

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

America

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The Spirit at Work

NEW ECUMENICAL DIRECTIONS

DENIS J. MADDEN



Catholic and In College

JOHN R. WILCOX

CLARE JENSEN

OF MANY THINGS

The distance from Stone Mountain, Ga., to the Jimmy Carter Presidential Center in Atlanta is approximately 15 miles, or about 150 years. If you're ever in that neck of the woods, as I was this summer, I suggest that you see both sites on the same day. For one thing, the road between them meanders through some lovely country, the sort of hazy, idyllic charm a New Englander like me expects to find during August in the Deep South. More important, though, the journey from Stone Mountain, with its mammoth carved memorial to the leaders of the Confederacy, and the Carter Center, with its living commitment to peace and reconciliation, is a journey through the lights and shadows of American history: from Lee, Jackson and Davis to Carter, King and Mandela.

My own trip was especially poignant because this summer marked the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington, that seminal gathering on the National Mall that at last awoke the conscience of this country and confirmed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as the moral leader of his time. Stone Mountain, in fact, is one of the places Dr. King mentioned specifically in his speech: "And if America is to be a great nation this must become true," he said. "So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that. Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia."

If you look carefully at the newsreel footage of the March, you might be able to pick out an elderly, bespectacled, white Catholic cleric standing a couple of dozen feet behind Dr. King. That cleric is actually a Jesuit, the sixth editor

in chief of **America**, John LaFarge. On that day in 1963, from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Father LaFarge witnessed the culmination of his lifelong efforts for racial reconciliation. When he returned to New York, just three months before he died at the age of 83, Father LaFarge described in these pages what he saw as Dr. King spoke his immortal words. **MATT MALONE, S.J.**

In the view of...the veteran and deeply religious A. Philip Randolph, the nationwide March for Jobs and Freedom was no place for any note of violence and hate. And neither was in evidence during the entire program. It was as tranquil and inevitable as God's providence itself, with the majesty and power of an apocalyptic vision. This was the only expression that occurred to my mind, as I gazed over the immense throng stretching all the way from the Lincoln Memorial to the distant Washington Monument—a humbly yet proudly rejoicing multitude of Negroes and whites, responding magically to speakers and singers alike.

Sustaining this immense outpouring was a twofold certainty: that the demonstration's aims were completely reasonable, in line with the nation's oldest and best traditions; and that these aims were certain of fulfillment. The certainty was born of American pride in our country and its heritage. And the marchers were claiming their heritage. As in ancient Israel, their hope was in the God of justice and love. Henceforth nothing could stop their progress until the "dream" so eloquently hailed by the final speaker, Dr. Martin Luther King, should be fully realized.

The Aug. 28 March was but a beginning, a summons to unceasing effort. The hour is bound to come—and the less delay the better—when North and South alike will set a final seal upon its simple goal of jobs and freedom for all citizens—yes for *all*.

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Cover: Pope Tawadros II of Alexandria, patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church, and Pope Francis after exchanging gifts in the pontiff's library on May 10. The pope told the Coptic leader that Christians are united in an "ecumenism of suffering." CNS photo/Andreas Solaro, pool via Reuters).

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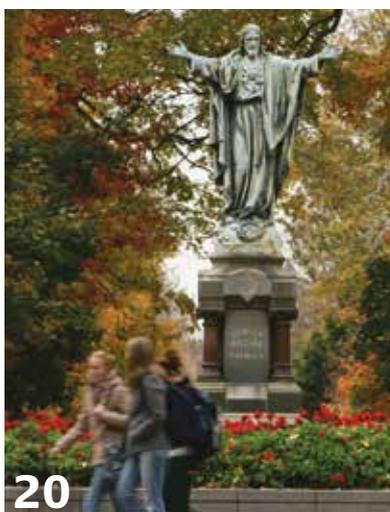


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ON THE WEB

Michael O'Loughlin writes on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development's investigation of **U.S. prison policy**. Plus, **James McCann, S.J.**, talks about the **Pontifical Oriental Institute** and a discussion of **Herbert McCabe: Faith within Reason**. All at americamagazine.org.



Touching Ethical Bases

Cheating has always been a part of baseball. Whether players corked their bats, smeared Vaseline on their caps or stole signs from the catcher, the game has never been entirely free of a certain sly trickery. So why should we greet the news of the proposed suspension of Alex Rodriguez of the New York Yankees for use of performance-enhancing drugs with more than a shrug of the shoulders? Players cheat and sometimes get caught. That is just part of the game.

Or is it? The former Major League Baseball commissioner Fay Vincent makes a bracing call for accountability in *The Wall Street Journal* (8/5) and in an interview with **America**. In an op-ed article arguing for a “one strike and you’re out” policy for players caught using performance-enhancing drugs, Mr. Vincent makes the compelling case that rules must be observed and enforced in sports. “It may seem odd to contend in a world often saturated by moral relativism that there is such a thing as an immoral act,” Mr. Vincent wrote. “But cheating at games...is wrong, and we had better begin to say so.”

For Mr. Vincent, this includes all forms of cheating, from the corked bat to the oversized slugger taking steroids. “There is no such thing as an innocent form of cheating,” Mr. Vincent told **America** in a conversation available as a podcast. Talking about right and wrong—instead of some mammoth home run—may seem like a drag in the age of ESPN’s “Top 10 Plays.” Yet if sports fans cannot have this conversation now, especially with their children, then when can they have it?

Reservations on Alcohol

Is prohibition an effective tool for limiting the availability and negative effects of alcohol? This might sound like an outdated question, but it is relevant and timely for about 100 Indian reservations across the country where prohibition remains in effect. After weeks of fierce debate, members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota on Aug. 13 voted 1,843 to 1,683 in favor of legalization, and the tribal council is expected to lift the ban officially. Alcohol has been outlawed in Pine Ridge, one of the largest and poorest reservations in the country, for nearly all of its 124-year history.

Pine Ridge already is plagued by higher-than-average rates of alcoholism, domestic violence, suicide and birth defects; some believe legalization will only further exacerbate these problems. Alcohol has always been readily available to tribal members willing to drive or walk to nearby Whiteclay, Neb., but the tribe’s official ban on alcohol represented

at least a clear stance against the devastating effects of alcoholism. Some tribal members view passage of the referendum as an attack on Lakota identity and values.

Still, the tribal council is deliberating how to implement legalization. Only the tribe will be able to sell alcohol, which will maximize revenue. The current plan, as reported by *The Rapid City Journal*, is to invest the profits equally into detoxification centers, treatment and counseling programs, youth programs and local community projects. The tribal government, through a transparent accounting of funds, can make good on public trust by ensuring this kind of investment in the common good. Legalization alone cannot and will not fix the myriad problems facing Pine Ridge, which are the result of a complex political, social and cultural history. But legalization represents a new opportunity for the tribe to address alcoholism and its effects in a comprehensive way.

For Better or Worse

The story has become all too familiar to American voters: an accusation, a denial, a confession, an apology and then, of course, the campaign. In the case of former U.S. Representative Anthony Weiner, Democrat of New York, this cycle has played out at a rapid pace. And while the New York City mayoral candidate has continued to lose supporters along the way (he dropped to fourth place in the latest Quinnipiac poll), one person has notably remained by his side: his wife, Huma Abedin. It is a fact that frequently has been noted with disdain by columnists and constituents alike.

Many have speculated about Ms. Abedin’s reasons for staying married to a man whose actions have brought public (and pun-filled) humiliation to their family: Is she staying with him out of love? Is it a political move? Is she just naïve? Yet, unless Ms. Abedin, an aide to former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, addresses these questions directly, the only possible answer is: We don’t know. And that’s O.K.

A marriage exists in the context of a community, and some might argue that the couple could hardly be surprised by such criticism after placing themselves back in the spotlight so soon after Mr. Weiner’s snapshot-filled scandal. Yet no one deserves to have the inner workings of his or her relationship dissected and analyzed by a voyeuristic public. Little can be gained. Any marriage, whether between two public figures or two little-known neighbors, is infinitely more complex than an outside observer can understand. The promises made to the American voters are our business; the promises the couple made to each other in marriage are theirs.

Egyptian Fall

The Obama administration's decision to cancel war games with the Egyptian army in the aftermath of widespread violence by the Egyptian military against its own people has been properly criticized as a gesture too little and too late. Perhaps Gen. Abdul Fattah al-Sisi would have taken U.S. appeals for restraint more to heart if a credible threat to Egypt's nearly \$1.6 billion annual aid package had been established from the start. Now sources within the administration say the aid has been temporarily, albeit "privately," suspended. But another episode of state-initiated violence should prompt the Obama administration to cut off aid—this time publicly. Its restoration should then be linked to specific benchmarks toward credible and inclusive civilian rule.

Rather than temper its responses to unrest in the streets, the Egyptian military is pressing Western media to cease "supporting terrorism" by publishing accounts of the brutality of its security forces. It depicts the Muslim Brotherhood as incorrigible terrorists and fanatics. The military has been assisted in this public relations offensive by Brotherhood members who fit the profile. Vicious attacks on scores of Coptic and Catholic churches, schools and other facilities have left many in a state of near or utter ruin. The world community must demand that the interim government attend to its proper duty to protect the religious minority communities that have become the targets of retaliatory attacks.

It is clear now that the disproportionate use of force by the Egyptian military has been deliberately provocative. Many of the participants at what had been largely peaceful protests in Cairo were completely at the mercy of their fellow Egyptians in the security forces. They were shown little of that mercy, however; hundreds, perhaps even thousands, have died since a calculated decision was made within the interim government to put an end to the Brotherhood's role in Egyptian society. This seems an unwholesome and futile ambition.

As in Syria, the Obama administration now finds itself in a no-win situation. Certainly no one can desire that repressive, intolerant factions within the Brotherhood should ascend to a position of power in Egypt. But neither can a mature democratic society like the United States stand by without protest before a resurgent authoritarianism. While the Arab Spring unfolded before an astonished world over the last three years, it has become generally accepted among geo-

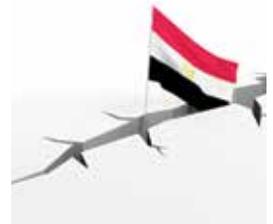
political policymakers that relying on brute authoritarianism to "contain" Islamic expression is a faulty, even immoral strategy.

The Muslim Brotherhood is not some fringe group that the army wishes to neutralize, but a social force representing a significant percentage of the Egyptian people, whose wishes and perspectives, whether or not they are palatable to Western notions, must somehow be included in a new Egypt. An authoritarian campaign to suppress such a large portion of Egypt's body politic will ultimately generate as much, if not more, extremism than it arrogantly promises to control.

Some may argue that the U.S. government should continue military aid to maintain whatever influence the United States retains in "restraining" the hand of the military. But the United States has been down the path of half-measured meddling and hand-holding of authoritarian regimes before. Over the long-term, the United States only succeeds in muddying its own reputation and credibility by "engagement" with despotism.

Mohamed ElBaradei, the interim vice president of Egypt who resigned in protest after the military crackdown, has chosen a course of action that the United States should emulate. ElBaradei has refused to participate directly any longer with a regime that bulldozed its own legitimacy in Cairo; nor is it likely that he will be found any time soon supping with Muslim extremists. ElBaradei will do what he can to continue to breathe life into a third force in Egyptian life, one that renounces brute authoritarianism, whether wielded by military autocrats or Islamic fantasists. While keeping lines of communication open to all parties, the United States should devote its energies similarly to supporting civil society in Egypt, a positive counterforce against those who are seeking to restore either military rule or the seventh century along the Nile.

Meanwhile, the United States, the European Community and the United Nations should be preparing a "responsibility to protect" strategy to defend the vulnerable in Egypt, whether that means protecting Muslims from a restoration of Egyptian authoritarianism or Coptic Christians and other religious minorities and secularists from a resurgent Muslim power that may yet displace the military autocrats who hold the field today.



REPLY ALL

Beauty of Dance

Re “Pope Francis Calls for Solidarity and Dialogue” (Signs of the Times, 8/12): More than 10 years ago in *America* (“Shall We Dance,” 3/25/02) I asked whether we, as the people of God, would respond to the invitation to “praise God’s name in the festive dance” (Ps 149:3). When I saw millions of people, including bishops and priests, joining in a simple but lively dance at the closing liturgy of World Youth Day, I received an answer.

As a Jesuit priest, trained dancer and choreographer who for more than 40 years has been exploring the power and beauty of dance as a very human form of prayer, praise and worship, I was moved to tears and laughter when I saw so many people responding to the call to praise God with “timbrel and dance” (Ps 150:4). I was particularly moved to see many bishops enjoying themselves as they were taught the dance.

The criticism we hear of using dance in a religious context is that dance in Western civilization is only used for “courtship” or “entertainment.” Yet this argument refuses to acknowledge the wonderful tradition of “folk” dance in Western culture. These are very simple dances, in which people join together to express their joy and the beauty of human community. We saw a wonderful example of such a “dance of the folk” on the Copacabana Beach. It does seem that the Holy Spirit was “taking the lead.”

ROBERT VEREECKE, S.J.
Chestnut Hill, Mass.

Our Blessing!

I was moved to tears as I read the wonderful article, “Everything I Can Do,” by Joey Kane (7/15). Joey was born in 1995, the year my son Peter, who also had Down syndrome, died at the age of 33. I marvel at Joey’s abilities.

I wrote an article for *America* titled, “Our Problem? Our Blessing!”

(6/5/76), about Peter and what he meant to our family. I am very pleased that so many things have changed for the better over the years for persons with developmental disabilities—in how they are educated and the opportunities open to them. But I am also horrified that 60 to 90 percent of babies with Down syndrome are not allowed to be born; their abortion is so simply and usually recommended.

The world is a better place because of Joey and my Peter. It is sad that the world loses the contributions that could be made by all the other persons who are killed before they are born simply because they have Down syndrome.

FRANCES GRACE
Fond du Lac, Wis.

Postpartum Perspective

Re “Cuomo’s Abortion Politics” (Current Comment, 7/1): The balancing of a woman’s privacy rights versus the rights of a fetus during the first trimester drove the decision in *Roe v. Wade*. Since then we have decided, through legislation and court decisions, to keep extending this protected privacy period and ignore medical advances that identify viable life at earlier stages of gestation.

Today even the most strident advocate of a woman’s privacy rights cannot possibly argue that any legitimate exercise of these rights can be directed at the termination of a fetus in the “24 weeks and beyond” stage, since experts now peg the minimum survival rate of infants at 23 weeks gestation—a number that will certainly continue to go down.

Maybe we need to restyle the debate. Let’s propose that a woman’s privacy rights extend to some period of time post-partum, especially if the child is born before 24 weeks. Then we can decide if there are any concerns that would make recognition of this new life an emotional or physical burden. Does anyone see any ethical or legal

issues here that couldn’t be remedied with an innovative piece of legislation?

DANIEL P. CUNNINGHAM
North Canton, Ohio

Interest of Children

Reading “Beyond the Fortnight,” by Archbishop William E. Lori (7/1), brought home the realization that his concept of religious freedom denies the most basic of human aspirations. The bishops have no convincing moral advice on what parents should do to care for children when their marriages break down or children no longer live with their two original parents.

According to church rules, Catholic heterosexuals can only remarry by proving that our original marriage was “not sacramental.” If we remarry without an annulment, we are forbidden Communion. If we do not remarry, our children are then brought up in a single-parent household. Similarly, those who divorce after one has discovered that he or she is homosexual cannot then marry another homosexual in the church to provide a two-parent household.

In both cases, church rules that are supposed to defend children end up ensuring that parents are refused Communion if they remarry; or, if they remain single, that only one parent is available to bring up the children.

As Catholic parents, we teach our children that God wants all people—including those created homosexual—to be able to love and be loved, to be able to love and raise children, and for children to be brought up in stable, loving, two-parent households, whether heterosexual or homosexual.

CHARLIE DAVIS
Fripp Island, S.C.

More Questions

“Beyond the Fortnight” raised more questions than it answered regarding “religious freedom.” Here’s one: If the state or the courts understand and define marriage differently from the Catholic Church, to which I belong, is

my religious freedom being violated if I am an employer and refuse to apply the definition of the state or the court in determining who may be considered a dependent for coverage under my health care plan? If I am an employer, for example, who covers employees and dependents in my group health care plan but I do not believe in divorce, would my religious freedom be violated if I am required to include as a dependent under my health care plan a new spouse of a divorced employee?

ROBERT STEWART
Chantilly, Va.

Love Beyond Sex

In "The Sexual Devolution" (7/1), Bill McGarvey writes in a believable and concise manner that an epidemic of bad sex is flourishing among young adults. He quotes Rabbi Yonah Schiller: "Our need for intimacy comes from a spiritual desire to be connected to people; their bad feeling comes from that connection not being rooted in anything real."

As teenagers we typically are overwrought with our sexual anxieties, a period that I personally found the most

difficult in my young life. Having been grounded in the Catholic tradition, however, I gradually came to appreciate the meaning of sexual intimacy in the context of marriage.

The greatest need of all human beings is to love and be loved, to fulfill the need to belong. Yet this need can be fulfilled through many simple kindnesses that do not involve sexual intimacy or self-gratification.

JACK A. ARTALE
Lititz, Pa.

Gift of Reconciliation

I had just finished Donna Freitas's book, *The End of Sex*, when I read Christina A. Astorga's review of it ("Save Yourself," 7/1). I was excited to know that the book is being discussed in Catholic circles. But I think the Catholic response to the hookup culture, especially any discussion of abstinence and virginity, needs to focus on the sacrament of reconciliation.

Catholics are blessed to know that God doesn't care so much whether a person still has his or her "virginity," only that we seek forgiveness. I say this

not to downplay the beauty of saving sex for marriage, but to emphasize that one mistake early in your college career need not doom your entire future, which unfortunately seems to be the case for many students.

Freitas describes college students who are longing to reclaim their inner sense of purity. The catechism quotes Pope John Paul II in "Reconciliatio et Paenitentia" where he says that through confession, "the forgiven penitent is reconciled with himself in his inmost being, where he regains his innermost truth." We college students need to hear that the church promises something better than "reclaimed virginity" or "temporary abstinence." As often as we need it, God offers us the possibility of a saintly soul. It's a second (or 70th) chance that can't be found anywhere else.

Professor Astorga calls for an alternative, meaningful worldview to offer us students. It's not any farther than the nearest campus chapel.

TOMMY O'DONNELL
Baltimore, Md.

The writer is a junior at Loyola University Maryland.

f STATUS UPDATE

Readers respond to "Everything I Can Do," by Joey Kane (7/15).

Down syndrome is just another variation in the genetic code God gave us. I think it may actually be a gift from God to help us learn more about DNA and how our bodies work.

My son, who has 47 chromosomes, is as much a joy as his siblings—and as much a terror at 2 years of age. When he was first born, I used to say that I have just as many hopes and dreams for him as for my three other children, but then I would add: "We know he won't be a rocket scientist or a brain surgeon, but..." After watching a man with no legs complete in track events at the Summer Olympics, I no longer add that. My son may very well be a

rocket scientist or a brain surgeon or the very first president of the United States with Down syndrome. Or he may bag your groceries. The future is his to make of it what he will.

What we are is God's gift to us. What we become is our gift to God.

HEATHER K. PEET

I am a school psychologist, and among my students are some with autism, Down syndrome and so on. The joy that these children bring to all who meet them is a testament to God's purpose for their lives. Although some days are challenging for the children, the staff and their families, even the smallest triumph is spirit-lifting. I am honored to work with these children and their families, and I am grateful that their parents chose life for their children. God has a plan for us all, and

those who allow his plan to be fulfilled as he sees fit will reap benefits beyond our mortal comprehension.

ANDREA CAPOLUPO-CONYNGHAM

I'm blessed to work with people, young and old, with "disabilities." From the moment I set foot in the place I loved it. I've never looked at any of our folks as having a disability; I see a soul, who is like me, a child of God. We all have some type of a "disability" that we deal with and live with every day. Some are more obvious than others. The less obvious help the more obvious get through the day. That is life and what we do. We love our sisters and brothers and help them when they need it and live life!

KIM HATHAWAY CARRIVEAU

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

EGYPT

Tensions Lessen, but Insecurity, Fear Trap Coptic Christians in Homes

A Catholic bishop in Luxor, about 400 miles south of Cairo, said Muslims and Christians are afraid to leave their homes because of insecurity in the streets. On Aug. 20 Coptic Catholic Bishop Youhannes Zakaria of Luxor said, “I’m crying for all these simple people—Muslims and Christians—who live in the villages nearby and don’t have anything because their food supplies are running out and people are afraid to leave their homes.

“Even those who are well off can’t buy food because all the shops are closed,” he said. The next day, Bishop Zakaria said that some of the soldiers had brought him bread, and the tensions in the city seemed to be lessening after the arrests of some of the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood.

On Aug. 21 Human Rights Watch urged Egyptian authorities to take “the necessary steps to protect churches and religious institutions against mob attacks.” The group said authorities should also investigate why security forces were largely absent or failed to intervene even when they had been informed of ongoing attacks. The group reports that immediately following the violent dispersal of the Muslim Brotherhood sit-ins in Cairo on Aug. 14, crowds of men attacked at least 42 churches, burning or damaging 37, as well as dozens of other Christian religious institutions in the governorates of Minya, Asyut, Fayum, Giza, Suez, Sohag, Bani Suef and North Sinai. H.R.W. has verified that at least three Coptic Christians and one Muslim were killed as a result of sectarian attacks in Dagma, Minya and Cairo.

“For weeks, everyone could see these attacks coming, with Muslim Brotherhood members accusing Coptic Christians of a role in Mohamed Morsi’s ouster, but the authorities did little or nothing to prevent them,” said Joe Stork, H.R.W.’s acting Middle East director. “Now dozens of churches are smoldering ruins, and Christians throughout the country are hiding in their homes, afraid for their very lives.”

Demonstrations began in Luxor a few days after the military crackdown in Cairo. “After being chased from the center of Luxor, the pro-Morsi demonstrators arrived under my residence shouting, ‘Death to the Christians,’” Bishop Zakaria said. “Fortunately, the police arrived in time to save us. Now the police and the army have two ar-

mored vehicles parked here.”

The bishop said the Muslim Brotherhood is going after Christians because “they think Christians are the cause of Morsi’s fall. It’s true that Christians participated in the demonstrations against Morsi, but 30 million Egyptians—most of them Muslims—took to the streets against the deposed president,” he said.

“By attacking Christians, they want to throw Egypt into chaos,” Bishop Zakaria said.

Egypt’s Coptic Catholic Church has said it supports the country’s military in the face of what it calls “a war on terror” against the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood has denied using violence in its campaign to restore Morsi to office.

On Aug. 20, Egypt’s Coptic Catholic Patriarch Ibrahim Isaac Sidrak sent condolences to the families of soldiers killed in an Aug. 18 attack in the coun-



try’s Sinai region. He called the dead soldiers “martyrs.” He did not mention at least 35 prisoners who died in a prison van in Cairo on Aug. 18. Egyptian security says they were killed trying to escape, but Brotherhood members and other opposition forces say they were killed in cold blood.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Adjunct Professors Seek Union Representation

Whether inspired by Catholic social teaching or rulings by the National Labor Relations Board, Catholic colleges and universities will eventually sit down with their adjunct faculty members to negotiate wages and work-

DAY OF RAGE. Supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood and ousted Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi in Giza Square, south of Cairo, on Aug. 18.



ing conditions. That's the consensus of union organizers involved in securing collective bargaining rights for adjunct and contingent faculty at religious institutions.

"Catholic social teaching is quite explicit about the importance of labor unions. The church has an obligation to not interfere and to propagate them," said Robin Sowards. He is a member of the Adjunct Faculty Association, a group formed by Duquesne University faculty and associated with the United Steelworkers in Pittsburgh. Duquesne University is one of three Catholic schools that have appealed N.L.R.B. decisions to allow adjunct faculty to unionize. The others are Manhattan College in Bronx, N.Y., and Saint Xavier University in Chicago.

A Supreme Court decision in 1979 (*N.L.R.B. v. Catholic Bishop of Chicago*) and subsequent judicial and administrative determinations held

that religious schools and colleges are exempt from the labor board's jurisdiction. Nonetheless, adjunct faculty have appealed to regional offices of the N.L.R.B. to allow union groups to represent them.

According to Modern Language Association statistics for 2009, the latest data available, adjuncts comprised 53 percent of the faculty at Manhattan and 62 percent at both Duquesne and Saint Xavier. Alan Trevithick, an adjunct at Fordham University in New York, is a founding member of New Faculty Majority. According to Trevithick, adjuncts receive one-third of tenure-track faculty compensation and work without benefits or job security.

"Schools don't want to confront the ethical reality of this," he said. "It devalues the whole notion of higher education and it's not sustainable." Trevithick, who also teaches anthropology and sociology at non-Catholic schools, said there is no difference between the way he is treated at Catholic and non-Catholic schools. "I feel equally exploited," he laughed.

There is no active campaign to form an adjunct union at Fordham, Trevithick said, but he predicted there will be more attempts on Catholic campuses. "Adjuncts are part of the teaching majority and they have equal or better rights than their full-time colleagues to put together a collective bargaining unit. It's inevitable that you'll see attempts to organize," he said.

The N.L.R.B. and the three Catholic schools awaiting rulings on their appeals disagreed on key points. The schools pointed to their religious affiliations, but the labor board said it found the institutions to be largely secular.

"This is not about religion. It's about preventing the most poorly paid employees [from being] represented by a union," said Sowards, who teaches English and linguistics at Duquesne. "To say that as a Catholic university you're too Catholic for the government but not Catholic enough to follow your own teachings is profoundly hypocritical."

Adjunct faculty at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., won union representation quickly and without resistance from the administration, according to David Rodich, executive director of Local 500 of Service Employees International Union. "The university was very constructive in its view and took a neutral stance with respect to unionization," he said. "Georgetown chose to adhere to the principles of Catholic social teaching, including the right to form a union."

Michael Galligan-Stierle, president



PART-TIME PROFESSORS. Academics discuss working conditions at a conference in Boston in April.

of the Washington-based Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, said that Catholic colleges and universities respect and support the moral rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively, but reject the jurisdiction of the N.L.R.B.

Women Religious Seek More Dialogue

Members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious announced on Aug. 19 at the close of their assembly and national board meeting in Orlando that they were pleased with the dialogue they had with the church official appointed to oversee their organization as part of a Vatican assessment and hoped for “continued conversations of this depth.” L.C.W.R. members met with Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle, appointed by the Vatican doctrinal congregation last year to oversee a reform of the L.C.W.R. In the statement, the sisters said the discussion with the archbishop gave them “hope that continued conversations of this depth will lead to a resolution of this situation that maintains the integrity of L.C.W.R. and is healthy for the whole church.” L.C.W.R. leaders are uncertain about how their “work with the bishop delegates will proceed.” The conference, which represents the majority of 57,000 religious sisters in the United States, has canonical status.

Lifting Limits on Sex Abuse Suits?

Some victims of childhood sexual abuse would have one more year to file lawsuits against private or nonprofit organizations that protected their suspected abusers under a California bill that passed a key legislative committee on Aug. 21 and is now on its way

NEWS BRIEFS

Jean Bethke Elshtain, an ethicist, scholar and author, died on Aug. 11 in Nashville at age 72. • Calling the program “deeply needed” by many, U.S. Agriculture Department undersecretary Kevin Concannon expressed his gratitude on Aug. 19 to Catholic leaders for championing the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** as it comes under attack in Congress. • Pope Francis will host a meeting of cardinals on Sept. 30 to formally approve the **canonization of Blessed John Paul II and John XXIII** and announce a date for the canonizations. • The Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced on Aug. 20 that it is exploring the **sale of six nursing homes** and one assisted-living facility and will seek to outsource management or lease its current and future cemetery sites. • Catholic bishops and priests from major dioceses across the country will preach a coordinated message on Sept. 8 to urge Congressional passage of an **immigration overhaul** that includes a path to citizenship. • A census study reports that in Ecuador there are **4.2 million child workers** (ages 5 to 17) and almost 9 percent of them are exploited in “high risk” labor like scavenging landfills.



Jean Bethke Elshtain

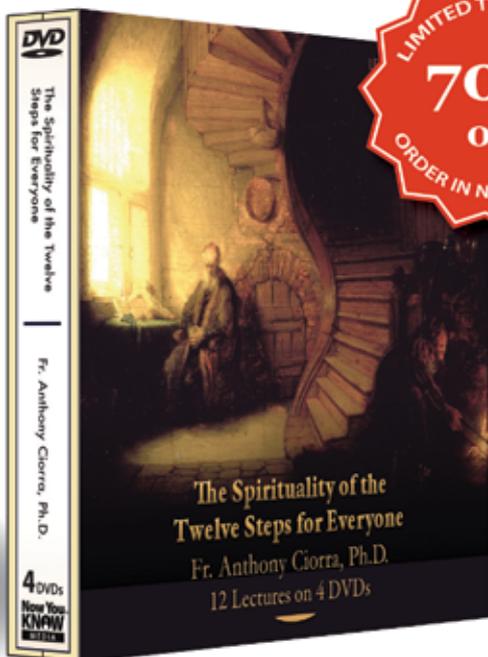
to a vote before the full assembly. The National Center for Victims of Crime, which sponsored the bill, and other supporters say victims might take years to acknowledge that they were molested. The Catholic Church has vigorously lobbied against the measure. “It discriminates against victims of child sexual abuse,” Ned Dolejsi, executive director of the California Catholic Conference, said in a statement. “It discriminates against private and nonprofit organizations like the church. It continues to protect public schools and government workers from lawsuits filed by victims and it even prevents victims from suing their actual abuser.” Changes approved by the California legislature in 2009 increased the statute of limitations for abuse claims against public entities.

Syrians Flee Into Iraq

The U.N. refugee agency said on Aug. 19 that some 30,000 Syrians had

streamed into northern Iraq and thousands more were waiting to enter. “This new exodus from Syria is among the largest we have so far seen during the conflict, which is now into its third year,” said Dan McNorton, a U.N. spokesperson. “As well as people who told us they were fleeing recent bombings, others say they were escaping fighting and tension amongst various factions on the ground.” The influx began in mid-August when the Kurdistan Regional Government authorities in northern Iraq suddenly opened access to a pontoon bridge, allowing several hundred people camped in the area since earlier last week to enter Iraq. By the following morning thousands had swarmed across the swaying bridge. The tide of refugees continued as reports emerged of high casualties following an alleged chemical weapons attack in Damascus over a neighborhood controlled by Syrian rebels.

From CNS and other sources.



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Waiting for Good Deeds

Railroads are the devil's work! Not really, I suppose. I might have thought that earlier this summer when my commuter train was thrown off schedule for weeks by a derailed trash train at my station, itself aptly named Spuyten Duyvil, which Washington Irving claimed was a corruption of the Dutch phrase "in spite of the Devil." But I see that train as more or less morally neutral but economically advantageous, if recently a bit smelly. Also, I can sleep on it.

Far more distinguished and presumably better-rested men than I have felt differently. Perhaps the most famous was Pope Gregory XVI (1831-46), who banned railroads in the Papal States, allegedly because their promise of increased mobility would lead to unrest among an already rebellious population. Gregory reputedly denounced the railroads as *chemins d'enfer*, "roads to hell," a play on the French neologism for the railroad, *chemin de fer*. It was a terrible moment for those who believe in human progress but a rather delightful one for those who love a good pun.

This bit of historical trivia might seem just that, trivial, but for its surprising pertinence to our contemporary reception of papal declarations. It is worth noting that while the Papal States might have missed out on mass transit, the rest of the world politely ignored Gregory's antipathy toward trains. It was, in the long run, little more than an occasion for a nice turn of phrase.

Maybe it also distracts us from the fact that Gregory said and believed far

worse, calling the notion of freedom of conscience an "absurd and erroneous maxim" and driving the influential French thinker Lamennais from the church over that issue and others, like freedom of the press ("a hateful freedom") and separation of church and state in his papal encyclicals "Mirari Vos" and "Singulari Nos," the latter of which condemned Lamennais by name.

What has changed? Not the railroads so much, which in this country are running on more or less the same technology that powered the devil-coaches of Gregory's time. Catholic belief in the primacy of conscience certainly has, with the Second Vatican Council repudiating Gregory and his successors on that question. And our own bishops in the United States have in recent years become enthusiastic cheerleaders for the separation of church and state.

There is no question, however, that our reception of papal commentary has changed dramatically. Many of the same folks who rightly feared the cult of personality that engulfed the church throughout the long reign of John Paul II are suddenly hung on every off-the-cuff word of Francis, the pope who can say no wrong. Others, who rejoiced at every utterance of Pope Benedict XVI as a harbinger of a "smaller, purer church" (you can guess how that process was imagined to work) are suddenly licking their wounds. Lost in much of this is the fact that the only declaration of Francis thus far that carries any real ecclesial weight, his recent encyclical,

was quite obviously almost entirely the work of Benedict himself. What will we who have so enthusiastically welcomed Francis' every word do when he inevitably says something we find horrifying? Or when one of his spontaneous remarks turns into Regensburg II?

Francis gives every indication of being a pope of action, particularly with his eight-man team of cardinals missioned to advise him on reform of the Roman Curia. Further positive signs can be found in his refreshing trust in the laity, as seen in his appointment of a lay board to overhaul the Vatican's finances and administration. But our focus seems to remain forever on his commentary and his person, not on his

actions. And it will be the actions of the church in the years to come that truly affect people's lives, both spiritual and material.

"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the children of men," Psalm 146 tells us. Why not? Because men and women are, inevitably, bound to disappoint us if we focus on their words and not their deeds.

I love Pope Francis as much as the next guy on the train, and I have been inspired by his down-to-earth manner and blunt challenge to focus on orthopraxis more than orthodoxy. But I think it important to remind myself to remain leery of words alone and to wait with hope for him and the church as a whole to follow those words with deeds.

It will be the actions yet to come that truly affect people's lives.

JAMES T. KEANE is an editor at Orbis Books in Ossining, N.Y., and a former associate editor of *America*.

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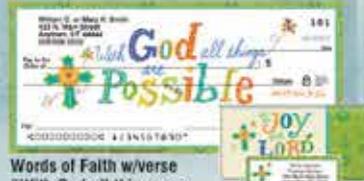
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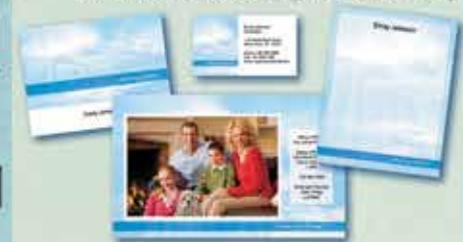
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Emerging trends
in the ecumenical
movement

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Becoming One

BY DENIS J. MADDEN



Where is the Holy Spirit leading us in the ecumenical movement? I would like to reflect prayerfully on the new springtime that is emerging gradually, quietly and peacefully. This new era in the movement will encompass the momentous gains of five decades of dialogue and also lead us closer to that full communion with other Christians that is the prayer of Jesus and our goal—"that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21).

In this meditation, I look at emerging trends while also remaining aware that unexpected interventions of the Spirit are always possible. I think that in some ways we will be

MOST REV. DENIS J. MADDEN is auxiliary bishop of Baltimore and chair of the Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

returning to the early history of the ecumenical movement; an emphasis on “mission” and the contributions of laypeople are again coming to the fore.

Our mission to share the teaching of Jesus Christ with the world is gaining high prominence in ecumenical circles. We followers of Christ seek to share Christ’s message of salvation with others. For Catholics this missionary impulse is expressing itself in the new evangelization. The church is not only reaching out to those who have not yet heard of Christ but also inviting those who once walked with us but have taken a byroad to join us again.

Pope Benedict XVI, in addressing the assembly of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity last November, put it this way: “As is known, the Council Fathers [of Vatican II] intended to stress the very close link that exists between the task of evangelization and overcoming the existing divisions between Christians.” Benedict pointed out that Jesus prayed for the unity of his disciples “so that the world may believe” (Jn 17:21). This unity serves a profound and most important purpose: the good of humanity.

Benedict, now pope emeritus, saw the spiritual poverty of many people as a great challenge for Christians. How can we offer the message of Christ in a hope-filled, joyful and convincing way that can fill this spiritual vacuum and bring inner peace?

Reconciliation and Morality

As he did frequently, Pope Benedict in his address to the pontifical council called Christians to self-examination and repentance so they could become more effective witnesses. Ecumenism and the new evangelization, he said, “both require the dynamism of conversion, understood as a sincere desire to follow Christ and to adhere fully to the Father’s will.” Personal transformation is a prelude to offering an invitation to others.

Thus we ourselves must go deeper spiritually. Visible unity will require a true and lasting reconciliation among Christian communities. Perhaps the contemporary experiences of communal reconciliation, facilitated in several countries by groups like the internationally prominent Focolare movement, can provide “roadmaps for reconciliation” among Christian communities. We must pray for this reconciliation.

There has been much progress toward reconciliation. One example of many, though less known, comes from

the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation. It was first convened in 1965, meets twice each year and has produced at least 25 shared statements. The dialogue partners have agreed that certain steps need to be taken to prepare for full communion between Orthodox and Catholic churches. One of their most recent statements, “Steps Towards a Reunited Church,” issued in 2010, offers a way forward.

We ourselves must go deeper spiritually. Visible unity will require a true and lasting reconciliation among Christian communities.

There are, of course, some issues on which the Christian churches seem to be diverging. These include questions of sexual morality. Ecumenical dialogues among experts often begin with a discussion of issues that the partners agree on, then move on to issues where our understandings

seem complementary and, finally, to harder issues where the dialogue partners seem to diverge. Convergences and complementarities can shed light on the reasons for divergences between the dialogue partners.

Formal ecumenical dialogues are finally beginning to address questions of personal morality, like family disintegration, cohabitation, contraception, sterilization and so forth. Until recently, there had been little ecumenical discussion of these highly emotional questions. The current Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue is working to identify the points of convergence and the lines of divergence in our understanding of these issues of personal morality. Such efforts can lead to unexpected mutual affirmations.

Deacon and Lay Involvement

The Catholic Association of Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers, an organization established in 1971 to help ecumenical leaders network and exchange ideas, and the religious orders with an ecumenical mission, like the Paulists and the Franciscan Sisters and Friars of the Atonement, have provided an educated cadre of ecumenical leaders for decades. Priests and religious, with their special charisms, will always play an indispensable role in ecumenical relationships, but this contribution is changing as the number of priests and religious diminishes.

Lay women and men have played a significant role in the ecumenical movement from the beginning. The Focolare movement, for example, brings Christians of many churches together. The movement’s spirituality of unity is the basis for the ecumenical formation of its members and the “dialogue of life” it promotes with others. Their

ON THE WEB

James McCann, S.J., discusses the Pontifical Oriental Institute. americamagazine.org/podcast

life of daily love for neighbor is attractive to those who are searching.

Today we are seeing the gifts of the Spirit given to permanent deacons and to lay Catholics coming to the fore even more significantly. This is part of the divine plan. There are now 16 deacons serving as ecumenical officers for their dioceses.

Lay women and men continue to serve on diocesan ecumenical commissions and as ecumenical representatives in their parishes. As we move forward, the roles of these lay representatives will continue to expand. Laypeople educated in the basics of ecumenism will be serving dioceses in varied relationships with our fellow Christians. This direction is very much in keeping with church teaching. The Second Vatican Council, in the "Decree on Ecumenism" (1964), exhorts "all the Catholic faithful to recognize the signs of the times and to take an active and intelligent part in the work of ecumenism."

New Forms of Training

Education is essential for taking an "active and intelligent part" in ecumenism, and this learning has many dimensions. A person certainly needs to know the basic ideas provided in the Vatican II's "Decree on Ecumenism," as well as the "Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism," revised and published by the Vatican in 1993,

Pope John Paul II's encyclical, "Ut Unum Sint" and Pope Benedict's many statements on the topic.

The U.S. bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs is beginning to develop new models for training local leaders. These models will be deeply rooted in our spiritual tradition. They will include readily available online videos and other resources available on the U.S. bishops' Web site. We envision integrated programs that respond to the needs of priests, religious, deacons and laypeople. Lay formation must include not only those who serve on ecumenical councils but also those who collaborate in social justice ministries or couples in ecumenical marriages.

Some recent work will help advance education in ecumenism. One significant example is the publication of *Harvesting the Fruits: Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue* (Continuum, 2009), by Cardinal Walter Kasper, former president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. In this book Cardinal Kasper brings together the results of almost 50 years of dialogue with four major international partners (Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed) in a concise and readable form. He synthesizes convergences in four major areas, including a very rich chapter on our progress in understanding the church. Cardinal Kasper also points to "open questions and remaining differences."



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This achievement is echoed elsewhere. Cardinal Kurt Koch, for example, Cardinal Kasper's successor at the pontifical council, recently called for a declaration that would serve as a summary of the achievements of a bilateral dialogue between the Catholic Church and a partner community. Such achievements could be formally recognized by the churches. A declaration would also indicate questions for continuing discussion. Cardinal Koch's call is already resonating with some of our Protestant colleagues.

Decades of common effort to heal the wounds of past disagreement are finally becoming available to a wider readership. Previously, only dedicated scholars had the time to study the many tomes on our ecumenical bookshelves. Now, however, summary texts are becoming more available, which will affect local communal prayer and discussions in unforeseen ways.

Continuing the Work

Along with these emerging trends, there is much continuity. Existing agreed statements will provide a foundation for our continuing theological dialogue with our Orthodox, Protestant and Anglican friends. One example is the "Agreed Statement on Baptism," recently approved by the U.S.C.C.B. and four Reformed churches: the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ and the Christian Reformed Church, our partners in dialogue.

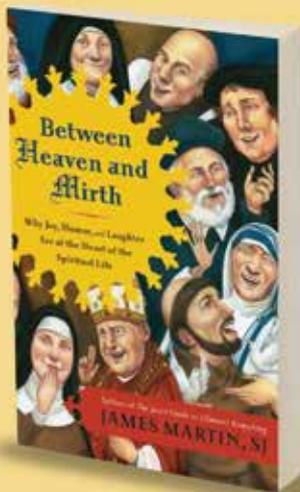
A second example is the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification," which the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican approved in 1999. The World Methodist Council signed this statement in 2006. This document states: "Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works." The preeminent theological issue of the Reformation has thus come to a "differentiated consensus." We have agreement on the core question. There are still many related issues where we disagree. Leading theologians will spend decades, if not centuries, debating these.

Spiritual renewal will always be at the center of the ecumenical movement. The future will see less "going our own way" and more mutual discernment of God's will for all of us. We all need to become more deeply rooted in prayer. We need time for silence and stillness. This is a time for listening to the Holy Spirit.

We need to listen attentively to other Christians. To learn from others requires humility. We will become more like Jesus who humbled himself. Ultimately the ecumenical movement will prosper as we, together, become more like Christ. ▲

From *New York Times* bestselling author James Martin, SJ. . .

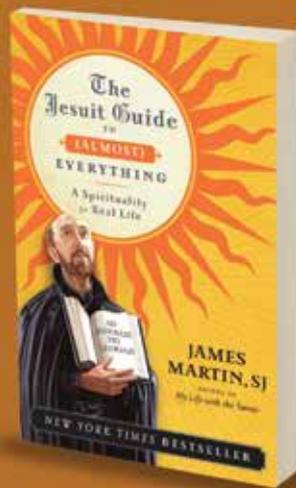
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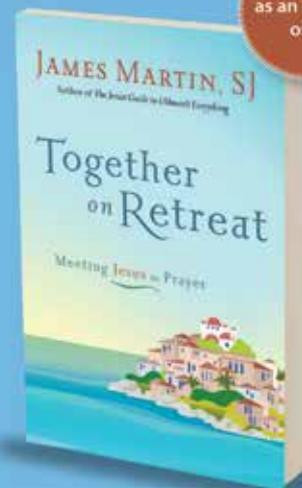
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Higher Learning

Catholic colleges and universities on a mission

BY JOHN R. WILCOX

The economic challenges facing Catholic elementary and secondary schools have been well documented in the media. One op-ed piece in *The New York Times* was titled “Catholic Education, in Need of Salvation.” Since the authors focused on the elementary and secondary level, there was no reference to Catholic colleges and universities.

If the first 12 years of Catholic education are in jeopardy, so is Catholic higher education. Without doubt, economics is a concern. And just as Catholic elementary and secondary schools have taken finances seriously and made them a priority of governance, so also have Catholic colleges and universities.

The fundamental threat that looms over the 192 members of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities is the erosion of the value-added dimension: their Catholicity, manifested in commitment to Gospel values, liturgy, prayer, theology, social justice/service learning and fidelity to church teaching.

Until recently, the founding religious congregation’s role, as the guardian of each college’s Catholicity, was taken for granted. The vast majority of the institutions were established by these congregations—Benedictines, Jesuits, Lasallians, Sisters of Mercy and others. Some 80 years ago, one accrediting association went so far as to describe the founding congregation as a “living endowment.”

Referring to the distinctive Catholic culture conferred by the founding congregation, the president of one Catholic university remarked that “this distinctiveness is like a fine mist. If you stand in it long enough, you will get soaked.” Today, a cultural drought prevails, and that fine mist is less and less evident on most campuses. Today it is possible to spend one’s career on some Catholic campuses without even getting damp.

Presidents, administrators and faculty members at Catholic colleges are chosen these days through a national search from a broad pool of diverse candidates that may or may not include members of the founding religious congregation or even practicing Catholics. To address the issue of a Catholic presence, mission offices have been established to ensure the integrity of the college’s Catholic identity and the religious heritage of the founding congregation. Educational programs also have been developed; it is the rare employee at a Catholic college or university who is unaware of mission

JOHN R. WILCOX, *emeritus professor of religious studies at Manhattan College, in New York City, is the principal author of* *Revisioning Mission: The Future of Catholic Higher Education*.



efforts underway on the campus.

After 38 years in Catholic higher education, however, I am convinced that these important initiatives are little more than stopgap measures; they fail to reflect long-term strategic planning on the part of either Catholic educational leaders or the founding religious congregations of these institutions.

These times call for a significant group of administrators, faculty and staff to commit themselves to the future of Catholic higher education in their universities. In order for these centers of higher learning to succeed, not just as institutions but as Catholic institutions, that commitment must be embedded in the college or university’s organizational structure.

A Community of Renewal

Many newly hired administrators, faculty and staff members may think of a mission community as a new idea, a plan of action that goes beyond essays and books about Catholic education. While it aims at action, the mission community is firmly grounded in the vision, values and mission of the founding religious congregation. The genius of the founding congregations was their ability to have a presence across the entire campus. That presence has diminished today to such

an extent that few, if any, priests, brothers or sisters remain in administrative, academic or support services. "It's over; move on," the backbenchers conclude. But not so fast.

If we truly believe in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, what often seems to be an accurate surmise is more than likely to become a surprise, for ours is a God of surprises. This "old" idea of how Catholic colleges and universities were

invitation. Transparency is of the essence. All are welcome: lay Catholics, clergy and religious, other Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, members of other faiths and those who profess no faith. Persons familiar with Catholic higher education know that this diverse group already has made a significant commitment to the vision and mission of these institutions.

When it comes to creating a community, there is no one-size-fits-all philosophy. An all-are-welcome invitation at a large university with a student body of 15,000 may elicit a response from 30 members of the administration, faculty and staff, while a relatively small college of 1,500 might have a mission community of 75. One author has written of "the wisdom of crowds." I am convinced that each mission community will have the wisdom, guided by the Holy Spirit, to respond to the unique needs on campus. A committed community is of the essence, yet there are many difficult issues to address and resolve.

The mission community should be "loosely coupled" to the institution and should not be a committee of the president or of the academic senate. If it is the guardian of the Catholic culture and congregational heritage, there is little doubt in my mind that the mission community will play a prophetic role, at times "speaking truth to power," but it will largely take the role of educating the wider college or university community and keeping Catholicity vital in all areas of life. Of course, partnering with the office of student life, especially campus ministry, will be an important strategy for reaching the students. Likewise, working with faculty members and understanding their vision of Catholic education is critical. One hopes that the Catholic intellectual life, especially Catholic social thought, will become the magnet for faculty investment in Catholic culture and its integration across the curriculum.

The mission community would meet regularly, pray in a manner that respects diversity, provide mission education for administrators, faculty, staff and students, offer reviews of college policy and strategic planning and foster a palpable Catholic culture as shaped by the religious heritage of the founders. Some members may participate regularly, while others may wax and wane in their interest. One thing I am convinced of is the power and appeal of the Catholic university, because it is ultimately about the human journey and life's meaning. However, this does not mean the future of Catholic higher education can be taken for granted. Action is required.

Without the development of mission communities, Catholic higher education will, I fear, wither away. Student acceptance rates are high, budgets are balanced and endowments are, in many cases, robust. But the window of opportunity for ensuring a truly Catholic future is inexorably closing. ■



The mission community would be a core group, assuming responsibility for the authentic Catholic culture of the college.

able to retain their identity through the living endowment of the founders is the inspiration for a new idea, a surprise that turns the institution on its head, yet gives assurance of a robust Catholic future.

Thus, despite the appointment of mission officers, mission committees and educational programs, there is a need to create a new, living endowment, one that will transform the sharply reduced living endowment of the founding congregation. This surprising, new living endowment could be called a mission community, whose life parallels that of the founding group, transcending, as it did, administrations, faculties and staff, which come and go.

The mission community would be a core group, assuming responsibility for the authentic Catholic culture of the college and the religious heritage of the founders. Members of the founding congregation must continue to be part of this new endowment, not as an elite group but because they are the source of the college's Catholicity and distinctive heritage. Membership would come through response by the administration, faculty and staff to a warm, embracing

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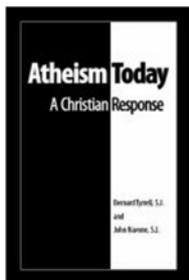


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Best of Both Worlds

Building Catholic friendships in college

BY CLARE JENSEN

As the summer of my senior year of high school drew to an end, the inevitable separation approached: I was about to venture into the world on my own, bidding my family a goodbye vastly different from the routine “see ya” exchanged before school each morning. Along with the usual changes resulting from moving to college, this transition brought the additional responsibility of practicing my faith independent of family.

I had researched the Catholic Student Association at Rice University, where I had enrolled for the fall, but I found the Web site outdated and the activities few and far between. With low expectations, I promised my mom and dad that I would sign up for the association’s e-mails.

My background in Catholicism had been very thorough; weekday Mass, recitation of the rosary and confession were regular events in the routine of my life. But I performed them primarily because my parents did, not because I was personally invested in them. The new independence of college life, however, forced into practice the Catholic adulthood initiated by my confirmation six years earlier, thus making my faith my own.

My journey toward integration with the Catholic Student Association began during orientation week with

Mother Teresa’s book *The Joy in Loving*. My roommate’s friend, after noticing the book on my shelf, concluded that I was Catholic and asked if we could



go over to church together. That first Sunday, we walked to the chapel for 10 a.m. Mass, and we have made this weekly journey together ever since. Having this friend by my side also allowed me the freedom to begin my involvement in the C.S.A. Initially, I was hesitant to attend events because, like many of my peers, I felt insecure about going alone. The presence of a friend provided me with the courage to go to additional activities beyond Sunday Mass. Peer pressure had always been an influence in my life, but it had never manifested itself in such a positive way.

As I surrounded myself with Catholic peers, I became more involved with the Catholic community. Having such a strong core Catholic community made me realize how

lucky I was to have close friends of the same faith. In the past, I had taken Catholicism for granted, and I had never really lamented my lack of Catholic friends. In return for the new and rich friendships, I decided to give back to the community that had given me so much. My involvement in the student association at Rice grew to such an extent that I have become a part of the leadership team. My role as a discussion co-coordinator for the Freshmen Catholic Fellowship allows me to continue building the community and friendships that I valued so highly when I began my involvement with the organization.

The friendships with my peers are not the only relationships that have developed for me since my arrival at Rice. Through the sacraments I have also grown closer to God, the ultimate friend. When attending Mass or confession with my family, I often took the sacraments for granted; but once they became personal decisions for me, I came to realize their importance more fully. The graces received through the sacraments are powerful in combating the laziness, indifference and lack of courage that prevent us from practicing our faith adequately.

My attendance at weekday Mass was a turning point in my faith journey. In the second semester of my sophomore year, I began attending the 7 a.m. weekday Mass, despite the fact that sleeping is one of my favorite parts of the day. I have never been a

CLARE JENSEN, a junior and an English major at Rice University in Houston, Tex., is active on the leadership team of the Catholic Student Association.

APT: BOB ECKSTEIN

morning person and since arriving at college I have pushed my wake-up time further and further back by working out the exact minimum amount of time necessary to prepare for class. However, when a couple of guys invited me to join them for morning Mass, I decided to try it once or twice. Then I began to attend several days a week.

The example of these two friends inspired me to pull on a pair of jeans and a t-shirt just in time to leave for my regular visits with Our Lord. The struggles of the early mornings were counteracted by the extraordinary graces received from the sacrament, not the least of which was help staying awake for my classes. During Mass and reflection, I have reached many realizations about the spiritual life as well as made several significant personal decisions that would not have been prompted except through God's grace.

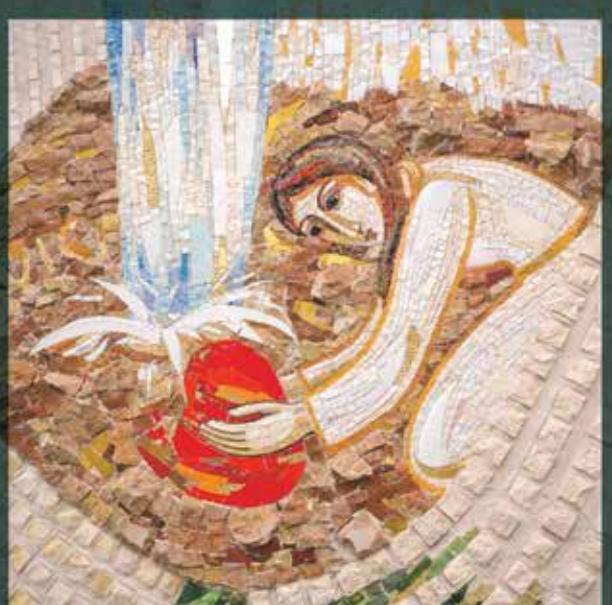
The Mass was not the only place where I found spiritual renewal. As I began to struggle with some of the sins

that societal expectations encouraged, I attended confession and, after discussing the matter several times with different confessors, returned to a fuller practice of my beliefs. Thus, the sacrament of confirmation has been realized many times over in my personal decision to receive and explore the graces given me when I was confirmed as an adult in the church. The closer we move toward God, the less inclined we will be to leave him.

It is necessary for each of us to strengthen our individual spirituality in order for the Catholic community to thrive as a whole. Prayer—a simple conversation with God—rewards us with a compassionate and loving friend at a time when we most need one. The introspective nature of prayer can be daunting, especially for those who have not cultivated a prayer life prior to college. Facebook, TV or even those homework assignments lying on the desk become unusually attractive when juxtaposed with the option of a silent conversation with a spiritual being.

Setting aside even a little time for God—five or 10 minutes—ensures that we not only keep God in our daily lives but also that we build a lasting relationship that will continue to develop for the rest of our lives. In my darkest hours, my Catholic friends were there for me. So was God. The adjustment to college seems a sufficient challenge without the addition of religious growth to complicate matters, but my time at Rice has drawn me closer to God in a way that I hope will continue to expand and strengthen in the coming years.

We are all initially uncomfortable with prayer, but success in the spiritual quest requires persistence. In the words of T. S. Eliot, "For us, there is only the trying. The rest is not our business." Although we may often feel discouraged in our prayer lives, we are still succeeding spiritually as long as we make a consistent and conscientious effort. And freshman year of college, a time of so many firsts, is an excellent time to begin. A



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Coining Perfection

On May 28, 2013, the perfect human being was born in Philadelphia.

The infant's name is Connor. His perfection is genetic. His parents had conceived 13 embryos in vitro. But before implantation, they wanted to eliminate any embryos with genetic defects. The relatively advanced age of the parents had raised concern about the increased probability of fetal abnormalities. A clinic in Oxford, England, scanned tissue samples from each embryo, using a new method called next generation screening. The scan revealed that only three of the embryos were free of chromosomal defect. Connor was the lucky flawless embryo chosen to be implanted and gestated in his mother's womb.

Connor is undoubtedly a consolation for his parents, who had long sought to bear children by other means, and concern for children's health is laudable. Nonetheless, the birth of the perfect child has its ethical costs. Presumably, the embryos with chromosomal abnormalities have been or will be destroyed. NGS adds a new weapon to our arsenal to eliminate people with disabilities from the population. Eugenic abortion is increasingly used to destroy bearers of Down syndrome before birth. Currently in the United States, approximately 80 percent of these fetuses are aborted during pregnancy. Carrying the telltale extra chromosome, Down syndrome embryos can now be discarded at the starting gate.

Dagan Wells, the English specialist in NGS, confidently predicts that the

method will become economical and routine in the near future. Scanning the entire genotype of the embryo will prevent the implantation not only of embryos with chromosomal imperfections but also of those that carry genetic markers linked to Alzheimer's or heart disease.

At the Main Line Fertility Clinic, where the child was conceived, Michael Glassner admits that widespread use of NGS might go well beyond health concerns. "You can have a very scary picture painted if you talk about height and hair color." In a society that tolerates sex-selection abortion and runs a burgeoning market for human eggs culled primarily from college-age women with robust health, high I.Q.'s and athletic prowess, the search for the genetically perfect will brook no limits. The slow and the plump need not apply.

The media celebration of our new genetic standard of perfection tends to obscure the ideals of human perfection that were commonplace in the classroom and the pulpit just a few decades ago. The hunt for the perfect genetic structure has replaced the ancient quest for moral heroism and personal sanctity.

One of my consolations as a philosophy professor has been the opportunity to introduce students to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. They welcome Aristotle's theory of friendship as an antidote to the nihilism of the sexual hook-up culture. But more and more of them find his concept of perfection baffling.

Aristotelian perfection is not a biological given; it cannot be engineered into existence by mechanical means. Rather, it is the slow, precarious fruit of freedom as the moral agent cultivates the virtues of justice, prudence, courage and temperance against the counterweights of vice. Perfection lies at the end of a personal journey, not in its microscopic start. For many students, this concept of perfection as a hard-won moral maturity has become a cipher.

The search for the genetically perfect will brook no limits.

In a recent final examination, one student summed up the general bewilderment: "I don't think Aristotle is serious when he says that to be perfect you have to cultivate all these virtues. Who wants to be magnanimous? What does that word mean anyway?"

He's kidding, right?" In our quest for biological perfection, the Hellenic ideal of moral perfection has become an enigma.

Even odder for our society is the vision of perfection embodied in the Gospels: "If you want to be perfect, go sell what you own and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure laid up for you in heaven" (Mt 19:21). Pope Francis is certainly on board. But how many of our contemporaries can comprehend an ascetical concept of perfection that prizes material dispossession, love of the poor and spiritual abandonment? Further, how many of us truly believe that the slightest trace of such evangelical perfection is worth more than all the fault-free genotypes in the world?

JOHN J. CONLEY

JOHN J. CONLEY, S.J., holds the Knott Chair in Philosophy and Theology at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore, Md.



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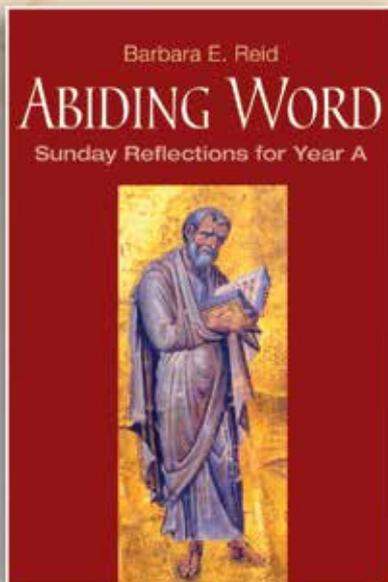
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THE WAY IT IS

Behind the scenes of 24-hour cable news

It is impossible to know what kind of coverage Walter Cronkite would have given to the Trayvon Martin case, which ended with a not guilty verdict for George Zimmerman after killing the 17-year-old Martin in Sanford, Fla.

Although we cannot know what Cronkite would have done, a few things seem clear: He would not have released George Zimmerman's social security number and address, as CNN did. He would not have spun viewers' outrage over Martin's death as a ploy meant to

hurt the National Rifle Association, as Fox News repeatedly did. And he very likely would not have played over and over again the 911 calls—including the gunshot—as Fox, CNN and ABC News did.

Then again, Cronkite was not responsible for producing news 24 hours a day. He did not have to try to find new perspectives on the same limited set of facts. He was not subject to the current pressures to keep audience share not just week to week but minute to minute.

Cable news is a many-headed beast, always hungry, driven by ratings, never satisfied. And each shiny new set piece and superficial, hyper-sensationalized coverage is one more shovelful of dirt on the grave of American television journalism. Tomes have been written on the subject, and most nights "The Daily Show" and "The Colbert Report" offer a grand tour of the indecent, Jerry Springer-esque palaver that substitutes for news on television today.

Last summer HBO began its own take on the matter with Aaron Sorkin's **The Newsroom**, a one-hour drama about a self-satisfied cable news anchor (Will McAvo, played by Jeff Daniels), tired of delivering soul-killing pablum night after night, who decides to be like his heroes and deliver hard-hitting news. It was to be "Network" as a TV

NETWORKING. Jeff Daniels and Emily Mortimer in "The Newsroom"



PHOTOMELISSA MOSELEY/HBO

show, with Jeff Daniels screaming on behalf of all of us, “I’m as mad as hell and I’m not going to take this anymore.” The trailers were electric, a brilliant and acerbic McAvoy lacerating a college student for suggesting the United States was the best country in the world.

The show’s first season, though, did not go so well. Critics raged that the female characters (played by the talented Emily Mortimer, Alison Pill and Olivia Munn) were all basically schoolgirls who just wanted the right boy to like them. The opening credits, images of news greats set to a nostalgic Thomas Newman score, felt slow, self-important, ridiculous.

And the show itself seemed almost schizophrenic, a date on Valentine’s Day holding equal status with the uprisings in Egypt during the Arab Spring.

Even Sorkin’s tennis-match-zippy dialogue seemed to have lost its luster, perhaps because the audience already knew that magic trick of his so well.

“Newsroom” also made the unusual choice to set the show two years prior to its airdate—the first episode is set in May 2010—and to spend the season covering actual events from the intervening period. So the pilot looks at the BP Horizon oil spill; other episodes touch on the killing of Osama bin Laden, Fukushima, Anthony Weiner, the Casey Anthony trial, Gabrielle Giffords and the Republican primary debates. At times this choice facilitated the show’s sometimes smug self-righteousness, a sort of dramatic version of Jon Stewart’s dog pile on the American media.

And yet the indignation that fuels “Newsroom” proved cathartic as well. Each week Sorkin well captured the fury that many have felt at politicians making outrageous claims without scrutiny from so-called journalists; toddlers with tiaras (or abusive parents) being forced on us

as “breaking news”; and coverage that seeks out not the truth but the “human angle” that will create the strongest, most polarizing feelings.

The second season, which debuted



on July 14, shows that Sorkin has taken his critics’ words to heart. Gone is much of the snappy patter; indeed, the first four episodes are perhaps the least Sorkin-sounding scripts he has ever delivered. McAvoy’s executive producer MacKenzie McHale (Mortimer) is almost immediately given a “Broadcast News”-worthy challenge that demonstrates just how capable a producer she is. The show’s most frustrating relationship issues are also quickly sent packing. Even the opening credits have been changed, the song sped up to feel more modern and energized, the images now tracing the path by which an event becomes a news story.

While the result is less effervescent, sometimes even slow, it also feels more disciplined and deliberate. The show continues to mine real stories, like the execution of Troy Davis in Georgia, the Republican debate audience that booed the question of a gay Republican soldier, child soldiers in Uganda and Occupy Wall Street. But it does so with less hunger for the easy and cheap and more

interest in a thoughtful conversation.

In preparation for writing this article I watched the first season again, and found myself stunned at the show’s prescience. A year before Edward Snowden, Sorkin had already written a storyline about a government whistleblower who reveals that the National Security Administration is secretly scanning our calls. Watching the characters deal with the shooting of Representative Gabrielle Giffords after the mass slaughter in Newtown, Conn., last December was simply devastating.

In retrospect, it actually makes sense that the original theme music was oddly

patriotic; “Newsroom” fundamentally is a show about a modern-day Washington fighting alongside young idealists for our independence from the trash that suffocates our national discourse.

But even more than that, “Newsroom” offers a precious space to reflect again on the important events that so often rush by in a flurry of tweets and babble, a fresh moment in which we can sift through our initial experience and go someplace deeper.

In the end, cable news is more likely to change the hairstyles of its anchors than produce anything of substance. But that is not to say we cannot allow ourselves the opportunity to think anew on the events being presented to us, the Trayvon Martins and the Newtowns, and let them genuinely and lastingly affect us. CNN and Fox News may always be with us; we can be thankful that for now, so is “The Newsroom.”

ON THE WEB

Jim McDermott, S.J., on
Hollywood in the age of Obama.
americamagazine.org/film

JIM McDERMOTT, S.J., is a graduate student in screenwriting at the University of California, Los Angeles.

A TRAVELING MAN

PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR An Adventure

By Artemis Cooper
New York Review Books. 480p \$30

Travel has been around since Adam and Eve were forced to leave the Garden of Eden, Noah built an ark and Abram, also on God's instructions, took a look at all of the land before his eyes. Travel writing was invented by Homer and Virgil, and the Synoptic Gospels may have helped revive the genre, what with all the journeying to and from the Galilee and Judea, as well as the boats and sandals.

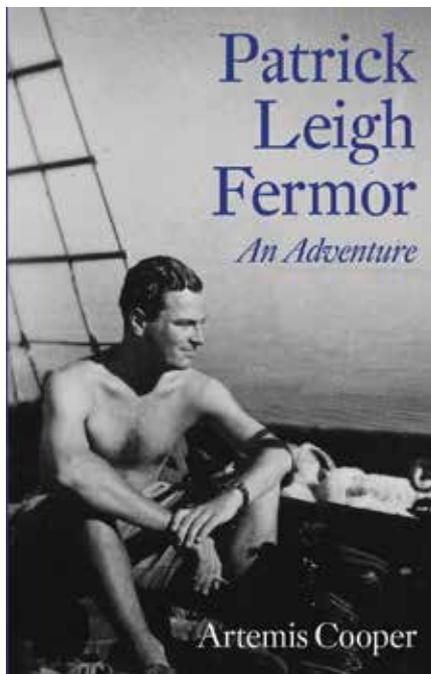
The travel writer is not content to tell the truth, but to find it. In this sense, the mid-19th century's *Walden* became the anti-travel book, as Thoreau had enough of the East in him to posit something altogether surprising about staying put. (Or the desert fathers and mothers, who seem to have written precious little about their journeys, even though traveling to new surroundings was essential to the point their lives were making.)

There used to be far more adventure in travel than there is today. We live in a time when there is really no wilderness left. The mountains, glaciers and passes were all named at least a generation ago. In fact, travel and travel writing changed on Nov. 30, 1915—the day the British government, prompted by wartime considerations, instituted the first passport. From that year forward, the world saw less wandering and more deliberation.

At about the same time, travel was also democratized. The automobile and eventually the airplane created opportunities for every middle-class man and woman to see the world. What had been a privilege of the high-born

became something more common, and today, of course, the bestselling travel books are guides penned by ordinary folks like Rick Steeves. But our subject, here, is travel writing of a more literary sort.

Most travel books are, in some respects, reflections on being an outsider, which is why travel writers



often get into trouble. Their prejudices show, and often those prejudices have been of the colonialist sort. The travel writer of a generation ago often expended paragraphs on the “difference” of his subjects, their perceived weaknesses and foibles, amid lovely descriptions of their environs. Much successful writing in the latter 19th and early 20th centuries was built on the backs of misunderstanding and misappropriating observations about “foreign” peoples. Those who wrote

about the “darkness” of Africa, for instance, were selling “strange” and frightening as travel. That is why Edward Said, in a 1981 review essay for *The New Statesman*, characterized V. S. Naipaul’s travel writing, which is often haughty about the third world, as “unencumbered with much knowledge or information, and not much interested in imparting any.”

Then there has long been travel writing as a way of self-discovery, at least since the days of medieval pilgrimage. There is a Zen saying, “If you want to find the path, set fire to your own life,” a sentence that even the Catholic writer Graham Greene embodied. He wrote one of the best travel books of the 20th century in *Journey Without Maps* (1936), which was also about the “darkness” of Africa but used the continent as a backdrop for exposing himself. Since Greene, much travel writing has evolved into landscape as soulscape, a phrase that would have made Greene spit. Think of the travelogue, *Eat, Pray, Love*.

There is also travel writing that is both informed and inquisitive, self-revealing and self-denying all at once. I am talking about the work of Patrick Leigh Fermor. He transformed travel writing into a genre all his own. His ability to immerse himself in his subject and become an insider without claiming so had no precedent. The best comparison might be to what the great Russian actor Constantin Stanislavski brought to the theater.

Paddy, as he was known to his friends, was born in London in February 1915, a month after the first Zeppelin raids and half a year before the requirement of passports. He was the son of a famous father—a geologist who made his name and spent most of his adult life in India. Paddy didn’t meet his dad until he was six years old. He remained in England to go to the

ON THE WEB
The Catholic Book Club discusses
Herbert McCabe: Faith Within Reason. americamagazine.org/cbc

Missile Silos, North Dakota

Furred, the horizons
are both calling and escaping:
there must be an edge.
Near the bases on the prairie
the farms in silhouette seem homesick;
one can imagine entering their kitchens
and from the stubbled fields
birds rise up, hopeful.

Someone stands at a window
looking for a limit to vision
but the fields press out flat
in every direction
like alternatives with equal value
and young girls who dream
of leaving home

go out with the boys from
the Air Force Base,
pressing their hot doomed bodies
together on back seats of cars.
All day the boys sit
before consoles, staring
at buttons and flashing lights,
waiting to launch

irreversible missiles
on cue, the trajectories blazing
over these flat fields,
over the sky, grand and clanging,
startling the farms,
the right angled roads,
low ceilings and huddled rooms.

KATHLEEN SPIVACK

KATHLEEN SPIVACK's *memoir*, *With Robert Lowell and His Circle: Plath, Sexton, Rich, Bishop, Kunitz*, was published recently by *The University Press of New England*. *A History of Yearning* won the *London Book Festival First Prize, 2010*. *This poem* was the *third runner-up in the Foley poetry contest 2013*.

finest schools, only to rebel against their strictures. Expelled from King's School, Canterbury, at 18 he left for Europe, resolving to walk the length of the continent from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople. The year was 1934.

The new book **Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure** makes for fascinating reading, although the reader should really start with *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*, the two volumes that recount Paddy's initial journey across nine countries, learning three languages, developing diverse friendships. There were many other journeys and books to come.

Artemis Cooper's biography of Fermor has been available in England since last autumn, published by the firm of John Murray, who also first published *A Time for Gifts*. It is written exquisitely by an author who has edited Fermor's letters, as well as a collection of his occasional essays, and has also written an excellent book on Cairo during the Second World War. Thankfully, Cooper's book is finally being published over here by the New York Review Books, which is also the publisher of all of Paddy's backlist in the states.

Fermor is revered in England as a breed of writer that probably no longer exists: one who writes from passion and disdains careerism, embodying his subject matter while maintaining a wide interest and expertise in multiple areas. Paddy was, in fact, the go-to reviewer at *The Times Literary Supplement* whenever a book seemed worthy of review but none of the specialists seemed right for it. Fermor was the master of the esoteric, and sympathy was his muse.

The best travel writing appears when an author comes from a perspective of near-total immersion in a place, which is what Fermor did so well. He was also mostly self-taught, which gives his writing its freshness. It is full of

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IN MODERN AMERICA

The McDevitt Center for Creativity and Innovation at Le Moyne College announces the continuation of a major initiative devoted to "Science and Religion in Modern America." The initiative brings eminent scholars from the sciences and the humanities to Le Moyne to offer their reflections on central aspects of the dynamic relationship between science and religion. Embodying Le Moyne's Catholic and Jesuit commitment to seek the unity of all knowledge, "Science and Religion in Modern America" represents a compelling model for informed and respectful conversation about these critically important issues.



Schedule of Talks for Fall 2013:

Tuesday, Sept. 24 Emergence: Systems, Organisms, Persons

Presenter: Nancey Murphy, Ph.D., Professor of Christian Philosophy, Fuller Theological Seminary

Thursday, Oct. 24 Does Evolution Have a Purpose?

Presenter: Michael Ruse, Ph.D., Professor and Director of the History and Philosophy of Science Program, Department of Philosophy, Florida State University

Tuesday, Nov. 19 Seeking a Theology Earth Can Live With

Presenter: Anne M. Clifford, Ph.D., Msgr. James A. Supple Chair of Catholic Studies, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Iowa State University

These events are free and open to the public. They will begin at 7 p.m. and will be held in the Panasci Family Chapel on the Le Moyne College campus.

For more information, contact the McDevitt Center for Creativity and Innovation at (315) 445-6200 or mcdevittcenter@lemoyne.edu, or visit the center online at www.lemoyne.edu/mcdevitt.

Previous talks in the series – by Francisco Ayala, Roger Haight, Thomas Tracy, J. Matthew Ashley, and Robert John Russell – are available for viewing at the McDevitt Center website at www.lemoyne.edu/mcdevitt.

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discovery. Most of all, Fermor came to know Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Eastern Orthodoxy. He became famous for asides on every imaginable Serbian dish, theological debate (I quote him on the *filioque* controversy in a book coming out next year) and monastic custom. He experienced it all firsthand.

His friend, Lawrence Durrell, recounted in a memoir how close Fermor was to the culture he adopted: "After a splendid dinner by the fire he starts singing, songs of Crete, Athens, Macedonia. When I go out to refill the ouzo bottle...I find the street completely filled with people listening in utter silence and darkness. Everyone seems struck dumb. 'What is it?' I say.... 'Never have I heard of Englishmen singing Greek songs like this!' Their reverent amazement is touching; it is as if they want to embrace Paddy wherever he goes."

But that was then. The genre of travel writing is now dominated by different tactics and varying concerns. There are, for example, a variety of ways technology has changed today's writers. Consider translation apps on iPhones; then imagine Paddy Fermor using one. Not a chance. There are no pragmatic shortcuts to real cultural understanding. A voice-activated mobile phone may help you converse with the locals, but it won't allow you to learn anything that lasts.

There is more travel writing than ever before. Robert MacFarlane, Britain's best travel writer today, is sometimes compared to Patrick Leigh Fermor. His latest, **The Old Ways: A Journey on Foot**, was a bestseller in Britain but barely made a ripple over here. MacFarlane writes exquisite sentences, and they reflect deep thinking about walking from place to place. That's unusual today and resembles Thoreau more than the essays one finds each year in **The Best American Travel Writing**. The B.A.T.W. 2012 volume included

essays first published in periodicals devoted to travel literature, like National Geographic, The American Scholar, The Hudson Review and The Believer. But I think its finest was "Memento Mori," by the Bulgarian Dimiter Kenarov. It is a reflection on death, funerals and necrologues, and I had a hard time imagining why it was included in a book of travel writing. I also recently enjoyed Sara Maitland's beautiful **From the Forest: A Search for the Hidden Roots of Our Fairy Tales**, in which she combines walks in European forests with examinations of how forests and other deep and dark places give meaning to common fairy tales. Like many works in the genre today, Maitland's is as much cultural anthropology, literary criticism and spirituality as it is travel.

Finally, the **New Yorker** magazine's

annual "Journeys" issue has featured some of the best travel writing of the last half century. We first read Mencken on Jerusalem, Matthiessen in Tanzania and Leibling revisiting Normandy in those pages. But after Paddy, there is no mold left of what makes great travel writing. The sky is the limit. Which is why, for sheer storytelling verve and fresh interest, my favorite in the April 2013 "Journeys" issue was by Burkhard Bilger, "The Martian Chroniclers," about the men and women who are leading the way of exploration to Mars. Perhaps outer space is the true, final wilderness.

JON M. SWEENEY writes frequently for *America*. On Oct. 15, Jericho Books will publish his next book, co-written with his wife, Rabbi Michal Woll: *Mixed-Up Love: Relationships, Family, and Religious Identity in the 21st Century*.

BOOKS | JOSEPH P. CREAMER

DEFENDER OF THE FAITH?

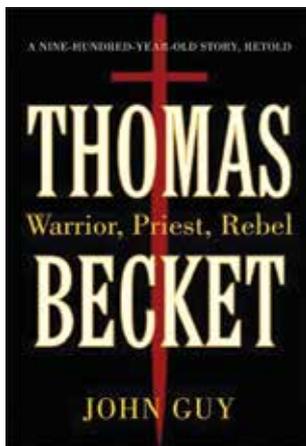
THOMAS BECKET Warrior, Priest, Rebel

By John Guy
Random House. 448p \$35

When the murderers of Archbishop Thomas Becket sliced off the top of his head and scattered his brains on the pavement stones of Canterbury Cathedral, they could hardly have imagined the fascination their victim's life would attract for centuries to come. The son of a prosperous London merchant, Becket had risen rapidly to become the chancellor of England and later archbishop of Canterbury. In his position as the leading royal official of the kingdom, he quickly

formed a close bond with the young King Henry II and became his trusted advisor. After Henry appointed him archbishop, however, he unexpectedly resigned the chancellorship. Becket and Henry's friendship soon soured, and conflict over the respective rights of church and crown arose. As the dispute escalated, Henry tried Becket on trumped up charges of embezzlement, leading to Becket's flight from England, not to return for six years.

In a vivid new biography of Becket, the Tudor historian John Guy clearly and concisely traces the steps of the long and complicated controversy, as well as its role in international politics. Guy sets out



to draw a balanced portrait of Becket, sifting the hagiographers' accounts and the post-Reformation biases of English historians. A confessional divide overshadowed interpretations of Becket ever since another King Henry VIII declared Becket a traitor to king and country. Henry VIII destroyed Becket's shrine and attempted to erase all images and mention of him in England. Even in the 20th century, English historians concluded that Becket was the cause of his own troubles, picking fights and remaining obstinate when compromise was needed. Becket's speedy rise from commoner to chancellor had made him arrogant and proud, these critics say; he was no saint, but brought on his own martyrdom through his self-righteousness. Guy does not play the blame-the-victim game. He balances the duplicitous and untrustworthy behavior of Henry II with attention to Becket's missteps and failures.

Guy tries to show that Becket was "far from saintly or infallible." He avoids "the trap" Becket's hagiographers' fell into—of "writing the history of the saint without his shadow." Guy intends to humanize St. Thomas, a sometimes necessary task for saints since their holiness is often emphasized at the expense of their humanity. But Becket was, in fact, one of the most fallible of saints. Because of his notoriety as a luxury-loving, extravagant social climber, his hagiographers were forced to acknowledge many facts that they might otherwise have omitted. They noted that Becket loved hunting and falconry—the elite sports of the time. They are forced to address the fact that, as King Henry II's chancellor, Becket led an army in battle and forced questionable royal taxes on the church.

His hagiographers had to admit that even after Becket became archbishop of Canterbury and resigned the chancellorship, he made a number of mistakes in his dealings with King Henry, foremost among them his loss

ST. CATHERINE UNIVERSITY

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NATIONAL INITIATIVE ON CATHOLIC SISTERS

St. Catherine University seeks a full-time Executive Director to lead a significant project focused on contemporary women religious. The project will employ digital and social media as a principal mode for sharing information, inspiring discussion and encouraging action. This leader must be comfortable with the influential role of social and digital media in the lives of young women, someone who values collaboration as a "way of being," and an innovator who will engage collaborators both within the University and across the nation.

St. Catherine University is the host institution for this venture. Funded by a major foundation, the Executive Director will oversee design, development and launching of National Catholic Sisters Week as part of Women's History Month. The project will span at least three years, encompass a budget of approximately \$3 million dollars, and may be extended upon successful achievement of its proposed outcomes. The Director will report to the University president in work that will engage faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate student interns, as well as professional collaborators across the nation.

The funders envision a campaign of national scope to inspire women to consider religious life. This initiative will build upon the 2014 Women's History Month theme: "*Women of Character, Courage and Commitment.*" To achieve the initiative's goals, St. Kate's expects to actively engage universities, religious congregations, and other organizations and collaborators.

This initiative will center on the contributions of women religious in five areas: education, social change, healthcare, the Church and spiritual life, and women's leadership. Key elements include: a dynamic and evolving website and corresponding digital campaign; a broad spectrum of oral histories of women religious developed by university students as interviewers, film makers and writers; a significant documentary developed in collaboration with National Public Television; web-based curriculum materials for middle school, high school and college women; and a series of creative events to bring together young women and women religious.

About St. Kate's

Enrolling over 5000 students on two campuses in the Twin Cities and one of the world's largest and most comprehensive baccalaureate colleges for women, St. Kate's prepares women to lead and influence. A culture of engagement, collaboration and creativity permeates the campuses, and the mission of the founding Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet deeply influences St. Catherine's spirit, culture and operations. President Andrea Lee, IHM is an experienced leader with significant contacts across the country.

The successful candidate will join an energetic and vibrant campus community and lead an initiative that has already captured the imagination of many at St. Kate's. St. Kate's liturgies are well known for their beauty and inspirational quality; the campus is beautiful and safe; and women's leadership is evident everywhere. With the province headquarters of the Sisters of St. Joseph next door and deep respect for the Sisters' mission undeniably evident on campus, kindred spirits abound. The University's main campus is located in a residential neighborhood within a vibrant, highly educated urban community. Salaries are competitive and include a generous benefit package.

Qualifications

Because of this initiative's unique nature, preference will be extended to a woman religious or Catholic lay woman to lead this project. Comfort within the worlds of communications, marketing and digital media is essential. The successful candidate will demonstrate abiding respect and admiration for contemporary women religious and the ability to accomplish the following:

- move a compelling vision to action;
- manage "multiple balls in the air";
- reflect a spirit of innovation, creativity and joy in her work and relationships;
- hire, lead and oversee staff;
- sustain a diverse array of relationships with women religious, university faculty and student interns;
- inspire, organize and lead collaborators at St. Kate's and around the country;
- work creatively with professionals in marketing, communications and digital media;
- engage undergraduate and graduate students in meaningful work;
- take initiative and achieve results on time and on budget; and
- adapt and improve the project as it moves forward.

In short, we seek a thoughtful self-starter, a leader of energy and vision, one committed to delivering measurable and meaningful outcomes for this exciting venture.

Applications, nominations and inquiries may be sent electronically to **Stacy Jacobson, Executive Assistant to the President**, at ssjacobson@stkate.edu. Please note **Sisters' Initiative** in the subject line. Include a resume and letter of application addressing interest, skills, education, personal qualities and experience that particularly qualify the candidate or nominee. Nominations should include relevant contact information. This position is available immediately and will remain open until filled, but applications received by **September 15** will receive priority attention. Prior to September 1, clarifying questions may be sent by email to the above address.

Smoke-free campuses

of nerve at the Council of Clarendon, where he swore an oath to uphold Henry's customs, which limited the church's freedom, and then reversed himself immediately.

In his attempt to humanize Becket, Guy dismisses the question of whether, despite his faults and foibles, Becket was a true martyr and saint. Guy comments that the search

for an answer has been "fruitless" and that Becket's worldly wise friend John of Salisbury would find Becket's canonization "utterly absurd." John of Salisbury was aware of Becket's faults from years of working closely with him, but Guy's claim is incompatible with the fact that John wrote a saint's life in support of Becket's cause for canonization.

John of Salisbury and all of Becket's friends were shocked by his murder. They could only try to explain things from the vantage point of his martyrdom. Looking back over his life, they began to see the signs of change and conversion without which his bravery in the face of martyrdom would have been inexplicable. How else could they reconcile his less than saintly behavior with his final courageous stand for the church's rights? As they considered his life, they noted changes in his religious observance and devotion that occurred after he became archbishop. They argued that his resignation of the chancellorship after becoming archbishop showed that he placed his responsibility to the church first and foremost, and they were not wrong to do so, since archbishops before and since often held both offices.

What one makes of Becket's life and character turns significantly on one's assumptions about a person's ability to change, especially to change for the better. As the great medieval historian and Benedictine David Knowles remarked, Becket did not so much convert as belatedly accept his priestly vocation to defend the church, even to the point of death.

Guy may not find the question of Becket's conversion compelling, but I believe his readers will, and with Guy's readable biography in hand, they will be able to decide for themselves if Becket truly was a saint.

JOSEPH P. CREAMER teaches history and is the senior dean of Fordham College at Lincoln Center in New York City.

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Who's Missing?

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), SEPT. 15, 2013

Readings: Ex 32:7-14; Ps 51:3-19; 1 Tm 1:12-17; Lk 15:1-32

"I will rise and go to my father" (Lk 15:18)

When you're lost, it's good to be missed; it's even better to be found. At the heart of spiritual lostness, though, is our collusion in our own absence. People are not inanimate objects like coins, things that can fall unwittingly into corners, nor are they like sheep, animals with limited understanding of the repercussions of their wandering ways. When people stray spiritually, they act with free will, although it can be restricted by previous experiences, ignorance and naïveté. Still, people walk away from God, generally because we are convinced we know better than God does what is best for us.

During the Exodus, God spoke to Moses, saying: "Go down at once to your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, for they have become depraved. They have soon turned aside from the way I pointed out to them, making for themselves a molten calf and worshiping it, sacrificing to it and crying out, 'This is your God, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt!'"

Should we file this under "How soon they forget" or "What have you done for me lately"? Moses intervenes, imploring God to preserve the people about whom God had said, "I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky," and the Lord "relented in the punishment he had threatened to inflict on his people."

It is not that God in the Old Testament is hungry to punish the people of Israel,

or wrongdoers in general; God is not pulled back from the fight, screaming, "Let me at them," conjuring up some other plan to wreak deadly revenge. The issue is what we deserve. The biblical accent can fall on what we have earned through our own stubborn behavior and God's merciful relenting, as in Exodus, or it can fall on God's merciful search for those who are lost because of their own stubborn behavior. Wherever the accent falls, the word is always mercy and the necessity is the turn back to God.

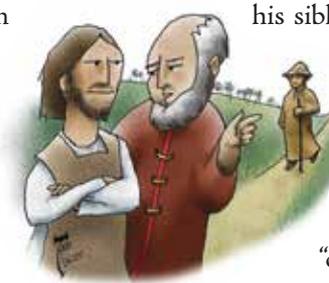
Jesus tells a story of two lost sons, the younger one, who has wandered far from home and "squandered his inheritance," and the older one, who has stayed near his father on his estate. The youngest son winds up wasting his inheritance and living with pigs, eating the husks of pig food. At some point the wandering son realizes it is time to go home and beg for mercy from his father. He has not lost only his money; he has lost himself. The father spies him from a long way off, runs to his son, embraces him and kisses him.

But it was when the younger son recognized that he was lost, that he had made choices that reduced him to physical and spiritual poverty, that he could repent and be found. It was only then that he

could come home to be showered not with reproach but with mercy.

The older son is another matter. He has remained near to his father, but it seems he is not close to him. He resents his younger brother coming home to a feast and his father for throwing the feast. He is angry that mercy has been shown, and when his father comes to plead with him to celebrate, he spews out the grievances he has been nursing for many years: "Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders."

The older brother cannot celebrate his sibling's return because he has no joy in the father's presence. Life with father has been a burden, an unwelcome task, a plodding life in which he has struggled not to "disobey your orders." Can



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Place yourself in the parable of the two sons. Which son (or daughter) are you and what do you need to grasp or let go in order to celebrate?

the older son see that he is lost? You can only be found when you know you are lost and it is time to come home.

Many of us fall into the category of the older son, but it does not matter where we are as long as we make it home, for either "you are here with me always; everything I have is yours" or "we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found." Party at God's house. Everyone's invited.

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Commending Dishonesty?

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), SEPT. 22, 2013

Readings: Am 8:4–7; Ps 113:1–8; 1 Tm 2:1–8; Lk 16:1–13

“How much do you owe my master?” (Lk 16:5)

I am not alone in considering Jesus’ parable of the dishonest (or unrighteous) manager (or steward, *oikonomos*) the most difficult, complex and confusing of all Jesus’ parables. The reason for this is simple: in the first verse of the parable, after determining that the manager is “squandering his property,” the rich man relieves him of his position; but after the manager subsequently and unilaterally reduces the payments owed to the rich man by his debtors, the rich man praises his fired steward “for acting prudently.”

How are we to balance his loss of position with the commendation? And what exactly did he do to deserve commendation? Does the manager get a reference letter even after being fired for slashing the liability of his master’s debtors?

The tensions in this parable work because we struggle to understand how everyone fits in this scenario. Does the rich man represent God? Who are the debtors? Do they represent everyone in relationship to God? Or are these specifically followers of Jesus? But who is the manager? If the rich man represents God, does the manager stand for the leadership of the church?

More important than wondering what or who every character in the parable represents, however, is the question of how to understand the whole notion of debt. In this parable the debt is measured by jugs of olive oil and bushels of wheat; but often when Jesus talks about debt, he is referring to spiritual debt. On the other hand, throughout Luke’s Gospel, how peo-

ple use their possessions and resources has implications and repercussions for their spiritual health.

It is true that the final verses offer explanations of the parable, but while these verses offer valuable insight into the contrast between money and true spiritual wealth and the need to be honest in all dealings, large and small, they do not answer the central problem of the parable: why is the dishonest manager commended?

It is important first of all to understand the role of the ancient steward, who managed whole estates for absentee landlords, including the tenant farmers, but was often a slave born on the estate, as explained by the Roman agricultural writer Columella (first-century A.D.). The *oikonomos* had a degree of freedom in how he ran the estate, but he was ultimately answerable to the owner. Earlier in Luke (12:40–42), Peter asked Jesus to explain a parable about the return of the Son of Man and whether the parable was “for us,” the apostles, “or for everyone.” Jesus replied, “Who then is the faithful and prudent manager [*oikonomos*] whom his master will put in charge of his slaves, to give them their allowance of food at the proper time?” It seems likely, then, that the manager in this parable stands for leaders who represent Jesus in his absence.

The “squandering of property” (the same verb is used in Lk 15:13 to describe the younger son’s wastefulness) for which the manager is dismissed has not to do so much with actual olive oil or wheat, but with the mistreatment of the

tenants of the estate by the manager, who have had their debt enlarged to meet his needs, not those of the rich man. This is why the reduction of the tenants’ debts, the lessening of their burden, leads ultimately to commendation for the manager, even as he loses his position.

Of true value to the rich man, God, is not wheat or olive oil, but the care of his tenants laboring in his fields. When the manager reduces the debt of the farmers, he finally understands the nature of true wealth and the nature of his master, the rich man. Yes, the *oikonomos* wanted to improve his own

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Imagine yourself sitting alongside Jesus as he tells the parable of the dishonest manager. What debts do you need to forgive?

position, but in so doing he genuinely released debt. The debtors have debt forgiven, and the relationship between the owner of the estate and his tenant farmers is improved. Forgiveness has eternal value.

The lesson of the lessening, after all, is not for the characters in the parable, but for us. If it is valuable for us as leaders or members of the church to forgive the debts of others as a last minute gambit to save our skin, how much more valuable is it not to pile up debt against others to begin with but to forgive radically from the start? How much do you owe me? How much do you owe my master? I can’t even remember.

JOHN W. MARTENS



ONE MAN'S SHIP

IS ANOTHER

MAN'S PARISH.



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