America
THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REVIEW
OCT. 27 2014 $3.50

Identity Politics

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN FAITH IS PUT TO A VOTE?

ROBERT DAVID SULLIVAN

OF MANY THINGS

America's marketing department likes to remind people that at the time of my appointment, I was the youngest editor in chief in the magazine's history. It's not, however, as impressive as it sounds. For one thing, the Catholic priesthood is one of the few places where 40 is actually considered young. My nieces and nephews, for example, a couple of whom have just started college, probably think that I'm more than a little out of touch. They listen respectfully but with healthy skepticism whenever I talk about my own university years. I don't blame them.

In my middle age, I find it increasingly difficult to say anything of significance to someone under the age of 30 that doesn't sound patronizing to my own ear the very moment it passes my lips. I have a different though related feeling whenever I'm called upon to counsel someone who is much older than I and yet, strangely enough, calls me father. Yes, it's obviously all relative; that's clear from a look around **America**'s editorial office. We recently had a summer intern who was born while I was a senior in college; on the other hand, our assistant editor Frank Turnbull, S.J., started working at **America** when I was 12.

Just last week, meanwhile, I had lunch in the Bronx with a man who was serving as an associate editor here on the day I was born: Joseph A. O'Hare, S.J., **America**'s 10th editor in chief and the president emeritus of Fordham University. Father O'Hare was the previous "youngest editor in chief," a fact of which he reminded me very soon after my appointment.

"How's things at our favorite magazine?" Joe asked when he greeted me. I told him things were great and asked how he was getting on. "Better than an Irishman deserves," he said, a classic O'Hare witticism, delivered with a wry smile and impeccable timing. We talked for a while about the magazine, politics and the latest Jesuit news. An hour in conversation with Joe is always an hour well spent.

After lunch, I headed down Fordham Road and boarded a train to Grand Central Terminal. (Not to be too pedantic, but while Grand Central is often called a station, it's actually a terminal because the rail line terminates there.)

If you've ever made this trip from north of the city down to Grand Central, as millions do every year, then you know what a delight it is to emerge from the dank and dusty rail platform into the magnificent, even breathtaking main concourse. Students of philosophy will liken this transition to the ascent from Plato's cave, the journey from a dark world of shadow and distortion to the world of light and truth.

The main concourse of Grand Central Terminal—with its bronze and stone carvings and ornamental inscriptions, all spanned by a ceiling that is 125 feet high—seizes travelers and lifts them up, directing their gaze to something larger, as if to say: "You have arrived in a great city populated by a noble people. Welcome."

Yet Grand Central Terminal is both triumphant and aspirational, a masterpiece of public architecture from a time when our civic culture was neither overly cynical nor overly romantic but simply hopeful. Grand Central is from a time when we believed that we could always be better than what we are rather than already the very best there is. It was a time when we knew enough about our past to cherish it and to allow it to shape our future.

As we head to the polls again this November, we'd do well to remember that young and old alike have something to offer; that if we are to know where to go, then we must remember where we came from, that while the United States is neither the last nor the best hope for humankind, it is a very bright light in a very dark world whose ideals are ever ancient and ever new.

MATT MALONE, S.J.

America | Media
A Jesuit Ministry

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Cover: Catholics pray outside the state Capitol in Austin as Texas legislators considered measures restricting abortion in July 2013. CNS photo/Reuters.

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ON THE WEB

Gerard O'Connell reports from the **Synod on the Family** at the Vatican, and the Rev. James Alison writes on the global **inclusion of L.G.B.T. people** in Catholic communities. Full digital highlights on page 19 and at americamagazine.org/webfeatures.

Mercy on the Mediterranean

"We don't know where to go to cry for them," one survivor told Pope Francis at a gathering on Oct. 1 to mark the anniversary of the Lampedusa tragedy. A year after more than 360 migrants perished in a shipwreck off the tiny Italian island, many families still do not know where the recovered bodies of their loved ones were laid to rest. The question for the international community is: Do we know how to cry for them at all?

Violence and instability in the Middle East and North Africa are driving unprecedented numbers of migrants and refugees to risk their lives on the ramshackle, overcrowded boats of opportunistic smugglers with the hope of washing up on Europe's shores. So far this year, 130,000 irregular migrants have made it to Europe's southern border; over 3,500 have died at sea trying.

To its credit, Italy has launched a search and rescue operation, called Mare Nostrum, that saved over 140,000 people in the past 12 months. But James Stapleton, head of communications for Jesuit Refugee Service International, says that Italy and the other southern European countries do not have the capacity to confront this crisis alone. J.R.S. has called on the European Union border agency to take responsibility and go "into international waters, where most people are losing their lives."

As long as desperate populations are willing to take to the sea, however, some lives will likely be lost. To discourage refugees from making this gamble, Europe should greatly increase its resettlement and humanitarian admissions for displaced and vulnerable populations. Pope Francis prayed "for closed hearts that they may open" toward migrants. We hope more open borders will follow.

A Place to Call Home?

President Obama recently approved a plan allowing Central American children to apply for refugee status in the United States. The program would establish processing centers in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, countries plagued by gang violence. Thousands of Central American families have sent their children to relatives in the United States to escape violence and poverty. In June alone, over 10,000 unaccompanied minors traveled through Mexico to the United States. The new in-country centers are intended to reduce this number.

Skeptics have criticized the plan, claiming it will further burden the broken U.S. immigration system. Supporters of the action have commended the president for being proactive about the border migration crisis. More must be done, however, to provide refugee assistance, beginning with an increase in the number of visas provided yearly by the United States Refugee Admissions Program.

In 2013 the United States distributed 69,926 refugee visas, with the largest allocations made for religious minorities from Iraq, Bhutan and Iran. Only 4,400 were given to individuals from Latin America and the Caribbean. This is not enough. In 2014 the number of unaccompanied minors entering the United States from Central America—so far over 60,000—will likely surpass the total refugee visas distributed last year. President Obama should allocate more visas and provide better guidelines for Central American children. His plan must take into account the recent surge in minors and bear in mind the violent situations these children are risking their lives to escape.

'Coercive and Discriminatory'

The decision by the State of California to require that all health insurance policies cover voluntary abortions is so radical that one wonders about the political calculation involved. The decision clearly violates the Weldon Amendment, a federal law enacted in 2005 to protect the conscience rights of institutions and individuals. Is the state trying to appease an influential constituency, knowing that their decision will not likely withstand judicial review?

The decision is shocking in its sweep. For the first time, California will require insurance companies to cover all abortions, including gender selection and late-term abortion, under the umbrella of "basic health service." In an interview with The National Catholic Reporter, Bishop Robert W. McElroy, auxiliary bishop of San Francisco, pointed to the dangers inherent in presenting abortion as just another medical procedure. "This Orwellian logic is part of a larger cultural and political effort to marginalize the widely shared recognition in American society that the act of abortion is morally suspect on a profound level," he wrote.

Two Jesuit universities, Loyola Marymount and Santa Clara, had sought to remove abortion coverage from their health insurance policies this year. Abortion rights groups complained loudly, prompting this change in state policy. The California Catholic Conference has rightly filed a federal civil rights complaint. In addition to violating the Weldon Amendment, the state's ruling is at odds with the Affordable Care Act, which mandates that the new health insurance exchanges include plans that do not cover abortion. Bishop McElroy is right: the decision is "coercive and discriminatory" and cannot be allowed to stand lest other states follow suit.

Listening to Ebola

First, some perspective is in order. Though this latest outbreak of the Ebola virus has, tragically, claimed the lives of more than 3,800 people, including one victim in the United States, the disease remains terrifying more within the media-stoked American imagination than as a practical threat in most parts of the world. Only one person has become infected outside the West African viral zone, though more desperate people like Thomas Eric Duncan, a Liberian who died in Dallas on Oct. 8, will surely try to escape outposts of poverty in Africa for treatment in more affluent quarters of the world.

Ebola is a frightening disease and its mortality rate is formidable; but in the months while it has been ravaging West Africa, just as many people, if not more, have fallen victim to malaria alone. In fact, easily preventable illnesses like malaria, measles and diarrhea claim about half a million children under 5 each year in Africa, and thousands perish from complications arising from another notorious scourge—plain old, small-type hunger.

The World Health Organization is enduring a good share of criticism for a sluggish response to Ebola, but blame for this unprecedented crisis can be widely distributed. The sluggishness did not begin last spring at W.H.O. headquarters in Geneva; it began decades ago in capitals across the West. The potential for a global outbreak of a dangerous virus like Ebola has been long predicted and various remedies prescribed. The most obvious countermeasures to the threat have been well known, if ultimately ignored—developing low-tech capacity in the impoverished nations of the world to respond adroitly to outbreaks, drilling wells to provide potable water, building up minimum sanitation capacity to prevent the spread of disease and better distributing the world's wealth in foodstuffs. That last measure would not only fortify bodies against illness but relieve the necessity for hungry people to seek out bush meat, whose consumption is the frequent starting point of viral outbreaks. It is suspected that Ebola was transmitted to human hosts through exposure to or consumption of fruit bats.

While Western leaders congratulate themselves on meeting Millennium Development Goals on poverty, an achievement that increasingly appears statistically dubious, payment on third world debt continues to consume resources that should have been committed to mitigating the vulnerability of people in places such as Sierra Leone and Liberia, where Ebola has hit hardest. Now U.N. officials say they need $1 billion to address this latest health crisis, and global leaders are descending on the hot zone with resources and matériel to stave off an epidemic that threatens to escape the continent. But how seriously should such efforts be judged? For far too long, profit has overshadowed need; the West prefers market forces to dictate health care and research priorities. And each year spending on making war dwarfs investments in economic development, a warped prioritizing that Pope Francis has deemed a global scandal.

In "The Joy of the Gospel," Pope Francis decries a "globalization of indifference" and "an economy of exclusion and inequality." He writes: "The majority of our contemporaries are barely living from day to day, with dire consequences. A number of diseases are spreading. The hearts of many people are gripped by fear and desperation, even in the so-called rich countries. The joy of living frequently fades, lack of respect for others and violence are on the rise, and inequality is increasingly evident."

Humanity, he argues, is near a historic pivot. How shall it turn? To a "generous solidarity" or to an anxious, obstinate withdrawal?

The hungry and the jobless cross borders when they have to, regardless of the law. Now the sick are sure to join them. Globalization means there is no such thing as the third world or the first world; there is only our world. If it is true, as some suspect, that Thomas Duncan fled West Africa's quarantine to seek treatment in Dallas, he might have miscalculated. Poverty, poor social prioritizing and diminished health care capacity are not problems in West Africa alone. All the high-tech health care in the world is little use to a person given marginal treatment at an emergency room because he does not have health insurance.

If we cannot be persuaded to solidarity by its moral appeal and the spiritual justness of it, we will be strong-armed into a broken and perilous version of solidarity by the reality of air travel and leaky national borders. If the great gifts of the world and human creativity are not mercifully shared, human ingenuity and desperation will converge to press some other compensatory encounter. It would be better if mercy, compassion and relationships were the driving forces of solidarity, as the church has long taught. But until then, Ebola will do the job for us.

REPLY ALL

All Are Welcome

As a mother of five children, four of whom have A.D.H.D. and two of whom also have an autism spectrum disorder, I am grateful for the welcoming attitude in Brian Doyle's "Suffering Children" (10/6).

I was a squirmy, talkative young child and more than once had to be spoken to (or got that little pinch) in attempts to quiet me. On one occasion, an older parishioner made some comment to my parents about my behavior. My father never returned to church.

I always make an attempt to help other parents or give them a welcoming look as they try to wrangle their little ones. My youngest are 7-year-old twins, and we continue to work on improving their behavior as they prepare for first holy Communion.

It would be nice if everyone remembered that not all disabilities can be detected with the naked eye. If everyone would give others the benefit of the doubt, that people do the best they can, we would all get along so much better!

KATHY VINES
Online Comment

Outside the Box

Re "Sacred Silence," (Current Comment, 10/6): When I was a young, canonically active priest summoned in a custody case, I pled on a witness stand that I had no memory of the suitability of a parent because I could not remember how I knew what I did about the individual involved and whether it was through the internal forum or another means. I completely respect the "confessional seal" in that context. The case in Louisiana, however, seems quite different in at least two ways.

First, the girl was not confessing a sin but rather being "sinned against"—and doing so in possibly the only context she knew to approach a priest in so delicate a matter. Thus, in my mind, reporting her remarks would not violate any seal of "confession." Second, if it is accurate that the advice she was given was to "sweep it under the floor," that was both pastoral dereliction and extremely poor judgment. As the editors suggest, she should at least have been encouraged to bring the allegations of abuse to an external forum with the priest's assistance.

Jesus said those who abuse a child "should have a millstone tied around their necks." This spirit is hardly reflected in an attitude that says, "If you speak of suffering in this box, there's nothing I can do about it."

DAVID E. PASINSKI
Fayetteville, N.Y.

Beyond Blame

Re "Revisiting Remarriage," by Mary Ann Walsh, R.S.M. (10/6): I was troubled as I read the working document prepared to guide the discussion among the bishops at the Synod on the Family. It states the problems clearly, but its answer to almost every one is that lay people are ignorant of the church's teachings and rules and all we need is more and better education and catechesis to solve the problems.

To point fingers at society and the laity and blame them for the problems of premarital sex, divorce, same-sex marriage, use of contraceptives, dysfunctional families, etc., is, in my opinion, the wrong place to start an open discussion among the bishops, even if the facts bear that out in many instances. I see a lot of judgments being meted out but not much talk of mercy or acceptance for part of the blame.

ROBERT KILLOREN
Online Comment

Discriminating Circumstances

Re "Voting on Trial" (Current Comment, 9/29): It's disappointing that no consideration is given to the expenses of early voting in Ohio. The Republicans wanted to reduce the early voting from 35 days to 28 days. Why isn't four weeks of early voting sufficient? Why is it discriminatory? If it truly is a matter of discrimination (as opposed to simply a change of habit), then the factual elements of the discrimination should be noted.

Virtually all of **America**'s readers are against any discrimination because of a clear sense of social justice. But unsubstantiated claims of discrimination in our present politically correct society have by now reduced their own credibility. This result can only be changed by rigorously discussing true discrimination. Frankly, having only four weeks of early voting doesn't seem discriminatory to me, but I am open to the factual discussion of how it is. Regrettably, the editors failed to do that.

DAVID KNOBLE
Online Comment

An Author Responds

In "Building an 'Ethnocracy'" (9/29), Drew Christiansen, S.J., gives a thoughtful overview of my book *Contested Land, Contested Memory* and presents my arguments regarding the exclusion of the "other" in the construction of Israeli collective identity and the damage this has inflicted. What I feel is missing from the review, however, is my accounting of why this process occurred. I believe that the collective memory of trauma played, and continues to play, a significant role in shaping Israel's development. This is a key aspect of my book.

The Zionist movement did not merely grow out of the discrimination that Jews experienced in 19th-century Western Europe. Its roots lay deeper, in the centuries of persecution and violence inflicted on Jews throughout Christian Europe, which continued to manifest themselves in state-sanctioned pogroms in the late 19th-century Russian Empire and which were later to reach their most horrifying culmination in the Nazis' "Final Solution."

What I have tried to do in my book

STATUS UPDATE

Readers respond to "Suffering Children," by Brian Doyle (10/6):

A favorite family story: my niece had to be taken out of Mass when she was about 3. As her dad carried her out, she screamed, "But I love God!" Everyone in church cracked up!

KATHERINE DYKES

I have three small children, and I appreciate the author's main point. But I think parents can draw more lines than simply "no extended fist fights." Squished grapes are a mess to clean up; crushed Cheerios only slightly less so. And your kids' snack isn't helping me teach my child that she can wait. Children ought to be able to survive a 25-minute Mass without food. They aren't just soaking in the reverence; they're also learning how to behave (or not to).

JOSE DEMERIT

There was a time I was embarrassed when my own children didn't "pay attention" at Mass and was bothered by how other people's children "misbehaved." It wasn't until I became a chaplain resident at our local children's hospital that my opinion changed. It was there that I saw many sick and suffering children, many with terminal illness, who could not run and play and do things that other children do—including going to church. I began to praise God when a child would cry out, run out in the aisle or sleep in the pew. That's what healthy children do! Once I "got it," my Sunday church experience was more fulfilling and blessed. I learned it was I who needed to change, not God's precious little ones.

MARY BOKLEWSKI IZAK

is to examine how two tangled histories of suffering, Jewish and Palestinian, and the traumatic collective memories they have engendered are woven through the political and physical landscapes of Israel and inform Jewish and Palestinian-Israeli lives today.

As we seek to understand these histories, we must be prepared to look unflinchingly at the role played by the church for centuries in fostering or condoning the anti-Semitic persecution that eventually gave rise to Zionism, and that paved the way for the Holocaust.

JO ROBERTS
Toronto, Can.

Fairytale Francis

I currently have in my garden that "fairytale" image of St. Francis that Jon M. Sweeney speaks of in "The Real Francis" (9/22). My hope is that it is merely a starting point for what will be a lively discussion of St. Francis in years to come.

I occasionally watch my grandchildren. The littlest, Isabel, early on was quite taken with the statute of St. Francis, which she could see from our breakfast room table. At just 18 months she would squeal with joy and point her finger, tipping her head to the side as if to say, "Who is that, Grandma?" When we had a nice enough afternoon to go outside, I opened the back door and Isabel ran straight for the statue. Their exchange appeared so sweet and genuine, though on the final embrace she knocked him clean off his feet and was quite distraught.

As the months and years go by, I am obliged to offer Isabel a St. Francis that is more than just a statue in "a quiet garden among the flowers," the Francis who "saw the sacred in everyone and everything."

NANCY DRAVES
San Antonio, Tex.

Beyond Baptism

I respect the truth of the indissolubility of sacramental marriage, but I think we have not looked long enough at how rarely a sacramental marriage really exists. Often a Catholic couple comes to my office and wants to arrange a marriage. But it is not the level of their faith or readiness to make a mature commitment that is important, but only their baptism. Their baptism seems to exist in the objective order, like some kind of vaccination, with automatic effects as soon as they consummate their marriage. So often, one or both are indifferent Catholics who manage to ignore the real demands of their wedding preparation—all they want is the church and the ceremony. If it ends in divorce, they must face the torture of a formal annulment case because, technically, they are "sacramentally married."

It is even sillier when we talk about Protestants, who don't even believe marriage is a sacrament. But because of their baptism, no matter the level of their faith, their marriage is assumed to be a sacrament. I find myself trying to convince a skeptical fiancée why they have to put off their marriage until they finish with the long agony of a formal case.

(REV.) BILL TAYLOR
Online Comment

Hidden Disciples

Re "Faithful Aspirations," by Frank DeSiano, C.S.P. (9/1): Too often the ideal for who is a true disciple or a true Catholic has been judged in the same way that the world judges: the more busy, the more involved, the better the Christian, i.e., the extroverts win the prize. This is negating the value and self-donation of all those whose call is to the hidden way of contemplation. Perhaps we should take to heart Mt 7:1 ff., "Stop judging, that you may not be judged."

SUSAN GEMPERLINE
Online Comment

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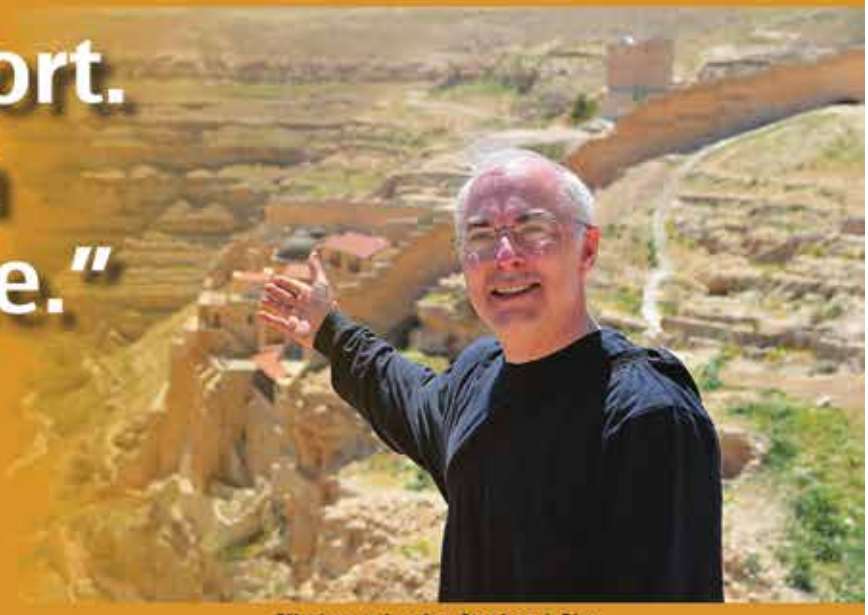

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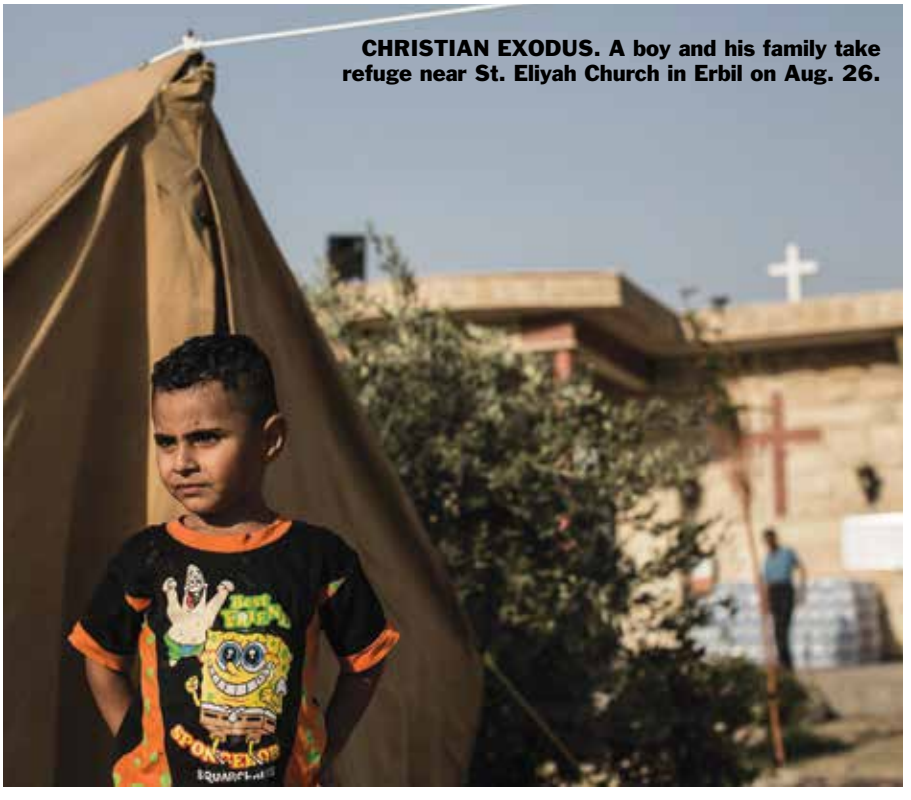
IRAQ

Local Bishop Says Government Abandoned Nineveh Christians



CHRISTIAN EXODUS. A boy and his family take refuge near St. Eliyah Church in Erbil on Aug. 26.

PHOTO: DANIEL ETTER FOR CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

In a blunt assessment of the Iraqi government's response to the suffering of Christians from the northern Nineveh province, a leading Chaldean Catholic bishop said, "Our people have been abandoned."

The Chaldean Archbishop of Erbil, Bashar Warda, blasted both the Iraqi government and local and regional Muslim leaders not only for their lack of material support to Christians following the vast dislocation of the community in flight from ISIS militants over recent months, but also for their unwillingness to explicitly condemn the repression of Christians by fellow Muslims.

"Christians have received no support from the central government," Archbishop Warda said in an interview with the international Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need on Oct. 7. "They have done nothing for them, absolutely nothing." More than 120,000 Christians have fled ancient Christian communities terrorized by the extremists and escaped into northern Iraq's Kurdistan region. Regrettably, the threat from ISIS fighters has followed them even into this regional sanctuary.

Archbishop Warda said displaced Christians in his diocese and the nearby Dohuk region are becoming increasingly concerned about their future two months after being forced to abandon their homes and all their belongings in Mosul and the Nineveh Plains. "The central government is to blame," he said. "It has not fulfilled its commitment to the people. The government in Baghdad received a lot of help from the international community for the displaced people from Mosul and Nineveh—but there has been no sign of it here." He charged that Baghdad was helping displaced Muslims but not Christians.

The archbishop also complained that Iraqi Muslim leaders have thus far failed to unequivocally condemn the violence carried out in the name of Islam and the ejection of all Christians from their ancient biblical homeland. Archbishop Warda said, "The crisis that has hit Christians from Mosul and Nineveh is not just a shock. It is for us genocide. All voices have acknowledged that this is a crime against humanity."

A U.N. report issued on Oct. 2 would seem to support the bishop's grim assessment. According to a report of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, the struggle in northern Iraq finds that "gross human rights abuses and acts of violence of an increasingly sectarian nature, committed by armed groups, have exacerbated the effect on civilians and contributed to the deterioration in the human rights situation and the rule of law, in many parts of the country."

U.N. investigators say, "Members of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities, including Turkmen, Shabak, Christians, Yezidi, Sabaeans, Kaka'e, Faili Kurds, Arab Shi'a, and others have particularly been affected by the situation. [ISIS] and associated armed groups intentionally and systematically targeted these communities for gross human rights abuses, at times aimed at destroying, suppressing or cleansing them from areas under their control."

Citing instances of long-time Muslim neighbors looting the homes of fleeing Christians, Archbishop Warda said many of his faithful felt

"betrayed" and were now more likely to try to leave Iraq. Archbishop Warda, together with other bishops, has coordinated a relief program of food and emergency housing for the displaced people. He said the task of aiding Christians had fallen almost exclusively to the church.

The United Nations reports that at least 8,493 civilians were killed and 15,782 were wounded in Iraq during the first eight months of 2014 but cautions "the actual numbers could be much higher." As of August 2014, the United Nations estimates that 1.8 million Iraqis had been displaced.

SYNOD ON THE FAMILY

Synod Leader Suggests Steps To Streamline Annulment Process

One of the Vatican's top canon lawyers at the Synod of Bishops on the Family says the current process for the annulment of marriages in the Catholic Church could be streamlined and expanded to the benefit of many people whose marriages have broken down.

Cardinal Francis Coccopalmerio of Italy spoke at a Vatican press briefing on Oct. 9. His words carry particular weight since, on the eve of the synod, Pope Francis appointed him as a member of the commission he set up to study the annulment process. He is also president of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts.

The cardinal outlined three ways the annulment process can be streamlined and improved. But to avoid misunderstanding, he began by clarifying that in the case of an annulment one is not dealing with what the church considers a valid marriage in the eyes of God, which by its nature is indissoluble. By declaring a marriage null, the church is stating it was never a valid marriage to begin with; "no indissoluble bond was attached."

According to the cardinal, there have been many calls at the synod to speed up the annulment process. Based on what was said and on his own expert knowledge of the subject, he identified three ways in which this could be done:

1. Removing the appeal process and requiring only one judicial decision in the church's tribunal. The current code of canon law requires the double confirming sentence by church tribunals before the marriage can be declared null. Now, after the first judicial sentence has been issued declaring the marriage is null, there is an automatic judicial appeal. The church cannot declare the annulment of a marriage until the appeal process has confirmed the first decision.

2. Not requiring a collegial judicial decision in cases of annulment. Currently it is necessary to have three judges declare the nullity of a marriage, whereas it would be sufficient to have only one judge for this purpose.

3. Allowing what many synod fathers described as "an administrative procedure," by which the local bishop can declare the annulment of a marriage "for grave and urgent reasons." This could happen even in the absence of external evidence or witnesses, when the bishop considers the couple themselves as "credible witnesses" to what was the actual situation in their marriage.

"I am very favorable to this third solution; it is often the only way forward," Cardinal Coccopalmerio said. "We must adopt the hermeneutics of the pope; we must adapt the procedure to the concrete situation of individuals for grave and urgent reasons." He cited the example of what Jesus said in the Gospel regarding the man whose ox had fallen into the well on a Sabbath; he said Jesus did not abolish the law of the Sabbath that prohibited people from working on that day. Rather, he indicates that action had to be taken here for grave and urgent reasons.

Referring to this "administrative procedure," the Italian cardinal said, "It cannot become a general norm, but it can be a situation in which the local bishop can decide case by case." Cardinal Coccopalmerio noted that people have long complained about the length and cost of the annulment process. Moreover, he said, there are many dioceses in Africa and Asia that do not have tribunals, so the judicial process is not a viable option there, whereas "the administrative procedure"

SYNODAL STROLL. Cardinals and bishops leave the Oct. 9 morning session at the Vatican.

is workable everywhere.

"If the synod supports this, then we'd get a big result," the cardinal, who is an expert in canon law, predicted.

GERARD O'CONNELL

Synod 'Gradualism'

On sexual and medical ethics, participants at the Synod of Bishops on the Family are giving emphasis to the concept of "graduality," a way of thinking about morality that allows for human imperfection without compromising ideals. On the Synod's first working day, Oct. 6, Cardinal Péter Erdö of Esztergom-Budapest, Hungary, said that "Humanae Vitae," the 1968 encyclical by Pope Paul VI that reaffirmed the church's prohibition of artificial birth control, "needs to be considered in light of the law of graduality," suggesting it was unrealistic to expect immediate acceptance of the widely flouted teaching. Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster told reporters after speaking at a session on Oct. 6 that the "law of graduality" is a "law of pastoral moral theology which permits people, all of us, to take one step at a time in our search for holiness in our lives." Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich and Freising, Germany, said that the idea of graduality could help the church develop a new way of speaking about sexuality.

Mexico's Disappeared

Families of 43 students who "disappeared" in Guerrero State in Mexico spend their time praying at the college the students attended. They also worry and wonder about the whereabouts of the students, who were shot at by police in late September and subsequently abducted from a bus. Mass graves containing charred human remains were found shortly thereafter. The disappearance on Sept. 26 of so many students in Iguala has sparked international outrage and soul-searching among many Mexicans. Stoking the indignation have been the accusations against Iguala police, who allegedly acted in concert with criminals. The abductions counter claims by President Enrique Peña Nieto that crime is on the decline and that there's a "Mexico at peace." It also follows accusations that soldiers summarily executed 22 individuals in the town of Tlatlaya.

Priest Released in Syria

Captors released a Franciscan priest who was among about 20 Christians kidnapped from a Syrian village near the border with Turkey. Father Hanna Jallouf was being held under house arrest in a religious residence in Knayeh, a small Christian village in northwestern Syria, according to a statement on Oct. 9 from the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land. The statement offered no further details, and there was no immediate word on the others who were abducted with him on the night and early morning of Oct. 5-6. Brigades linked to the Al-Nusra front, a branch of Al Qaeda that operates in Syria, are believed to have been behind the abductions. A statement from the Latin Patriarchate said there had been no contact with the priest or his captors and that Franciscan nuns who were in a convent in the village took refuge in neighboring homes. Father Jallouf was one of two priests living in the village of 700 Catholic families. The kidnappings come as fighting between rebel forces and the Syrian army increased in northern sections of the country in early October.

From CNS, RNS and other sources.

NEWS BRIEFS

Malala Yousafzai at Girl Summit 2014

The **Nobel Peace Prize** was awarded on Oct. 10 to Kailash Satyarthi of India and Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan, heroic advocates for children's rights, especially the right to education. ✦ In the Maiduguri Diocese in northeastern Nigeria, **nearly 200 churches have been destroyed** or razed by Boko Haram insurgents since August, a diocesan official reported on Oct. 6. ✦ Children in families in which one or both parents migrate long distances for employment and the elderly and spouses left at home must become a "high priority in any **migration policy debate**," said Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, the Vatican's permanent representative to U.N. agencies in Geneva, on Oct. 8. ✦ **Christine Vladimiroff**, a Benedictine sister who is the former president of Second Harvest (now called Feeding America), a national food program for the poor, died on Sept. 25 at the age of 74 after a long illness. ✦ Rulings that **overturned bans on same-sex marriage** in five states will be allowed to take effect after the Supreme Court on Oct. 6 declined to consider appeals of lower court rulings. ✦ "**One cannot be silent**, nor [can] the international community remain inactive, in the face of the massacre of persons," said the statement issued on Oct. 4 at the end of a three-day Vatican summit on the plight of Christians in the Middle East.

DISPATCH | MIAMI

Rafter Redux

What came ashore on Sept. 23 wasn't the sort of high-end yacht that usually docks in affluent Key Biscayne. It looked instead like a floating dumpster, and it was carrying nine Cubans who had fled their communist island. These days that's not such an odd sight for communities like Key Biscayne, which sits across Biscayne Bay from Miami. This year in fact has seen a remarkable spike in the number of Cubans arriving in South Florida on crude rafts.

And it's brought back painful memories for Ivan Camejo.

That's because 2014 marks the 20th anniversary of Cuba's most massive exodus of rafters. In 1994, after then President Fidel Castro said Cuban authorities would do nothing to prevent Cubans from leaving if they wanted to, 35,000 attempted the treacherous passage to the United States. Camejo was one of them.

He almost didn't survive the journey. "For four days," he says, "all I did was paddle and pray, pray and paddle." He and his raft companions faced storms that almost threw them into the Florida Straits. On the last day, they came upon the floating corpses of rafters who had met that fate.

"Many were half-eaten by sharks," Camejo recalls. Hours later his raft was picked up by the U.S. Coast Guard. He eventually made it to a new life in Miami.

So far this year, the Coast Guard has intercepted more than 3,000 rafters, known as *balseros*. That's double the number this time last year.

"It takes me back," says Camejo, who runs the Cuban Rafters Foundation, which helps newly arrived *balseros* secure homes, jobs and passable English. "And it makes me realize how little things have changed in Cuba."

In many respects he's right. Things really haven't improved all that much for Cubans since 1994—when the loss of the Soviet Union's largesse sent the island's economy into free fall. For many life has gotten worse.

> 'The rafter's goal is to become a family's anchor in the United States.'

But the new *balsero* boom is also a reminder of how little things have changed regarding Cuban policy in the United States, where politicians refuse to loosen a failed, 52-year-old trade embargo in ways that might help more Cubans become self-sufficient.

Either way, the U.S. communities that feel the brunt of those Cuban and U.S. policy shortcomings can be found in South Florida. Aid workers like Juan López, associate Cuban and Haitian resettlement director for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Miami, are working overtime. López has been taken aback by the sudden rise "in the number of Cubans feeling the kind of desperation that drives a dangerous raft journey."

The economic reforms that the Cuban leader Raúl Castro decreed in recent years were supposed to put more cash in Cubans' pockets. But the *balseros* who show up at Lopez's agency say it's hardly turned out that way for most Cubans—in large part because Castro, ever nervous about ceding too much control, hasn't taken the reforms far enough.

Still, while those dashed expectations might explain the rise in departures from Cuba, they don't entirely explain the burgeoning number of departures by raft. In fact, the *balsero* count should be down this year, if only because last year Castro began allowing Cubans to travel abroad freely for the first time in half a century—on commercial flights instead of flimsy boats.

The most likely explanation for the persistence of the floating exodus lies in something else many, if not most *balseros* tell people like López: This latest generation of *balseros* has no family in the United States, which means they have little or no access to the billions of dollars in remittances Cuban-Americans send to relatives in Cuba each year. That's money that can start a small, income-generating business—or buy a plane ticket.

"So the rafter's goal," says Lopez, "is to become the person who sets a family's anchor in the United States." That's easier for Cubans than any other migrant group, thanks to the controversial "wet foot, dry foot" rule that gives Cubans automatic residency if they make it onto dry land here.

But some policy flexibility in Washington would help. Were the embargo opened just enough to let American investors and nonprofits channel resources to private Cuban entrepreneurs—especially those with no U.S. family ties—it could ease the destitution that launches rafts. But little change is imminent on either side of the Florida Straits. The waters in between can probably expect more rafts.

TIM PADGETT

TIM PADGETT, *Latin America editor for NPR affiliate WLRN, is* ***America****'s Miami correspondent.*

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Party Favors

Religion is losing influence in the United States, but more Americans want churches to express their convictions on political issues. This paradox is reported in a Pew Research Center study on religion and public life: 72 percent think religion is losing influence, and most see this as a bad thing.

More Americans say churches should express views on social and political issues, up to 49 percent in 2014 from 43 percent in 2010. Those who think there is too little expression of religion in politics outnumber those who believe there is too much by a margin of 41 percent to 30 percent.

Almost half (47 percent) see the Republican Party as friendly toward religion. Less than a third (29 percent) see the Democratic Party as friendly toward religion. The Obama administration is seen as friendly by 30 percent, a decline of 7 percent from 2009. Among Catholics, the percentage saying the administration is "unfriendly" has grown from 15 to 28 percent.

These findings suggest challenges for both parties and Catholic leaders:

Catholic Differences. E. J. Dionne Jr., describing the political diversity and electoral impact of Catholics, has said, "There is no 'Catholic vote'…and it is really important." There are political differences based on Mass attendance, but ethnicity offers a more stark contrast. Divisions between Hispanic Catholics and "white Catholics" reflect differing experiences, ethnic identity and moral priorities. Sixty-nine percent of Hispanic Catholics and 41 percent of white Catholics are Democrats or lean toward that party. Fifty-three percent of white Catholics lean Republican compared with 26 percent of Hispanic Catholics. The church's efforts to speak to and for the Catholic community have to take these realities into account.

Republican Resentments. Pew reports that many Republicans say their party is doing a "bad job" and want it to be more conservative on abortion and same-sex marriage. Catholics who are Republicans because of pro-life and traditional marriage convictions may resent that Republican leaders pursue other elements of the Republican agenda more visibly and vigorously. Sadly, many Republicans want their party to be more conservative on legal status for immigrants, obstructing needed immigration reform and efforts to make the Republican Party more competitive in presidential elections by reaching out to Hispanic voters.

> The task for Catholics is not to wring our hands, but to build a new politics.

Democratic Dangers. Increases in those who see the Democratic Party as unfriendly toward religion reflect battles over contraceptive mandates, conscience rights and religious freedom. A related danger may be electoral strategies that focus primarily on those with no religious affiliation, single women and educational elites, along with African-Americans and Hispanics. This is a White House where Planned Parenthood and gay rights groups have more clout than the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and Hispanic leaders. This progressive version of the culture wars can make the Democratic Party less welcoming for people with traditional religious beliefs. Van Jones, a leader of the progressive left, not the religious right, warned against "becoming this party where you can be spiritual but not religious," which is "going to leave out a lot of people."

The Democratic Party has lost Catholics, but the Republican Party has not become their permanent political residence. Catholics with Pope Francis' priority for the poor and vulnerable may find themselves politically homeless—comfortable with neither Republican economic individualism, which measures everything by the market, nor with Democratic cultural individualism, which celebrates personal "choice" above all else. Neither form of libertarianism leaves enough room for the weak and vulnerable or the common good. The task for Catholics is not to wring our hands but to work in both parties and other institutions to build a new politics that protects both human life and human dignity.

My experience at Georgetown, at Harvard and in Washington, D.C., suggests there is recognition that our challenges are not just economic, military or political but also moral, ethical and, yes, religious. This Pew study reports there is openness and opportunity for Catholics to follow Pope Francis in bringing "the joy of the Gospel" to public life. Our faith offers moral principles, civic virtues and priority for the "least of these" that can help to heal our wounded nation and broken world.

JOHN CARR

JOHN CARR *is director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.*

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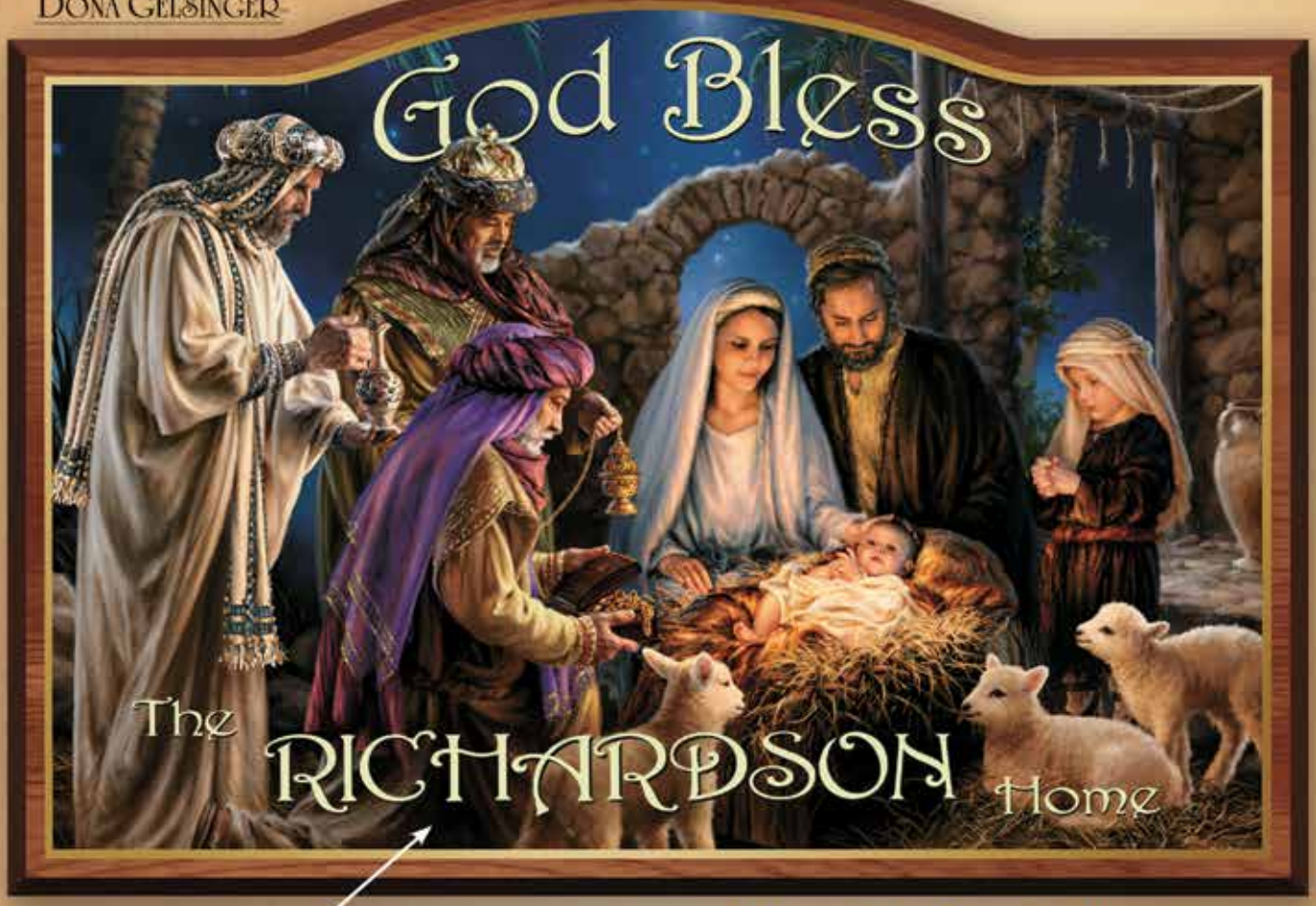

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Identity Politics

What happens when faith is put to a vote?

BY ROBERT DAVID SULLIVAN

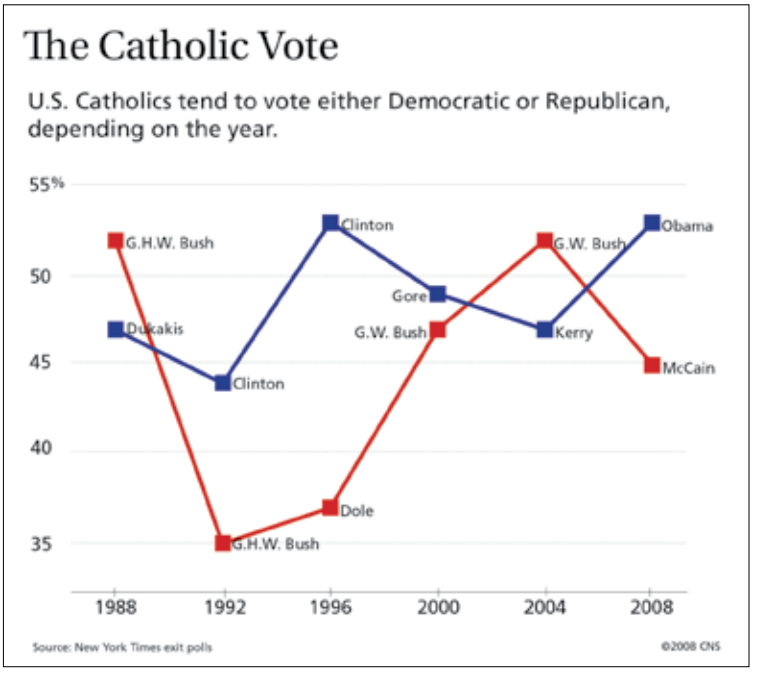
Fifty years ago this fall, the Democrats won their highest percentage ever in a presidential election, and Catholics formed the party's bedrock constituency. Still reeling from the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Catholics voted for his successor, Lyndon Johnson, by a margin of three to one (76 percent to 24 percent, according to Gallup). This was not quite as high as Kennedy's margin, but Catholics became more powerful than ever in the Democratic Party, since the almost universally Protestant "Solid South" was in the process of breaking away from a party it once dominated. With big majorities in Congress as well as the presidency, a Democratic Party that united racial and religious minorities (African-Americans and Jews as well as Catholics) had an opportunity to reshape American life.

The United States did change quite a bit over the next decade, but the Democratic coalition fell apart with the very next presidential election, and the Catholic bloc eventually fractured for good. In 2012, Gallup estimated the Catholic vote at 49 to 48 Democratic, and most other polls showed Catholics giving Barack Obama a margin no bigger than his four-point lead nationwide. In 1965, according to "Vital Statistics on Congress," a joint effort from the Brookings Institution and the American Enterprise Institute, 93 of the 108 Catholic members of Congress were Democratic. In 2013, the caucus was much larger, but more divided. This time, 93 (yes, the same number) of 163 Catholic members were Democratic.

It is still tempting to generalize about American Catholics, who make up about one-quarter of the national population. This past May, The New York Times ran an article on the rarity of women governors in the Northeast that included this explanation: "Beyond the region's political culture, the states' demography has also traditionally worked against women. 'They are older, with a blue-collar electorate in an industrial economy and a heavy Catholic population,' said Celinda Lake, a Democratic pollster."

This was a cheap shot, since the article included no evidence that Catholics are less likely to vote for women. More often, there are stories like the one in Politico that ran after Mitt Romney selected Paul Ryan, a Catholic, as his running mate in 2012. The choice "all but guarantees a fierce election-year fight for the affections of Catholic voters," wrote James Hohmann. But his story actually illustrated a split among Catholic voters (some emphasizing "social" issues, others talking about "social justice") that would persist whatever the two major candidates did.

Indeed, most polls show Catholics are now close to the national average in their voting habits and in their views on major issues. "The Catholic vote tends to mirror the national vote, uncannily so," wrote Gerald F. Seib, of The Wall Street Journal, in a March story on a meeting between President Obama and Pope Francis. Perhaps "uncannily" implies an unwarranted surprise at that fact. "Catholics are remarkably—and I mean *really remarkably*—average across major demographic categories," wrote Frank Newport, editor in chief of Gallup, in a blog post in 2013 citing data on age, educational attainment, family income and party identification (30 percent Democratic, 25 percent Republican and 36 percent independent). The one exception was that 29 percent of Catholics claimed Hispanic heritage, compared with 13 percent of all Americans.



ROBERT DAVID SULLIVAN, *a freelance writer and editor living in the Boston area, is the author of* ***America****'s "(Un)Conventional Wisdom" blog.*

Losing Catholics

Polling data suggests that the political fault line in 2014 is not between Protestants and Catholics, but between frequent churchgoers and less committed adherents of all religions. A survey in August by Marquette University of the Wisconsin electorate (who will decide whether to re-elect Gov. Scott Walker, a Republican, this fall) found no significant difference between Catholic and Protestant respondents on most matters: 39 percent of Catholics and 38 percent of Protestants approved of President Obama's job performance, while 33 percent of Catholics and 36 percent of Protestants had a favorable view of the Tea Party. Forty-nine percent of Catholics and 53 percent of Protestants favored raising the minimum wage, and the Affordable Care Act won the support of 34 percent of Catholics and 35 percent of Protestants.

But weekly churchgoers were significantly more likely to favor Republican candidates and positions. There was majority support for raising the minimum wage only among voters who attend church less than once a week, and support for the Affordable Care Act was highest among those who "never" attend services. The poll is consistent with other studies indicating that Catholics who say they attend Mass weekly have more traditional views and are less supportive of government activism than those who say they attend Mass less frequently or not at all.

How did the Democratic Party lose their sizable advantage with Catholic voters? Its position on abortion—specifically the 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision—is surely a factor. Jimmy Carter was the last Democratic nominee to express support for tighter restrictions on abortion, and his 57 percent of the Catholic vote (according to Gallup) has not been matched since. Pro-life Catholics have found themselves in alliance with Southern evangelical Protestants, and it is the Republican Party that has welcomed them.

A broader issue is respect for religion itself. The Democratic Party has gained a reputation as being uncomfortable with spiritual language and values. The Republicans, in contrast, have highlighted the piety of its presidential candidates and promised a greater role for religion in civic life, from sanctioning prayer in school to giving religious groups more responsibility in providing services to the poor.

CNS PHOTO/GREGORY A. SHEMITZ

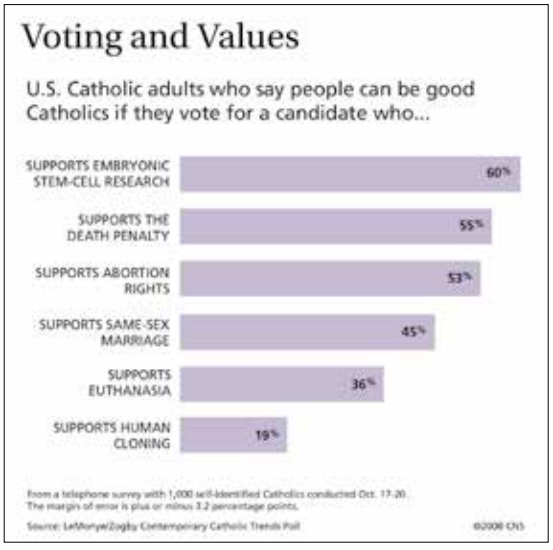
The Republican Party has also been stoutly in defense of the Pledge of Allegiance (including the added phrase "under God") and a constitutional amendment banning the desecration of the American flag. The conflation of religious values with patriotism has long been a characteristic of the Republican Party—"Our form of government has no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is," said Dwight Eisenhower shortly after being elected president, putting both the secularist and the Communist outside the bounds of acceptability—but it was Ronald Reagan who made it synonymous with the G.O.P.

The Great Communicator is the primary subject of Rick Perlstein's sprawling book *The Invisible Bridge: The Fall of Nixon and the Rise of Reagan*, which covers much of the pe-

riod when the Catholic vote became untethered from the Democratic Party. Perlstein's thesis is that the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal, in addition to rising crime rates and an energy crisis, posed some tough questions about the future of the United States, but we decided to learn nothing from these traumatic events and instead turned to Reagan, the enemy of nuance and champion of American exceptionalism.

Voters' Block

After the Kennedy presidency, Americans from nearly all religious groups became concerned with the apparent unraveling of civil society. The former Nixon advisor Patrick Buchanan, in an interview this summer with **America**, said that the Democratic Party's response to social upheaval and its nomination of "amnesty and abortion" candidate George McGovern alienated what had been a loyal bloc: "I think many Catholics of that generation—conservative, traditionalist Catholic union folks—were much closer to Richard Nixon than they were to the elites demonstrating on the campuses or the rioters.... Cultural, moral and social issues brought postwar Catholics into the Nixon new majority."



Writing about *The Invisible Bridge*, Kevin Drum of Mother Jones suggests that it could have benefited from more of an attempt to understand this point of view: "I wish Perlstein had gone a little lighter on his obvious contempt for Reagan and spent a little more time owning up—perhaps uncomfortably—to just what it was about the liberalism of the 70s that finally drove so many voters crazy."

Jimmy Carter—a deeply religious but ecumenical Baptist—temporarily got many of these voters back in 1976, but Reagan was more than adept in appealing to the Catholic vote during the 1980s.

Perlstein notes that one of Reagan's favorite quotations to drop into his speeches came from Pope Pius XII: "The American people have a genius for great and unselfish deeds. Into the hands of America God has placed the destiny of an afflicted mankind." Reagan may have interpreted the statement as more of a blank check of approval than it really was, but citing the pope as an authority was a shrewd way of easing religious doubts about a my-country-right-or-wrong nationalism. Running for the 1976 Republican nomination, Reagan also told an Illinois audience, "I happen to believe there was a divine plan in the settling of this land between the oceans."

After the Reagan administration, the Democratic Party continued to facilitate a divorce from Catholic voters. In his 1990 book *Under God: Religion and American Politics*, Garry Wills expressed astonishment at the tone-deafness of its 1988 presidential nominee: "[Michael] Dukakis was the first truly secular candidate we have ever had for the presidency. Not a 'secularist' as Pat Robertson would define that term, not a militant against religion, but someone entirely free from religion." That Dukakis was the first non-Protestant nominee since Kennedy earned him little headway with Catholic voters, who gave him only about half their vote after delivering strong majorities for Protestants Hubert Humphrey and Jimmy Carter.

Since then, the so-called Catholic vote has been divided pretty much down the middle, reflecting the nation as a whole—still significantly more Democratic than white Protestants, but not as reliably Democratic as African-Americans or voters who do not identify with a specific Christian church. The changing identities and priorities of the two major parties undoubtedly drove some Catholic voters away from the Democrats, but changing economic circumstances must also be considered.

"It's got to do with class," the political scientist Nelson Polsby told **America** in 2004 ("Catholics and Candidates" 5/17/04). "Lots of Catholics do what Protestants do. When they make more money, they are likely to be Republican."

John Kenneth White, a professor of politics at The Catholic University of America, agreed: "In the 1960s, '70s and '80s, Catholics had become part of the haves.... They've got their green eyeshades on and they're looking at their tax bills."

Selective Catholicism

Catholic identity has not become invisible in American politics. It is a constant theme in coverage of Paul Ryan, the Catholic member of Congress from Wisconsin and the 2012 Republican vice-presidential nominee. Mr. Ryan has been making a case for smaller government and more market-based solutions to poverty, but he frequently has to battle accusations that his worldview comes more from atheist perspectives and Ayn Rand, the author of *Atlas Shrugged*, than from his church. "If somebody is going to try to paste a person's view on epistemology to me, then give me Thomas Aquinas," Paul Ryan fretted to Robert Costa, of The National Review, in 2012. "Don't give me Ayn Rand."

Mr. Ryan would not get the support of a group called Nuns on the Bus, which is organizing a voter drive across the country this fall. In covering their kick-off event with Joe Biden (the first Catholic vice president), Jennifer Jacobs, of The Des Moines Register, wrote, "They draw attention to the 'wealth gap,' health care for all, immigrants' rights, nonviolent solutions to conflict, a 'living wage,' housing policy, and not forcing Americans to spend down to zero before they qualify for food stamps, Medicaid or other social services." But she also noted, "They leave issues such as abortion and gay rights to other groups." It seems that the price of admission to the big leagues of national politics is to be carefully selective about Catholic doctrine.

Abortion is a support beam of our newly polarized two-party system, with nearly all elected Democrats on the "pro-choice" side and nearly all elected Republicans (including Paul Ryan) in favor of anti-abortion legislation. As long as this is the case, it is hard to envision a more unified Catholic vote than what currently exists.

The polarized two-party system may be one reason for the rising number of voters who call themselves independent. "Some voters who identify as independents are partisans who don't wish to identify that way for a specific and logical reason," the political scientist Julia Azari, of Marquette University, writes on the Mischiefs of Faction blog. "They might be Democrats who lean with the party in a doveish direction, but break with it on abortion."

So if religious beliefs can influence partisan identification, can partisanship, in turn, influence religious identification? In a 2010 Forum on Religion & Public Life, held by the Pew Research Center, professor David Campbell, of Notre Dame (co-author of *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*), noted, "For many Americans, Republican equals religion." As a result, he speculated, "when asked today, are you of a particular religion, [many Americans] think, well, wait a second, religion—that equals a particular brand of politics. That's not my politics.... Ergo, they report, I don't have a religion."

Because the Catholic vote tracks so closely with national election results, it is tempting to speak of Catholics as a powerful swing group, but slack and elastic may be better adjectives. If you limit the Catholic vote to those who attend Mass weekly, you would get one result, and if you expand it to include Catholics uncomfortable with the "religion equals Republican" perception, you might get something quite different.

"I believe in an America," John F. Kennedy said in his famous 1960 address to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association, "where there is no Catholic vote, no anti-Catholic vote, no bloc voting of any kind."

Kennedy, in fact, owed his election to an almost-unanimous Catholic bloc, but his vision has since come true.

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Friends in High Places

When the Churchills met the Kennedys

BY THOMAS MAIER

Winston Churchill's childhood, at least the first "wavering lights and shadows of dawning consciousness," as he put it, began in the most unlikely of places: Éire. "My earliest memories are Ireland," he explained in his autobiography. "I can recall scenes and events in Ireland quite well, and sometimes dimly, even people." The Churchills wound up there when Winston's father, Lord Randolph Churchill, gained an appointment to serve in Ireland during the late 1870s. It was a predominantly Catholic land then, yearning for its independence from Protestant Great Britain.

In Ireland, young Winston quickly learned that not all imperial inhabitants appreciated British rule. The stabbing of Lord Frederick Cavendish, the chief secretary for Ireland, by four knife-wielding Irish extremists who butchered Cavendish in Dublin's Phoenix Park, became part of Churchill lore. (A visiting former Boston mayor, John F. Fitzgerald, known as Honey Fitz, on a trip with his young daughter Rose in 1908, called the murder spot "a Catholic monument.") Lord Randolph Churchill told reporters that he felt "confident it was the work of Fenians," the notorious Irish rebels.

The adult most responsible for Winston's parenting, his beloved nurse, Mrs. Elizabeth Everett, detested these Irish-Catholic upstarts and their religion. "Mrs. Everett was very much against the Pope," Winston recalled. "If the truth were known, she said, he was behind the Fenians." Naturally, Mrs. Everett's view "prejudiced me strongly against that personage and all religious practices supposed to be associated with him."

Throughout his adult life, Churchill respected the Protestant customs and creed of the Church of England, though he was not particularly religious. Nor did his prejudice towards Catholics seem overt as a public official—except, of course, to Irish Catholics in the 1920s, who blamed him for the brutality of the British Black and Tans armed force trying to stop their war for independence.

In private, some of Winston's view of Catholicism came into play when his only son, Randolph, decided to marry Pamela Digby shortly after meeting her in 1939. Concerned with carrying on his family's legacy, Winston favored this rather rushed union, quickly put together before Randolph went off to World War II. But Winston did have one reservation, which he posed to Pamela in private the first time they met at Chartwell Manor, the British leader's home. Pamela remembered seeing Winston come out of his studio, a short distance from the main house, and walk up the grassy hill toward Randolph and his intended bride.

"Your family, the Digby family, were Catholic but I imagine you are not still a Catholic?" he said, looking at her very severely. "Are you Catholic?"

"No, I'm not," Pamela replied.

The agnostic in Winston, unaffiliated with any church or particular deity, surely did not mind. But the historian in Winston seemed vaguely to remember that the Digbys were Romanists. As a royal monarchist looking for a rightful heir, this possible variance from the Church of England was something he needed to know. He did not want to see religion become an issue. Jack Churchill, Winston's stockbroker brother, had married a Catholic, and their children were being reared in the Church of Rome. Winston's inquiry about her religion seemed to carry a slight distasteful implication: that he was part of "the majority of that type of English person who is anti-Catholic," Pamela later explained.

Pamela assured Winston that he need not worry. She had been baptized at infancy in the Church of England. While their papist affiliation was true centuries before, the Digbys had been Protestants in good standing for years among the peerage, and faithful Conservative Party members, too.

"Yes, you had your heads chopped off in the Gunpowder Plot," Winston now recalled.

"That is right—Sir Everard Digby," Pamela replied. (Actually, Sir Everard, converted to Catholicism by a Jesuit, was hanged, drawn and quartered at the Tower of London for his involvement in an attempt in 1605 to blow up the House of Lords and kill King James I.)

Winston appeared relieved. "That being out of the way—that I was not a Catholic—he became very much on our side," Pamela recalled. "But the rest—Clemmie and my family—were very practical and didn't think it was a good idea."

Love in haste prevailed. The Churchills presented Randolph's proposal as grandly as possible. "Since the age

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FRIEND OF JOE. Randolph Churchill, son of Winston Churchill, and his bride, Pamela Digby, leaving St. John's Church in London after their marriage on Oct. 10, 1939.

of 19, Randolph Churchill has had a varied and sometimes spectacular career in politics and newspaper work," The New York Times reported about the nuptials. On the way to the altar, it was learned the Digby home at Minterne, Dorset, had once belonged to Gen. Charles Churchill, a brother of the great Duke of Marlborough. Wedding chroniclers noted that the two families shared this fateful association with Winston's hero, the subject of his massive biography, as if they were joined by fate rather than mere coincidence.

On Oct. 4 newsmen and a large crowd assembled outside St. John's Church, craning their necks for the real star of the show, Winston Churchill, who showed up in a black felt hat instead of his naval cap. Many friends and relatives cheered the newlyweds on, including the toast-making lord Freddie Birkenhead and Vic Oliver, Churchill's comedian son-in-law. Randolph appeared gallant in his Hussars uniform, while the voluptuous Pamela, no longer frumpy, wore a blue dress and a convincing smile. As they left the church, the couple marched under the raised swords of Randolph's fellow Fourth Hussars, a splendid exit for a man presumably going soon into battle.

Joe Kennedy Steps In

The day's majesty and exchange of eternal vows did not sweep away all doubts about this union, however. After their wedding, Randolph confessed to Pamela that he had nearly married another woman because of the confusion surrounding their three-week courtship. When Pamela seemed to waver in her acceptance, Randolph had decided to keep searching for a bride to sire his heir.

On Sept. 19 he finally found another woman agreeable to marriage and "would have done so but for the refusal of the Archbishop of Canterbury to grant a special license for that day." Looking for an advocate to convince the Anglican head of the Church of England, Randolph enlisted the most unlikely of arm twisters: Joseph P. Kennedy, the Irish Catholic from Boston.

Documents show young Churchill privately approached the American ambassador for this extraordinary favor—most likely to Joe's Machiavellian delight. As with Jimmy Roosevelt, the eldest son of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Joe had tried to cultivate a friendship with Randolph as a subtle way of influencing sons and compromising their fathers. "In middle age he began to take on younger protégés," his granddaughter Amanda Smith later described in her own fashion. "Often these were the children of extraordinary famous and very busy parents."

Joe Kennedy carried his own sensitivities as a member of a religious minority in the United States, then also a primarily Protestant nation. Kennedy believed the patrician president, who had sent him to London as U.S. ambassador in 1938, nevertheless harbored bigotry toward Irish Catholics like him. "I got the impression that deep down in his heart Roosevelt had a decidedly anti-Catholic feeling," Joe eventually wrote in his diary. "And what seems more significant is the fact that up to this time he has not appointed a prom-

inent Catholic to any important post since a year ago last November." Kennedy concluded that "this [anti-Catholic] feeling [was] firmly imbeded [sic] in the Roosevelt family."

Contrary to most historical accounts, Randolph Churchill "rather liked" Joe Kennedy originally, Pamela later recalled. Randolph attended many social events with the Kennedys in London and undoubtedly knew of Joe's friendship with the American Bernard Baruch and the British press magnate Lord Beaverbrook, both wealthy men close to his own father. Furthermore, Randolph's job as a political writer for a London daily made the headline-grabbing ambassador fascinating, even if Randolph was gradually repulsed by his views. "In fact, at one moment, Randolph saw quite a lot of Kennedy," Pamela later explained. "I guess he didn't really like him, but he was a good source. He was working for a newspaper."

To his wife, Rose Kennedy, the ambassador explained that 28-year-old Randolph had sought advice about marrying an actress and that he'd been turned down—only to wed Pamela Digby instead a week later. "Nuts! I call it," Joe concluded in a Sept. 26, 1939, letter home, sparing his Catholic wife any details about the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The decision to seek Joe's help underscores Randolph's personal desperation as well as his ill-informed judgment. Joe didn't consider himself particularly friendly with the archbishop. Rather, Joe was a friend of the new king, George VI, who had confided that the archbishop and Winston Churchill had cruelly drawn attention to "the defect in his speech" during the abdication crisis, according to Joe's diary. Over brandy one night, the king told Joe he felt vindicated after finishing a successful speech at Guildhall in front of them. "I made that speech straight at Churchill," the king told him. (This version differs substantially from the relationship portrayed in the 2010 movie "The King's Speech," in which Churchill encourages the stuttering king.)

If Randolph Is Not Killed

Thus, with no particular patron on his side, Joe could not likely have convinced the archbishop to change his mind about a special allowance for Randolph. Years later, Pamela said, she eventually learned about Randolph's frantic request to Kennedy. "My husband has asked him, the American Ambassador, to use his utmost endeavours with the Archbishop of Canterbury to obtain such a special license," she recounted in annulment records.

Before her own vows, Pamela also harbored doubts about this marriage. She had hedged her bets on success with Randolph in a way that appalled more than one friend and family intimate. Her father's good friend Lord Margesson, the Conservative Party's chief whip, a man known for getting his way in Parliament, "took me for a long walk in the country and did his utmost to dissuade me," she recalled. Another friend, a woman who had known Randolph her whole life, tried to persuade Pamela beforehand to reconsider. "He has tried to marry every girl in London for the last two years," she implored.

No longer a debutante, Pamela gave the most practical of replies. Her answer would set the stage for the Churchills' family life for the next several years. "Well, if he [Randolph] is not killed & we do not get on well together," she declared, "I shall obtain a divorce."

As much as he initially liked the Kennedys, however, Randolph realized the new ambassador's Irish-Catholic background might pose a problem. When Honey Fitz, the ambassador's 75-year-old father-in-law, showed up in London for a short visit that spring, Randolph told Londoners that the former Boston mayor was known for "his excellent singing voice [and] was the first American politician to discover that the best way to poll the Irish vote was by twisting the tail of the British Lion."

In his unpublished memoir, Joe Kennedy acknowledged that the large public attention surrounding him "was heightened by the fact that my Irish-American background and my family of nine children were not in the normal tradition of our earlier envoys to the Court of St. James." His selection was a barrier breaker, a milestone for his Irish Catholic heritage. Both Joe and Rose recognized the immeasurable long-term benefits for their family's future in politics. Besides, Roosevelt's selection of him (regardless of his private views of the church in Rome) was a giant step forward for Irish Catholics, the kind denied for decades in the United States.

"You don't understand the Irish," explained Thomas Corcoran to another F.D.R. aide, Harold Ickes, who wondered why Kennedy politically coveted this appointment abroad. "London has always been a closed door to them. As ambassador of the United States, Kennedy will have all the doors open to him."

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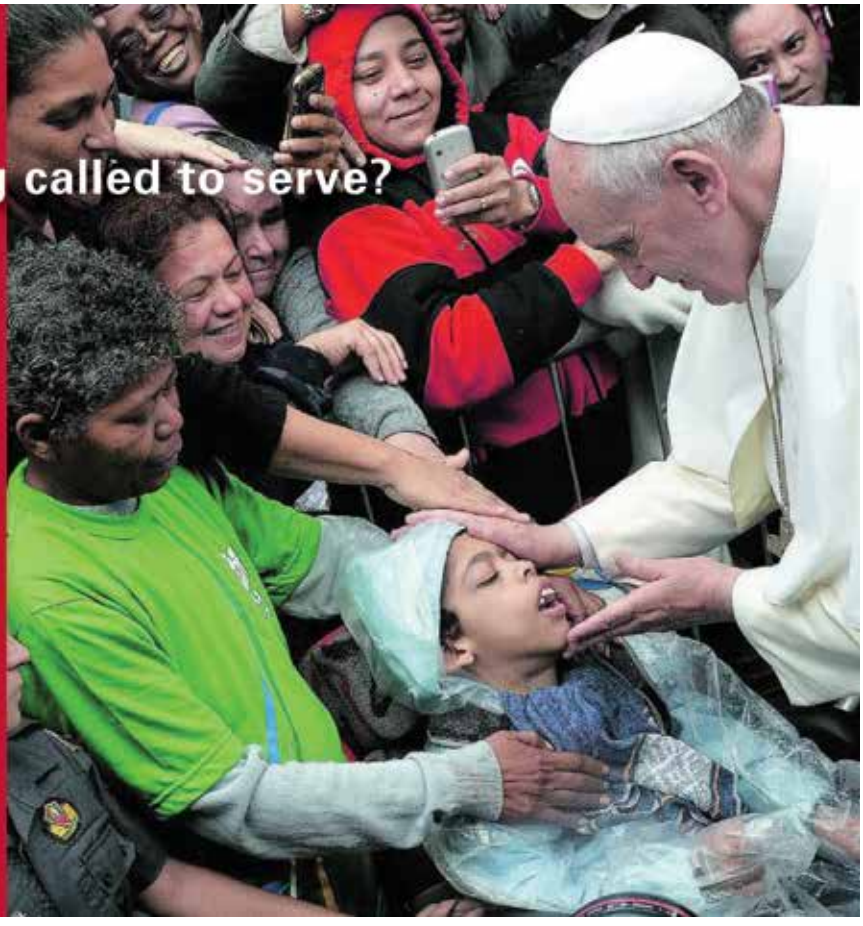

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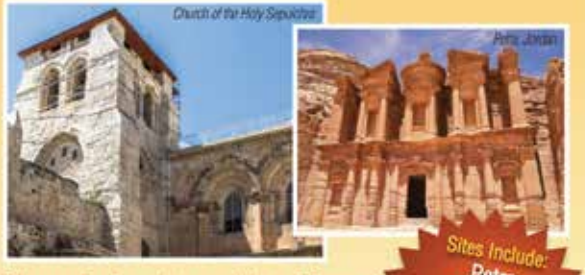

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Interfaith Affinity

The shared vision of Rabbi Heschel and Pope Francis

BY HAROLD KASIMOW AND JOHN MERKLE

Soon after the death of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel in December 1972, **America** devoted an entire issue to his life and work. The idea for the special issue, published on March 10, 1973, came from John C. Haughey, S.J., an associate editor, who explained that anyone who knew Rabbi Heschel "sensed the depth of his exposure to the Presence of God." The same point appeared in the editorial that introduced the special issue: "No Christian who ever entered into conversation with Professor Heschel came away without having been spiritually enriched and strengthened."

Pope Francis never met Rabbi Heschel, and although he is known to own a number of books by Heschel, it is not clear to what extent he has studied Heschel's thought. Nonetheless, he may have been indirectly "spiritually enriched and strengthened" by Rabbi Heschel. A few connections between the men point in this direction. Take, for example, the testimony of Rabbi Abraham Skorka of Argentina, one of Pope Francis' closest friends. Rabbi Skorka accompanied Francis to the Holy Land in May, and in 2010 they co-authored a book, *On Heaven and Earth*. About the conversations that became that book, Rabbi Skorka, who claimed Rabbi Heschel as a "formative spiritual guide," has said that the spirit of Rabbi Heschel guided his dialogue with Francis. "In our live dialogue, one drew from the other," Skorka explained in an email message to Rabbi Alexander Even-Chen. "In this manner, Francis undoubtedly drew spiritually from Heschel."

Another connection exists through Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer (1930-93), one of Rabbi Heschel's most devoted students, who became the most influential rabbi in Argentina while Jorge Mario Bergoglio served as the provincial superior of the Jesuits there (1973-79) and then as rector of the Jesuit university and seminary in San Miguel, outside Buenos Aires. Rabbi Meyer inspired not only Jews but also Christians. He was passionate about spreading Abraham Heschel's approach to Judaism and once said he felt that Rabbi Heschel had "accompanied" him during his 25 years in Argentina.

In light of these connections, we decided to probe what

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Pope Francis has said and written about topics central to the religious worldview of Rabbi Heschel. We found that Francis has a strong affinity for a number of the rabbi's core ideas.

God's Search for Us

One of Rabbi Heschel's greatest and most influential books is *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism* (1955). Like other books of his, it has been translated into Spanish and is widely read not only in Argentina's Jewish community but also by many Argentine Catholics, especially members of the clergy. The title expresses what is perhaps Rabbi Heschel's most distinctive or signature idea: it is not so

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much we who seek God, but God who seeks us.

Rabbi Heschel explains, "This is the core of all biblical thoughts: God is not a being detached from man to be sought after, but a power that seeks, pursues and calls upon man. …Israel's religion originated in the initiative of God rather than in the efforts of man." By this he does not mean that God does not know where we are and is looking for us. Note what he writes: "God is not a being detached from man." For him, God is always present to us. But because we are not always, or perhaps even usually, present to God, Rabbi Heschel suggests that God must "reach out" to us (from around us and from within us) to elicit our presence, our responsiveness. We dwell within the sphere of God's presence, yet God must strive to get us to appreciate that presence. God dwells within us, yet God must awaken us to the divine indwelling.

For both Rabbi Heschel and Pope Francis, pride and arrogance are at the root of idolatrous and ideological approaches to religion, and the key to genuine religious faith is humility.

This idea that God searches for us, an idea that Rabbi Heschel emphasized throughout his adult life, is one that Pope Francis also advances. In his very first entry in the book with Rabbi Skorka, Francis says: "I would say that one encounters God walking, moving, seeking Him and allowing oneself to be sought by Him. They are two paths that meet. On one hand, there is our path that seeks Him, driven by that instinct that flows from the heart; and after, when we have encountered each other, we realize that He was the one who had been searching for us from the start." Francis repeated this idea in his interview with Jesuit journals (**Am.**, 9/30/2013). "We must let God search and encounter us," he said. "God is always first and makes the first move."

The Presence of God

At the core of Rabbi Heschel's Judaism is faith in the one God, whose search for human beings has received a response from the Jewish people, who by living in a covenant with God have accepted the challenge of giving witness to God. But just as the biblical and rabbinic authors reminded the people that their being chosen to give this witness to God did not imply that they were superior to other peoples or had an exclusive relationship with God, the rabbi points out that it does not imply that the Jewish people are the only vehicle of God's revelation.

According to Rabbi Heschel, God is, or may be, revealed through each and every human being. "The human is the disclosure of the divine," he said in his inaugural lecture, titled "No Religion Is an Island," as a visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York in 1965. "To meet a human being is an opportunity to sense the image of God, the presence of God." Although the Jewish people are chosen for a special type of witness, every human being, created in the image of God, is meant to be "a witness for God," he said. Pope Francis sounded very much like Rabbi Heschel in the interview with Jesuit journals. "God is in every person's life," he said repeatedly. "You can, you must try to seek God in every human life."

While it is a traditional Jewish teaching that every person, created in the image of God, may somehow reveal the presence of God, Rabbi Heschel goes beyond this claim in suggesting that Judaism is not the only religion of divine revelation. Speaking about different religious traditions in the lecture at Union, Rabbi Heschel insisted that divine revelation reaches the human spirit "in a variety of ways, in a multiplicity of languages." And in an interview shortly before his death, he said, "God is to be found in many hearts all over the world—not limited to one nation or to one people, to one religion." In the dialogue with Rabbi Skorka, Pope Francis revealed his spiritual affinity to Rabbi Heschel. "God makes Himself felt in the heart of each person. He also respects the culture of all people. Each nation picks up that vision of God and translates it in accordance with the culture, and elaborates, purifies and gives it a system."

In Rabbi Heschel's view, religions may be considered

valid to the extent that they foster awareness of God's love and also love for God and God's creatures. Even non-monotheistic religions may be considered valid to the extent that they foster love for human beings, which, for Rabbi Heschel, "is a way of worshiping God, a way of loving God," as he writes in *Israel: An Echo of Eternity* (1967). Regardless of their theologies, of whether or not they have a monotheistic understanding of ultimate reality, all religions that cultivate such love are, in Rabbi Heschel's view, valid and vital ways of serving God.

In his lecture at Union, Rabbi Heschel said, "In this aeon diversity of religions is the will of God." So far, Pope Francis has not spoken explicitly on this issue, so it is uncertain if he would go as far as Rabbi Heschel. In his apostolic exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel," however, Francis seems to offer something in the same spirit as Rabbi Heschel when he writes: "The same Spirit everywhere brings forth various forms of practical wisdom which help people to bear suffering and to live in greater peace and harmony. As Christians, we can also benefit from these treasures built up over many centuries, which can help us better to live our own beliefs."

The Failure of Religion

For Rabbi Heschel, God may be present in and through diverse religions, yet these same religions often fail to manifest God. He begins *God in Search of Man*:

> It is customary to blame secular science and anti-religious philosophy for the eclipse of religion in modern society. It would be more honest to blame religion for its own defeats. Religion declined not because it was refuted, but because it became irrelevant, dull, oppressive, insipid. When faith is completely replaced by creed, worship by discipline, love by habit; when the crisis of today is ignored because of the splendor of the past; when faith becomes an heirloom rather than a living fountain; when religion speaks only in the name of authority rather than with the voice of compassion—its message becomes meaningless.

To this summary of Rabbi Heschel's countless critiques of religion, Pope Francis would surely say "Amen." As a parallel to Rabbi Heschel's criticism of faith being "replaced by creed" and how "the crisis of today is ignored because of the splendor of the past," Francis warned in the interview with Jesuit journals that "faith becomes an ideology among other ideologies" in those who long for "an exaggerated doctrinal 'security,' those who stubbornly try to recover a past that no longer exists." Like Rabbi Heschel, Francis wants faith to be a "living fountain" rather than an "heirloom." The pope put it this way: "If the Christian is a restorationist, a legalist, if he wants everything clear and safe, then he will find nothing. Tradition and memory of the past must help us to have the courage to open up new areas to God."

Francis also shares Rabbi Heschel's criticism of religion when it "speaks only in the name of authority rather than with the voice of compassion." The pope has repeatedly warned against clericalism, for example. "The risk that we must avoid is priests and bishops falling into clericalism, which is a distortion of religion," he explained in his dialogue with Rabbi Skorka. "When a priest leads a diocese or a parish, he has to listen to his community, to make mature decisions and lead the community accordingly. In contrast, when the priest imposes himself, when in some way he says, 'I am the boss here,' he falls into clericalism."

Since becoming pope, Francis has denounced clericalism with even greater force. In a closed-door meeting with religious superiors in November 2013, later reported by La Civiltà Cattolica, Francis called clericalism "one of the worst evils." This is reminiscent of Rabbi Heschel's claim at the convention of the American Medical Association in 1964 that striving for personal success, when it becomes the object of "supreme and exclusive concern," is both "pernicious and demonic." And the pope's warning to newly appointed bishops in September 2013, that careerism is "a form of cancer," sounds just like Rabbi Heschel's remark in the A.M.A. address: "According to my own medical theory, more people die of success than of cancer."

Rabbi Heschel did not shy away from making harsh criticisms—not of specific people but of what many people do and pursue. Neither does Pope Francis shy away from making such criticisms. But for both men the voice of religion, while necessarily involving prophetic criticism, is ultimately meant to be "the voice of compassion." And for both the rabbi and the pope, interreligious dialogue is urgently needed for people of different traditions to develop that voice and to recognize it in each other.

The Urgency of Dialogue

In Rabbi Heschel's view, one of the principal reasons for the failure of religion is the inflation of its importance, treating a given religion as if it were itself divine rather than a human response to the divine. "Religion is a means, not the end," he said in the lecture at Union Seminary. "It becomes idolatrous when regarded as an end in itself." To assume that there is only one valid way of responding to God is—precisely by absolutizing that way—to equate a religious means with the divine end. About this, Rabbi Heschel was emphatic: "To equate religion and God is idolatry."

For Rabbi Heschel, genuine monotheistic faith demands an attitude of openness to the validity of various religions precisely because it is opposed to absolutizing—that is, deifying—anything other than God, including a cherished tradition that fosters faith in God. "We must not regard

any human institution or object as being an end in itself," he writes in *God in Search of Man*. "A temple that comes to mean more than a reminder of the living God is an abomination." So, contrary to what many people seem to assume, true monotheistic faith means that we must not make our faith the object of our faith. "There is great merit," Rabbi Heschel explains, "in our having no absolute faith in our faith." He said in the Union lecture: "Human faith is never final, never an arrival, but rather an endless pilgrimage, a being on the way." Therefore, Rabbi Heschel asserts emphatically in *Man Is Not Alone*: "To rely on our faith would be idol-worship. We have only the right to rely on God."

While Pope Francis has not gone so far as to suggest that reliance on our faith may be a form of idolatry, he has spoken of how faith can be transformed into ideology, which for him is tantamount to idolatry. During a homily at a weekday Mass in October 2013, he said that a Christian can become "a disciple of ideology." He explained, "The faith passes, so to speak, through a distiller and becomes ideology." Because "ideologies are rigid, always" and because Christian ideology is "rigid, moralistic, ethical, but without kindness," the pope said that this Christian ideology is a "serious illness."

For both Rabbi Heschel and Francis, it is clear that pride and arrogance are at the root of idolatrous and ideological approaches to religion and that the key to genuine religious faith is humility. "A major factor in our religious predicament is due to self-righteousness," Rabbi Heschel said in the Union lecture. "Religion is often guilty of the sin of pride and presumption.… But humility is the beginning and end of religious thinking, the secret test of faith." Speaking about religious ministers, Francis made the same point in his dialogue with Rabbi Skorka: "Humility is what gives assurance that the Lord is there. When someone is self-sufficient, when he has all the answers to every question, it is proof that God is not with him. Self-sufficiency is evident in every false prophet."

Self-sufficiency is also a mark of a false understanding of religion. "The religions of the world are no more self-sufficient, no more independent, no more isolated than individuals or nations," Rabbi Heschel said. "No religion is an island. We are all involved with one another. Spiritual betrayal on the part of one of us affects the faith of all of us. Views adopted in one community have an impact on other communities. Today religious isolationism is a myth." Claiming that nihilism is "world-wide in extent and influence," Rabbi Heschel emphasized the urgency of interfaith dialogue and cooperation:

> We must choose between interfaith and inter-nihilism. Cynicism is not parochial. Should religions insist upon the illusion of complete isolation? Should we refuse to be on speaking terms with one another and hope for each other's failure? Or should we pray for each other's health, and help one another in preserving one's respective legacy, in preserving a common legacy?"

Pope Francis takes a similar position. In an address to civic and religious leaders in Brazil in July 2013, Francis emphasized the need for dialogue "in a spirit of openness and without prejudice." He said: "Only in this way can understanding grow between cultures and religions, mutual esteem without needless preconceptions, in a climate that is respectful of the rights of everyone. Today, either we take the risk of dialogue, we risk the culture of encounter, or we all fall; this is the path that will bear fruit."

For both Rabbi Heschel and Pope Francis, interreligious dialogue is not simply an option but an obligation, because it "is a necessary condition for peace in the world," as Francis writes in "The Joy of the Gospel." Reflecting on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Heschel puts it bluntly in *Israel: An Echo of Eternity*: "The choice is to love together or to perish together." And beyond peaceful coexistence, interreligious dialogue also yields spiritual enrichment for those engaged in it. Believing it presumptuous for anyone to think that his or her religion is exclusively true and fruitful, Heschel said in the Union lecture that "the purpose of religious communication among human beings of different commitments is mutual enrichment and enhancement of respect and appreciation." Cardinal Bergoglio, S.J., echoed this sentiment in an interview published in 2010, when he explained that we can build a true community only by recognizing the value of others and "celebrating the diversity that is enriching for us all."

Pope Francis has inspired countless people of diverse religions and of no religion to seek a path and find a way toward spiritual enrichment. Perhaps through Francis some of the signature insights of Rabbi Heschel are reaching far more people than he could have ever imagined. A

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‘Rough Diamonds’

Pope Francis is concerned about the formation candidates for the priesthood are receiving and is well aware that all is not well behind the walls of seminaries in some countries, and also in Rome, sources say.

The Argentine pope knows there is a tendency in some seminaries to return to a pre-Vatican II style of formation and way of thinking, sources confirm. He’s cognizant of the fact that in seminaries in a number of countries, and in some national colleges in Rome, young men openly, and with a sense of pride, identify themselves as “John Paul II seminarians” or “Benedict XVI seminarians.”

Some ambassadors to the Holy See have drawn my attention to this too and asked: “What kind of priests will these men be when they go to work in parishes or take other posts of responsibility in the church?”

Seminaries are the formation centers for future priests and bishops, and what happens there is crucial for the future of the church, so in this week’s Vatican Dispatch I will take a first glance at what Pope Francis has done and is doing in this area.

In the last year of Benedict XVI’s pontificate, Mauro Piacenza, 69, then the cardinal prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, who was a disciple of the late Cardinal Siri of Genoa and of a decidedly “conservative” mind-set, like his mentor, won his battle to bring the seminaries of the world under the control of his congregation. The move took place in January 2013. Before that date, seminaries had been under the Congregation for Catholic Education.

It was a short-lived victory, however. On Sept. 21, 2013, six months after the election of Pope Francis, the new pope, in a highly significant reforming move, transferred Piacenza from that important post to the office of Major Penitentiary and replaced him with Archbishop (now cardinal) Beniamino Stella, a Holy See diplomat who was then head of the Vatican’s academy for diplomats.

At the same time Pope Francis brought in from Mexico Jorge Carlos Patrón Wong, the 56-year-old bishop of Papantla, a pastor very much in the pope’s own mold, and appointed him to the newly created post of secretary for seminaries in the Congregation for the Clergy. It was the clearest indication yet that Pope Francis wanted to give high priority to the formation of seminarians and of course, with Stella, to the clergy and their permanent formation.

> Cardinal Bergoglio always gave attention to the formation of seminarians.

On Oct. 3, addressing the plenary assembly of the Congregation for Clergy, Pope Francis zoned in on three topics: vocation, formation and evangelization. He described a vocation as “a treasure hidden in a field,” which has to be “discovered.” God calls some people to follow him and serve him in the ordained ministry, “but we must do our part, which is the response of the man, of the church to the gift of God.” Bishops must discern carefully when accepting candidates for the priesthood; failure to do this can have disastrous consequences for the people of God, as can be seen in some dioceses today, he said.

“It’s necessary to study well the course of a vocation! Examine well if it’s from the Lord, if that man is healthy, if he is balanced, if that man is capable of giving life, of evangelizing, if that man is capable of forming a family and of renouncing this to follow Jesus,” he insisted.

It is necessary to safeguard and help the vocation grow so that it may bear mature fruit, he insisted.

Vocations are “rough diamonds” that “have to be worked on with care, with respect for the conscience of persons and with patience, so that they may shine in the midst of the people of God,” the pope said.

“Formation is therefore not a unilateral act through which someone transmits theological or spiritual notions,” he said. “Jesus did not say to those he called: ‘Come and I will explain’; ‘Follow me; I will instruct you.’ No! The formation offered by Christ to his disciples came instead through a ‘Come and follow me’; ‘Do as I do.’

“That is the method that the church wishes to adopt today for its ministers,” Pope Francis stated. “The formation we speak of is an experience of discipleship, which brings one close to Christ and allows one to conform oneself ever more to him.” It concerns the seminarian’s intellectual, human and spiritual development. Moreover, “every vocation is for mission...for evangelization.”

As archbishop of Buenos Aires, Cardinal Bergoglio always gave great attention to the formation and accompaniment of seminarians. As pope he is doing likewise.

GERARD O’CONNELL

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

Finding My Foundation

Faith, doubt and growing up

BY KATHERINE LUCHETTE

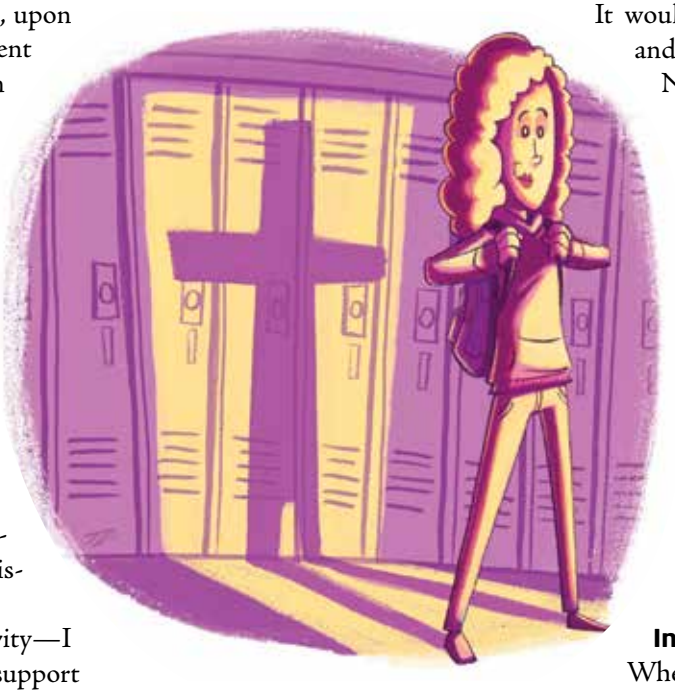
Is God real? For some people, the answer is instinctive. They answer in absolute terms, one way or the other. But there are those who, upon reflection, may lean in different directions at different points in their lives, and who may never be able to respond with absolute certainty.

I fall into the second category. So when I began my freshman year at a Jesuit high school after attending public schools all my life, I felt pressured to make a snap judgment. It seemed that saying, "I don't know," simply was not acceptable at a school full of impassioned individuals. It seemed like an admission of failure or weakness.

Because I prefer objectivity—I like having proof and logic to support what I believe—I was frustrated that I could not find any obvious physical example of God's presence. I had never experienced a miracle; I had never felt an intimate connection to God. No, I decided, God doesn't exist. I was content to remain silent during class discussions, because if I was ever pressed, I couldn't defend my uncertainty. So rather than let myself get embarrassed or backed into a corner, I let others control the conversation. After all, this was not something to which I had given much thought.

KATHERINE LUCHETTE, *a graduate of St. Ignatius College Prep in Chicago, Ill., is a freshman at Brown University in Providence, R.I.*

During my junior year, however, I felt as if I had hit rock bottom. At the beginning of the school year, I was driving four of my friends and we were in a bad accident. I am thankful that no one was injured, but our family car was completely totaled. Given that my parents were finishing putting their fourth child through a Catholic high school and had just finished paying for a third college tuition, the timing was less than perfect. I felt an incredible amount of guilt throughout the whole situation, not only for the burden I had put upon my parents but also for stupidly endangering my friends. It was my responsibility as the driver to keep everyone safe, and one stupid mistake had put all that at risk.



Not long after that, I had a series of terrible arguments with my mom. It would start with little quips back and forth and escalate from there. Neither of us was proud of it, but we could not simply forget what the other had said. My friends, the car, my mom—it was all weighing on me at once, and I sunk lower emotionally and spiritually than I can ever remember being. I could not even begin to sort through everything I was feeling: guilt, anger, shame, helplessness. I just tried waiting it out, thinking I would get over it eventually.

In God's Presence

When I went on our school's junior retreat, I thought I was completing a graduation requirement more than anything else. But one activity on the retreat involved acknowledging the people who bring the light of Christ into our lives and the ways in which we shut out that light. I immediately thought of my family. They had so easily forgiven me for what had happened that I could not even remember what we fought about. Later that night, when we were offered reconciliation, I took advantage of this opportunity and felt an enormous weight lifted off my shoulders.

I could not explain right then the source of this immense relief, but I came to realize that it was a result of

ART: TIM LUECKE

God's grace. I was increasingly aware of my own dependence on the God whose existence I had doubted. When I felt I could not handle everything on my own, I found myself turning toward God.

At the end of my junior year, I chose to go on a four-day Kairos retreat. In the course of it, I came to realize what Thomas Merton meant when he said, "For me to be a saint means to be myself." But most important, I gained a more profound understanding of God's activity in our lives; I found the "proof" of God that I yearned for in my freshman year. Slowly, I began to see God's presence in all things, like a smile from a stranger, and not just in miraculous events.

Over that summer, I worked on building a stronger foundation for my faith. I attended weekly Mass for the first time since middle school, and in October I went on another retreat, this time to deepen my prayer life. It was a two-and-a-half-day silent retreat, which took me out of all the commotion of school and college applications and athletics and allowed me a few minutes to breathe. I learned how to simply allow myself to feel God's presence, taking time to listen to him rather than constantly talk at him. Since then, I have found it difficult to keep my prayer consistent. When things are going really well, it is easy to neglect my prayer, and when I hit a rough patch, I feel ashamed to face him. But when I make a concerted effort to pray, expressing gratitude for my blessings or admitting weakness in a request for help, I always feel more at peace, more at ease with who I am.

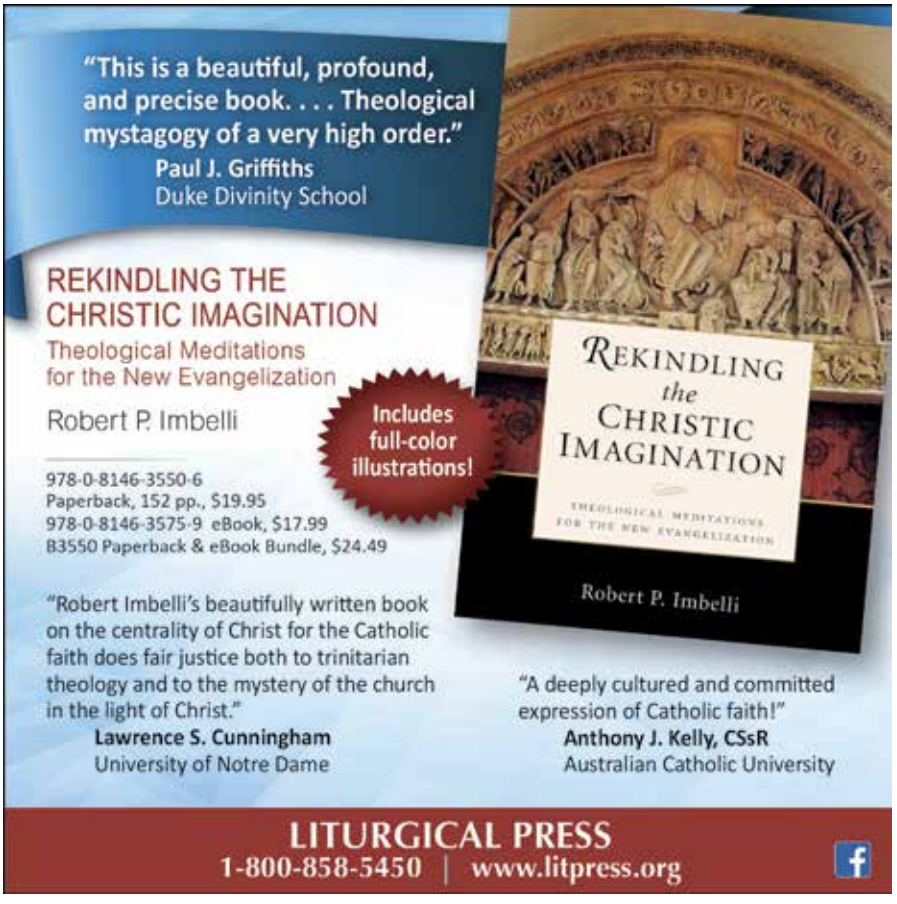
Leading Through Christ

In February of my senior year I applied and was accepted to lead a Kairos retreat. In working with my teammates to prepare for the retreat, I was truly challenged to put my faith into practice. We tried to follow Pope Francis' example of servant leadership, putting our personal interests aside in order to lead our classmates with empathy and compassion. When my teammates and I found ourselves struggling, we knew instinctively to support each other.

Leading this retreat and living with my team in a Christian community gave me new confidence and taught me how to stand up for my faith and my ideals. I tend to be much more comfortable remaining quiet as a scene plays out around me, and I am definitely not comfortable with speaking out or going against the crowd. But I could see that it is sometimes better to make my opinions heard than to remain passive. And often, people respect me more for it.

When I am with my senior class, whose members I have come to know and love over the past four years, it is easy to speak out against rumors and bullying. But I now face a new challenge in my faith as I try to carry those same ideals to college. I face the same issues I did when leading Kairos: remaining steady when confronted with challenges to my faith. My faith and my commitment to being a woman for others will continue to be tested, but I feel that I am well prepared for the challenge. Reflecting on the past year, I know that I can live a life of faith and thrive in a largely non-Catholic student body.

Now I can look back on my time in high school and recognize all God has given me. Even through the obstacles and difficulties, I know that God has given me the strength to fight on. And more than that, my Jesuit education has taught me the importance of centering my life around my faith. As I begin to discern my vocation, I am committed to serve God and others in whatever I do. I feel ready to move on to college, where I don't have required theology courses, but where I feel I can transition into an adult faith. But most important, I have begun my college experience with one conviction in mind: God is very real. A



FILM | DAVID DiCERTO

A SPARK OF GOODNESS

Holiness and humanity in 'St. Vincent'

In *Finnegan's Wake*, James Joyce famously described the Catholic Church as, "Here comes everybody," a pithy tip of the cap to what the author believed was one of Catholicism's defining traits: its inclusive, big-tent embrace of all the faithful. This metaphysical melting-pot, a mystical body we Catholics refer to as the communion of saints, includes not only those who have been canonized, but those who are works in progress. Bill Murray's Vincent McKenna—the eponymous, hard-luck curmudgeon at the center of Theodore Melfi's feature directorial debut, **St. Vincent**—is one such man.

Murray, who has made a career out of crankiness, gets to channel his inner W. C. Fields—colored with shades of Walter Matthau and Clint Eastwood's Walt Kowalski from "Gran Torino"—as a cantankerous Vietnam War vet, about as unlikely a candidate for a halo as they come. Vincent drinks too much, smokes, gambles, curses like a sailor and frequents the sexual services of a very pregnant Russian stripper, Daka, played by Naomi Watts. He is not the sort likely to roll out the welcome mat when a single mom, Maggie (Melissa McCarthy), shows up next door with her timid 12-year-old son Oliver (Jaeden Lieberher) and a carload of emotional baggage.

Deep in debt, Vincent implausibly sells himself as a babysitter to Maggie, who works long hours as an X-ray technician. Predictably, Vincent and Oliver bond as Vincent shows the boy the ropes, including how to mix it up with schoolyard bullies and play the ponies, while dispensing sardonic advice like a misanthropic Mr. Miyagi. In return, Oliver chooses Vincent when his teacher at the parochial school he attends assigns him to write an essay about "saints among us."

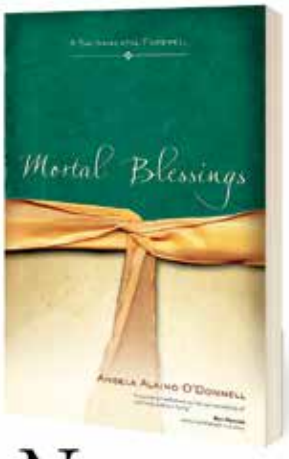
BAD BABYSITTER. Jaeden Lieberher and Bill Murray in "St. Vincent"

PHOTO: THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Melfi, who also wrote the screenplay and identifies as Catholic, drew inspiration from personal experience with his adopted daughter, who was given a similar assignment—she chose St. William of Rochester, a 13th-century Scotsman and the patron of adopted children.

The Catholic novelist Flannery O'Connor lamented our age's loss of "a sharp eye for the almost imperceptible intrusion of grace" into our fallen world, but Melfi proves up to the challenge. Much like Vincent himself, the movie has a tender heart under its gruff veneer; it is a feel-good film with an edge. Sentimental without being schmaltzy, the story reflects a Catholic sensibil-

"Beautiful and beautifully written!"
Rev. James Martin, S.J.
Author of *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*



New from
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ity—an Infant of Prague statue adorns Vincent's dresser, and the male religious all wear Roman collars (even the young hip one)—that evokes an affectionate Catholic nostalgia while acknowledging the changing times. Oliver's classmates include a Baptist, a Buddhist, an atheist and an "I don't know," which his teacher, Brother Geraghty, played amiably by Chris O'Dowd, sighs is "the fastest growing religion in the world."

Geraghty "celebrates" all religions, but says Catholicism is best because it "has the most rules and the best clothes." It is a comment indicative, perhaps, of the overall tone, which tends toward a humanism that defines a saint as: "a human being who has dedicated their lives to others and to making the world a better place." Rightly, other criteria include, "courage, sacrifice, compassion and humanity." But holiness, even as an aspiration, gets only a passing mention.

It is refreshing to see McCarthy's sensitive side, rather than her salty one, and young Lieberher impresses. But the film hinges on Murray, who should merit Oscar consideration. He plays ennui like a concert pianist, turning the simple act of navigating an empty bank teller line into artistry. Raised Catholic, Murray manages to play Vincent as unpleasant but not unsympathetic or without redeeming qualities. In a sense, he embodies Robert Louis Stevenson's contention that "a saint is a sinner who keeps trying." There is even a moving depiction of marital devotion under painful circumstances—though Vincent's a la carte approach to "fidelity" saps it somewhat of its poignancy—and a nice moment with pro-life undertones.

Melfi challenges viewers to look through Oliver's lens of charity and see Vincent's true value, flawed though he is. In doing so, the film earnestly suggests that even the most seemingly vice-riddled soul has the potential for virtue. It was St. Augustine—someone who knew a bit about both—who said, "There is no saint without a past; no sinner without a future."

Observant viewers may catch Vincent stealing an apple early on (a nod to Augustine's *Confessions?*). But there is no *tolle lege* moment. Despite a health scare, Vincent seems content in his ways. But Melfi offers reasons to hope.

Opinions will differ as to whether an impressionable, emotionally vulnerable young boy's introduction to booze, gambling and women is appropriate fodder for comedy, and whether Maggie should let Oliver hang around with an ornery drunk who frequents bars and strip joints. (To his credit, Melfi reins in the bawdiness.)

But questions of parental judgment aside, it is hard to find fault with the movie's compassionate refreshingly non-cynical message as summed up by Oliver: "To give everything and have nothing left to give is the best life you can have." And its central relationship resonates with Pope Francis' theology of encounter. Every time we "encounter another person in love," Francis says, "we learn something new about God."

Viewing the film invites us to consider Pope Paul VI's words, that whenever art revels "in the human condition, however lowly or sad it may be, a spark of goodness, at that very instant, a glow of beauty pervades the whole work." Ultimately, Melfi succeeds in saying something honest about woundedness and the mysterious workings of grace on broken vessels of clay, "guilty of dust and sin," as George Herbert poetically reminds us, all in need of Pope Francis' "field hospital" church and the healing it provides.

"Dumbness does not play well in Heaven," Brother Geraghty quips. After a summer movie season dominated by dumbness, it is nice to see a film that offers something more satisfying. Imperfect? Yes. But then, we are all works in progress.

DAVID DiCERTO *is a Catholic film critic and co-host of "Reel Faith." His movie reviews can be seen at www.netny.tv/reelfaith.*

THE SOUL'S FOOD

On a recent trip to my home town I was welcomed at the door by a stranger, a friend of a second cousin, who was looking after the place during my parents' cross-country trip. Having grown up in a veritable hotel for friends and family, this didn't seem all that strange. What got me was the fridge. Where the oversized jug of Lucerne 2 percent milk that could be wiped out in one Saturday morning once sat was an unimposing carton of organic skim. An array of exotic condiments had supplanted the Heinz. The eggs were brown.

Food had never much factored into my thinking about family. But as I took stock of the unfamiliar contents of the kitchen, I felt in a visceral way the absence of my mom and dad, who were by then rolling through western Missouri. I understood then what many people probably know intuitively: the inextricable link between food, family and community.

For most of history taste, like faith, was passed down from generation to generation, a culinary heritage adapted but rarely abandoned. Today, as in most areas of American life, individual choice reigns supreme, and consumers can choose from an infinite menu of specialized diets to suit their gastronomical preferences. We've got vegetarians, pescatarians, vegans and locavores. You can go gluten-free, raw or paleolithic (think hunting and gathering in the meat and produce sections). And for those with too much time on their hands, there is the all-emoji diet, consisting only of foods found among the texting symbols on a smartphone keyboard.

In much the same way that keeping kosher or fasting on Fridays serves to strengthen religious identity, modern diets can establish the boundaries of a community. When asked if the "caveman" diet was a cult, John Durant, author of *The Paleo Manifesto*, unabashedly responded: "Yes, of course it is. And the world desperately needs more health cults, not fewer.... The old religion was health—health is the new religion." And indeed, while modern diets may have shed their religious roots, the promises made by their evangelizers border on salvific. What's the key to eternal youth—or at least a few more healthy decades of life? Eating 40 percent less food, according to the advocates of calorie restriction. Purify the body and mind with a liquid detox diet. Rob Rhinehart, the creator of Soylent, a complete nutrient product that cuts out the pesky business of eating altogether, thinks his concoction "has potential to feed the world."

The promises made by evangelizers of modern diets border on salvific.

So does the world really need more health cults? There are undoubtedly some benefits to recent trends. For those struggling with obesity and food allergies, finding a supportive health community can be a lifesaver. Choosing a diet that supports local farmers or decreases one's environmental impact is certainly laudable.

But the rise of ever more extreme or particular food restrictions can also fracture family and communal life. In The New York Times (10/1), Pamela Paul writes about the difficulty of planning meals after her 9-year-old daughter decided to become a vegetarian. She mourns the loss of her "once-cherished turkey Bolognese recipe" and hears the voice of a long-dead maternal Jewish relative prodding, "How will she get enough protein?" I started eating vegetarian while in college, and at home I would often make my own dinner if the family was having meat. I thought I was being low-maintenance, but now I can't help but worry that in cooking for myself I robbed my mom of a fundamental way of expressing love.

Of course, we've seen this all before. In the first century, dietary traditions were upended by another radical new cult: Christianity. Community food fights apparently got contentious enough to warrant some stern words from St. Paul: "Let no one, then, pass judgment on you in matters of food and drink.... These are shadows of things to come; the reality belongs to Christ" (Col 2:16–17). His message holds today: eat meat or don't, but do not let diet become a stumbling block to that most important meal, the communal breaking of bread, in families and in the Eucharist.

I had gone to Arlington, Va., that weekend to help my sister pull off the annual Labor Day potluck that my family has hosted for our neighbors for 21 years. I had my parents on call as I made the grocery list, figured out how many bags of ice to buy and prepared my mom's famous five-layer dip. And as we all dug into the familiar dishes we've come to love over the years, it was almost as if they were there.

ASHLEY McKINLESS

ASHLEY McKINLESS *is an associate editor of* ***America****.*

PAPER TRAIL

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER AT FIFTY

The Story of the Pioneering Paper and Its Editors

By Arthur Jones
Rowman & Littlefield. 312p $30

As The National Catholic Reporter marks the 50th anniversary of its founding this October, it's worth considering how long the odds were against the paper's success. From the start, the editors had small budgets to finance their big dreams. Despite meager resources, the founders set out to create an independent newspaper that circulated nationally. They focused coverage on a set of self-described progressive issues, hardly the stuff of long-term, mass-market appeal. They based the newspaper in Kansas City, not in the media and advertising centers on the coasts. And yet, N.C.R. has managed over the years to offer not only detailed and at times groundbreaking coverage of the Catholic Church across America, but also strong reporting from the Vatican, Latin America and Asia.

Arthur Jones, editor of the paper from 1975 to 1980 and editor-at-large afterward, tells this story through the lens of the editors and publishers who captained N.C.R. through both a stormy media market and the controversies of the post-Vatican II church.

Two factors emerge in the book to explain why the paper has managed to continue attracting enough of a readership to survive. One is the quality of the reporting. Jones, who worked at Forbes, notes that many of N.C.R.'s editors and writers over the years have held good positions in major secular news organizations, where they no doubt could have earned more if they so chose. They're pros.

The second is the staff's deep commitment to the Catholic Church and, in particular, its teachings on social justice. "The New Testament came easily to the paper's lay editors," Jones writes, noting that three had been seminarians, one had been ordained and another is a woman religious. In Jones's portrayal, the editors' vision of

what the church is and should be is at the core of what amounts to a media ministry rooted in the biblical tradition of prophetic witness.

But what may seem like prophetic witness to N.C.R.'s friends has been viewed by critics as destructive to the church and ideologically biased. As Jones notes, bishops stung by the paper's hard-hitting reporting and dissenting editorials have twice called for the name "Catholic" to be dropped from the masthead. Within four years of the paper's 1964 founding, Kansas City's Bishop Charles Helmsing, initially a friend to N.C.R., condemned it as "a platform for the airing of heretical views on the church and its divinely constituted structure."

By that time, N.C.R. had already published one of its great scoops: a 1967 article revealing that the Papal Commission on birth control had recommended to Pope Paul VI that he end the church's ban on artificial contraception. N.C.R. had also run articles calling for women's ordination to the priesthood and questioning the virgin birth. Helmsing raised the possibility that the writers had automatically excommunicated themselves under canon law. The paper's founding editor, Robert G. Hoyt, wrote in reply, "We intend to go on being a Catholic paper."

Hoyt was a former Norbertine seminarian whose approach to journalism—boundless enthusiasm for aggressive reporting and tough-minded opinion pieces advocating social justice and church reform—became part of the paper's DNA. Throughout the book, Jones provides good portraits of the paper's leaders, especially editor and publisher Thomas C. Fox, who began his career reporting from Vietnam, where Time's Saigon bureau chief called him "the best hire I ever made."

N.C.R. has had many fine moments, and Jones does a good job of putting the paper's achievements in the context of the changing times. Those who want to walk through the great controversies over U.S. foreign policy, the role of women in the church, economic justice, sexual morality and the power of the papacy as viewed in N.C.R. will enjoy this book. Those who disagree with N.C.R.'s self-described progressive stands would likely be put off, especially since Jones fights some of the old battles anew.

One of the paper's greatest moments came with a June 7, 1985, story that uncovered the clergy sexual abuse scandal nearly 17 years before the Boston Globe's Pulitzer-winning January 2002 exposé. Its opening

paragraphs were indeed prophetic witness:

> In cases throughout the nation, the Catholic Church is facing scandals and being forced to pay millions of dollars in claims to families whose sons have been molested by Catholic priests. These are serious and damaging matters that have victimized the young and innocent and fueled old suspicions against the Catholic church and a celibate clergy. But a related and broader scandal seemingly rests with the local bishops and a national episcopal leadership that, as yet, has set no policy on how to respond to these cases.

For a long time, N.C.R. was left nearly alone with this explosive story as it continued to probe the issue with little follow-up in the rest of the news media. Jones reports that the story led a priest on the N.C.R. board to urge that Fox be fired, but that no one seconded the motion. He reprints passages from some angry letters to the editor, but more detail on what it was like to be at the cutting edge of this emotionally fraught story would have been useful.

The book would have been stronger if it delved more deeply into criticism of the paper. That's an important part of any institution's story. Early on, Jones quotes a 1997 article in which the University of Notre Dame's R. Scott Appleby wrote that N.C.R. was "vulnerable to criticism [because] it was narrowly theological, biased, and contentious for its own sake, thereby undermining Catholic unity." Jones excuses himself from this debate because "it requires a detached observer." But outside criticism seems a rather large topic to sidestep in such a book, and minimizing it risks making the account seem self-congratulatory.

A major internal debate also could have used further consideration. Jones notes that editor Michael Farrell, ousted by the N.C.R. board in 2000, apparently after becoming embroiled in disputes with Fox and Jones about the paper's direction, wrote a memo seeking to justify his use of softer features to complement the news reports. "If the paper is not more entertaining, not in the tabloid but in the reader-friendly sense, it will be difficult to attract new readers who may not share the 1960s commitment to what is becoming a boring repetition of peace, justice and church reform," wrote Farrell, a former priest.

Jones dismisses Farrell's dissent out of hand as "a fine vision, for a magazine." And yet Farrell's proposals were in tune with ideas being advanced at many newspapers as they tried to attract younger readers. This was a struggle for the paper's identity, fought at its highest level—an important part of its story.

As an admirer of N.C.R., I found that this book deepened my appreciation for the paper, starting with the sheer unlikelihood of its longevity. It made me want to know more. In his introduction, Jones makes clear that his book is not intended as a full history of The National Catholic Reporter. Rather, it is "the inside story told by an insider who cares." And a noteworthy story it is.

PAUL MOSES *teaches journalism at Brooklyn College/CUNY. His next book,* An Unlikely Union: The Love-Hate Story of New York's Irish and Italians, *will be published by NYU Press.*

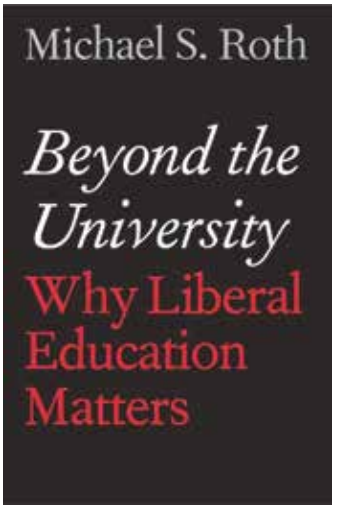
JEFFREY VON ARX

FROM JEFFERSON TO RORTY

BEYOND THE UNIVERSITY
Why Liberal Education Matters

By Michael S. Roth
Yale University Press. 240p $25

My colleague from up the road, Michael Roth, the president of Wesleyan University, has written an accessible, useful, intelligent book on a topic that concerns many of us in higher education and about which there has been much discussion of late.



The subtitle of the book names the concern: "Why liberal education matters," and the criticism, as everyone knows, is that liberal education does not prepare students for the real world when what is wanted is targeted undergraduate vocational instruction that will get students jobs.

The best thing about this book is that it poses the question in a distinctively American context and so is able to explain how Americans in particular think about liberal education. Roth begins his discussion with the Founding Fathers: Jefferson, Adams and Franklin. Here it is Jefferson who sets the terms of the case for liberal education in America: Liberal education trains men (deliberate choice of word here; and free, white men at that) for the independence of judgment that is essential for responsible participation in political and civic life. So from the very beginning, liberal education in the American context came to be closely identified with the autonomy and in-

dividual freedom that Americans believed to be a precondition for responsible political life. Roth acknowledges another tradition of liberal education with which graduates of Catholic universities would be familiar: the rhetorical tradition, based on the liberal arts as first articulated in medieval universities and renewed in the Renaissance to include the appropriation of the great works of the classical past. This tradition, of which Jesuits were probably the greatest practitioners, sought to introduce students to a common culture and was thought to have a formational purpose: forming men of virtue who would be good Christians and good citizens.

But, although this rhetorical tradition initially found purchase in the colonial colleges and persisted in some places (Princeton, for example) well into the 19th century, it was overtaken by the distinctively American view of Jefferson and those who followed him, and by the rise of research universities at the end of the 19th century. So the rhetorical tradition of liberal education does not, appropriately, find a place in the story Roth is telling, existing as it did only in the backwaters and ghettos of American higher education. It is interesting, though, that at the very end of the book, Roth returns to some of the purposes of the rhetorical tradition—cultural understanding and value formation—to make up for the principal defect to which the dominant tradition has brought us: the kind of "critical thinking" that only debunks and is incapable of finding or making meaning.

In addition to Jefferson, the heroes in the articulation of an American vision of liberal education are Ralph Waldo Emerson and William James; especially John Dewey and, in our own day, Richard Rorty. Other voices are brought into the discussion and make important contributions: Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Dubois and Jane Adams. Emerson gave content to Jefferson's autonomy through his emphasis on the cultivation of the individual—and of interiority—certainly of self-assurance or, as Emerson termed it, self-reliance. Conformity and an unquestioning acceptance of the goals society set for you were the enemies of the personal transformation that was the end of education, so what Emerson called "aversive thinking" had to have its place in true liberal education. Pragmatism was the appropriate response to the claim that liberal education was too individualistic, and John Dewey is key here with a vision of education that is social experiential as well as dynamic: a "practical idealism" that sought transformation, but in ways that would affect social realities.

Pragmatism as the dominant school of American philosophy declined rapidly after World War II in the face of logical positivism and analytic philosophy, but Roth contends that this was at the cost of any sense of the relevance of philosophy and hence of liberal education for real world problems in the wider culture. Richard Rorty and others helped revive philosophy as enquiry into critical (social) issues and so brought liberal education back to the place where it influenced political and civic life.

Liberal education as conceived and practiced in most universities today has, however, for better but mostly for worse, been reduced to "critical thinking," the post-modern hermeneutics of suspicion that encourages and rewards the unmasking of error and the demonstration of "privileged" points of view in anything that looks like a truth claim. This brings Roth to the place where he must in effect plead for a greater cultural sensitivity in an approach to liberal education: the need to "absorb ourselves in great works of literature, art and science," and the need for moral engagement: "a way of tuning the heart and spirit so as to hear the possibilities of various forms of life in which we might actively participate."

These are noble goals, coming from the leader of one of the preeminent liberal arts colleges in our country. Obviously, he and his institution do not operate out of the context that grounds liberal education in institutions where the older, rhetorical tradition still functions (albeit with its own issues!). Still, it is good to see these questions being raised at a place like Wesleyan.

JEFFREY VON ARX, S.J., *is president of Fairfield University.*

NICHOLAS SAWICKI

OFF TO A GOOD START

TEACH ME TO BE GENEROUS
The First Century of Regis High School in New York City

By Anthony D. Andreassi, C.O.
Fordham University Press. 272p $35

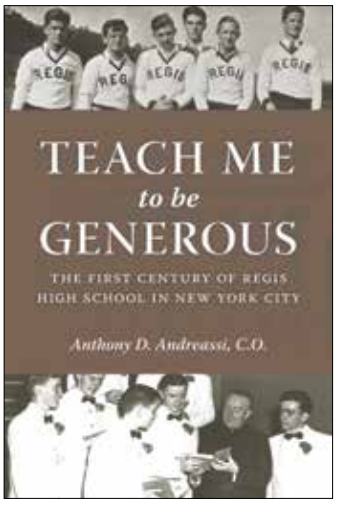
In 2007, a major secret in Jesuit education was revealed. When the wife of the late Hugh Grant, Jr., Lucie Mackey Grant, died, the fact that the Grant family had been almost single-handedly supporting Regis High School became public. Upon the death of her husband in 1910, Mrs. Julia Grant inherited $9,000,000 (roughly $200,000,000 today). Mrs. Grant purchased the land on 84th Street and Park Avenue in Manhattan, paid for the construction of Regis High School and endowed the school sufficiently to provide a quality education for Catholic boys. But there were non-negotiable terms: the boys had to come from parochial schools; they had to be Catholic; tuition remain free and fundraising not allowed; and, most

importantly, the Grant family was to remain anonymous.

Anthony Andreassi, C.O., a priest of the Brooklyn Oratory of St. Philip Neri and a history teacher at Regis, has produced a work that is both a scholarly analysis and homage. *Teach Me to be Generous*, while paying respects to individuals and events, is first a serious historical analysis of Regis High School and the factors that have shaped the school of today.

A portion of Andreassi's narrative centers on the conflicts that arose between the "Founding Family" and the Jesuits. Accusations of mismanagement of funds were leveled against Fr. David Hearn, S.J., the Jesuit impetus behind the project, by his superiors; retaliatory remarks were made by Mrs. Grant, forcing further responses from superiors in New York and Rome. There were issues with Mrs. Grant until her death in 1944, and then with her children long afterward. There were disagreements over the use of space by non-Regians; the raising of funds from other sources; the possibility of charging tuition, and a host of other issues. However, Andreassi notes that, despite the disagreements between the Grants and the Jesuits, there was never a loss of love. The Grants continued to give generously to the Society and the Society continued to pray for the Grants.

For every generation in Regis, Andreassi points to characters within the school who acted as role models. For men from the '40s, coach Don Kennedy was a force in the school's physical education program and a winning basketball coach. He took a genuine concern in the personal formation of Regians, both academically and athletically, and eventually led the basketball team in the season of 1947-48 to an unprecedented 27-1 record. For alums of World War II, Fr. Gabriel Zema, S.J., moderator of the Regis Alumni Association, supported Regis graduates in the Service during W.W.II, particularly in consoling the families of those lost. For graduates of the '50s, the name of then-president Fr. Robert I. Gannon, S.J., is undoubtedly remembered for his controversial plan to charge tuition, a scheme which would have been disastrous for Regis. Gannon planned to expand the school population to over 800, guaranteeing free tuition for freshman year. At the end of freshman year, the top 125 boys in each year would receive a free education, with the remaining 75 boys paying tuition. The plan was fortunately met with severe opposition.



Most remembered, perhaps, is "Fr. Regis" himself, Fr. Stephen Duffy, S.J., who taught at Regis for 56 years. Duffy was famous as not only a kind and ever-present teacher, but for his inventiveness and enthusiasm in the classroom. From his National Football League pool for charity to the little antics at his desk, Fr. Duffy was a beloved figure. Of course, he, too, had mentors, and who better to teach "Fr. Regis" than "Mr. Regis," Cyril Egan, who was once the longest tenured teacher at Regis. His students adored him, so much so that the alumni, upon learning that "Cy" could not afford to retire after 44 years, established the first pension fund for their old teacher. It was a recognition by the alumni for the laymen who had sacrificed so much.

Andreassi defines two time frames within which the history takes place, centering on the 50th anniversary of Regis. In the first 50 years, Regis was typical of most Jesuit schools: severely competitive (reading of the marks), high achievement standards (a grade below 75 percent was failing), strict disciplinary action (if one failed two classes, expulsion was generally imminent, with very few exceptions). Regis focused on a classical curriculum, and it had great success but an extremely high attrition rate (this could be affected by external factors, like war and the depression). It was typical of a Catholic institution of the time in regards to pastoral care: sodality membership was high, confession and penances were regular, Mass was mandatory and retreats were less guided meditation and more devotional in practice.

This contrasts with the Regis of post-1964. After the Second Vatican Council, the school changed academically and pastorally. Academically, classics were deemphasized, more freedom was allowed in the schedule, the sciences and mathematics were emphasized and academic competition was also deemphasized. Pastorally, the sodality, a centuries old devotion, disappeared overnight; traditional sacraments saw a drop in attendance; school Masses became opportunities for liturgical experimentation; and retreats became less traditional in style. Many of these changes were indicative of the '60s and '70s, and quickly passed; others were more progressive, including variations in the curriculum and adaptions to the pastoral needs of the student body, and continued.

A development from this era was a greater concern for others, primarily in the mission of the school. Regis had slowly moved towards a more middle and upper-class student body, comprised of white students from European descent. It was around the 1960s and '70s that Regis began to tackle the question of diversity. While the school continues to struggle with diversity, in recent years the REACH

program (Recruiting Excellence in Academics for Catholic High Schools), has met great success and is sending forth a large number of boys (well over 200 since 2002) each year from New York's minority populations.

In *Teach Me to be Generous*, Anthony Andreassi, C.O., provides a clear history of Regis that makes it more of a community than an institution. Despite financial struggles, issues surrounding the diversity of the student population, the pursuit of justice and internal battles that have been waged and won, Regis is still a fine Jesuit institution. Through Andreassi, we see what great things generosity can accomplish.

NICHOLAS SAWICKI, *a Fordham University student, served as an intern at* ***America.***

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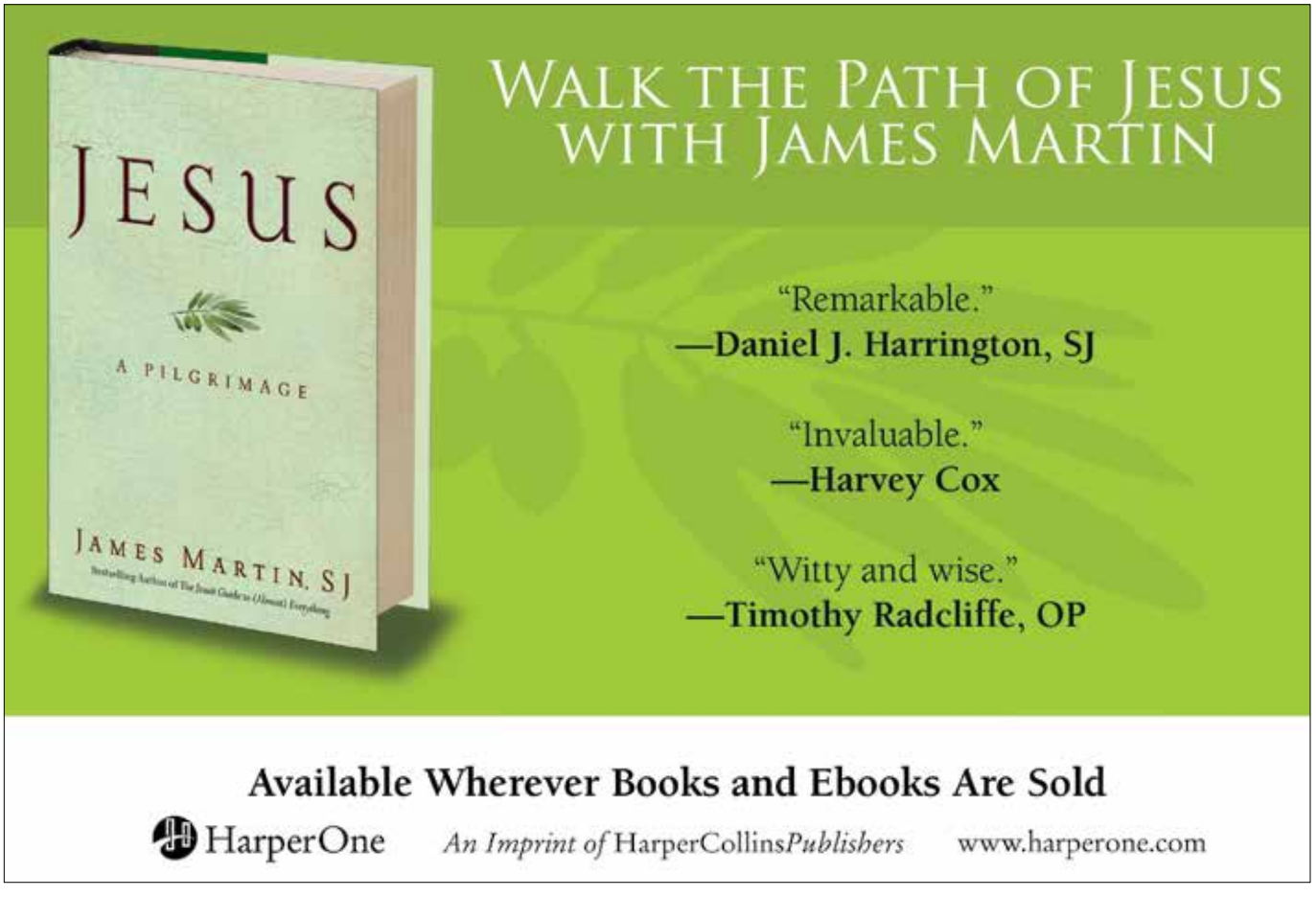

Bodies and Souls

ALL SOULS (A), NOV. 2, 2014

Readings: Wis 3:1–9; Ps 23:1–6; Rom 6:3–9; Jn 6:37–40

"I will raise them up on the last day" (Jn 6:40)

What happens when we die? This is a question most people ask at some point, perhaps especially Christians, who look forward to the resurrection at the end of time. But in the interim, prior to the general resurrection, what happens to those who have died? Where do they go? This is a confusing issue for more people than is often acknowledged. As a boy, I pondered the resurrection and assumed that when I died I would be "resurrected" straightaway into heaven to live with all the other people who had been raised. This is not the Christian view, but many Christians share in another confusion, believing that incorporeal life in heaven, achieved immediately upon death, when the soul is freed from its bodily confines, is the final state for which all human life is intended. The so-called last things are difficult to understand because the evidence in Scripture is scattered and partial, and what little there is about life after death shows evidence of development.

The ancient Israelites focused not on the world to come but on the rewards and blessings bestowed by God, like a long life, numerous children and abundant crops and flocks. The deceased went to Sheol, which was not a place of reward or punishment but the place where the shades of the dead rested.

Resurrection, mentioned rarely in the Old Testament, became a more pronounced hope in later Second Temple Jewish texts. In the centuries before Jesus there had been a development in the understanding of the final destiny of the dead. Later Jewish thought, while not systematic, stressed that the whole person, body and soul, would be raised up at the end of time.

While less thought was expended upon what happened to the dead who awaited the resurrection, the author of the Wisdom of Solomon, a text written in the Greek-speaking city of Alexandria sometime between 30 B.C. and A.D. 40, did reflect on the "souls of the righteous" dead. The author writes that "the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace." This is no longer Sheol but a place free of torment and filled with peace. The whole passage points to a process of judgment after death and a continuing existence in God's presence, but it also foresees a future kingdom of God when these righteous souls "will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever."

For Christians, this "future" kingdom is embodied in the return of Jesus Christ, when all, both living and dead, will participate in the resurrection of the body. Because Jesus Christ conquered sin and death through his own resurrection, the Apostle Paul says that all of us who have been baptized into Christ's death will also share in the new life: "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." The conquering of sin and death, says Jesus, was the purpose of his earthly mission: "This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day."

For those who are still alive in the earthly body, we await either death or the coming of God's kingdom. But our brothers and sisters, those righteous souls who now exist in the presence of God, also await the fullness of God's kingdom, when the body and soul are reunited eternally. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, at No. 1005, a section grounded in the teachings of the Apostle Paul, clarifies the Christian hope: "to rise with Christ, we must die with Christ: we must 'be away from the body and at home with the Lord.' In that 'departure' which is death the soul is separated from the body. It will be reunited with the body on the day of the resurrection of the dead." And so we, with all the righteous souls who have died before us, await that kingdom in which all is made whole and God is all in all.

JOHN W. MARTENS

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Is death the worst thing that can happen to you? If not, what is?

ART: TAD A. DUNNE

JOHN W. MARTENS *is an associate professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn. Twitter: @BibleJunkies.*

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