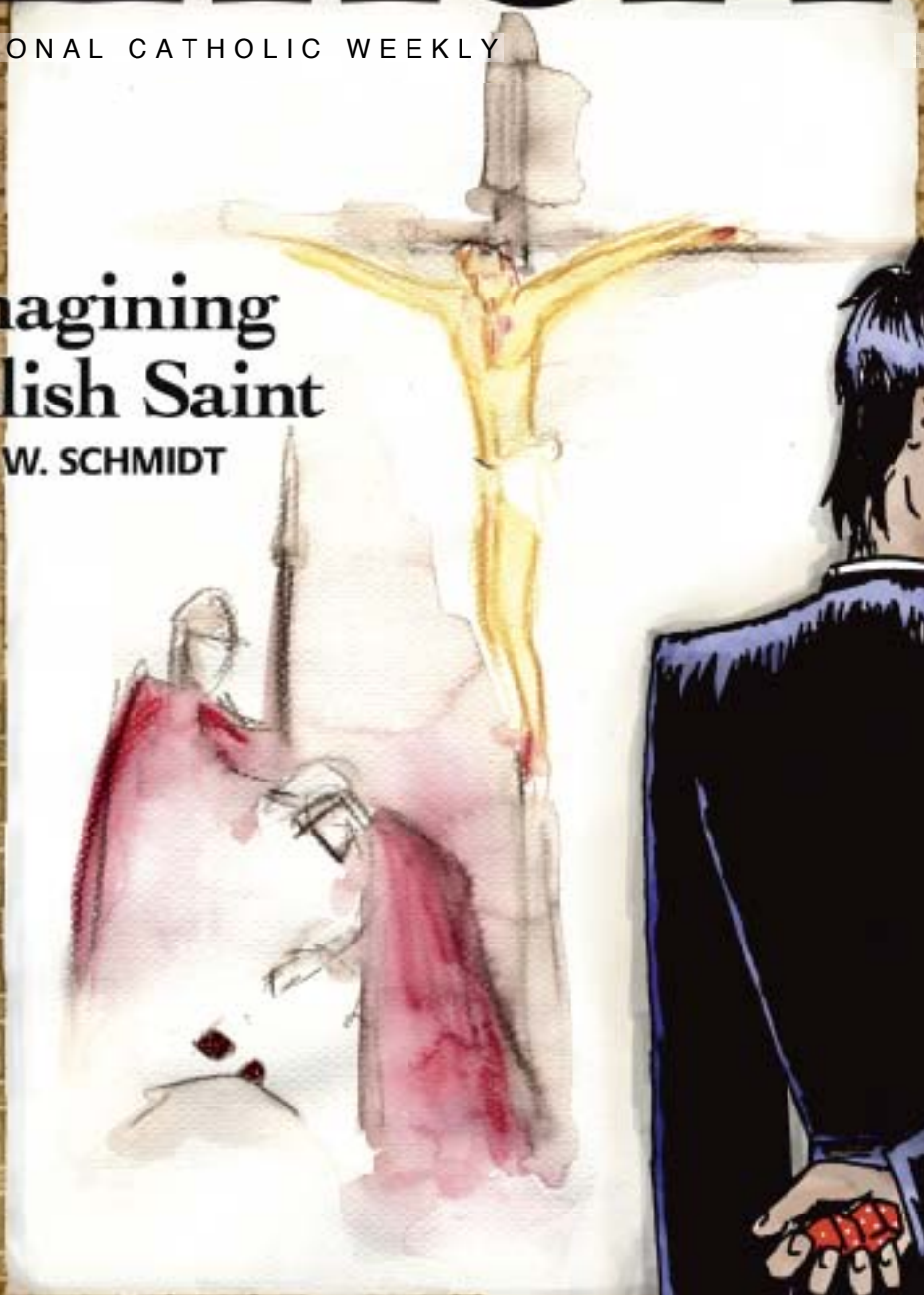
VOCATIONS ISSUE

America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY JAN. 2-9, 2012 $3.50



Reimagining A Polish Saint

EDWARD W. SCHMIDT

Three Jesuits and Me

PATRICK GILGER

OF MANY THINGS

The last convoy of U.S. combat troops crossed the border from Iraq into Kuwait in the early morning of Dec. 18, 2011, bringing almost nine years of war to a muted and dusty finish. To hinder possible parting shots from Al Qaeda, comrades in arms in the Iraqi military were not informed as U.S. troops pulled out in the middle of the night. The silent exodus was in stark contrast to the war's "shock and awe" beginning in March 2003.

U.S. soldiers were happy and relieved to be on their way home for Christmas, but concerned about what might follow in Iraq. It is hard to know what to feel about this war stateside. So many of us were invited to be no more than spectators to the carnage. Weren't we told to carry on and go shopping?

A universal conscription never joined us in worrying over our young people; our taxes were never hiked to pay for the outlandish costs of Iraq. Our professional fighting men and women and the thousands of reservists pulled in from middle-class lifestyles and middle-aged parenting seemed to be the only ones called upon, repeatedly, to sacrifice. The poor may apparently now be asked to do their share as the federal government responds to Iraq's unbudgeted tab by cutting social services.

The last U.S. casualty in Iraq was Army Specialist David Emanuel Hickman, 23, of Greensboro, N.C. He died in Baghdad on Nov. 14, killed, like so many of the other 4,487 U.S. service members lost in Iraq, by an improvised explosive device. Even as they attempted to withdraw in mid-December, U.S. forces were harassed by mortar and artillery fire.

When the American flag was lowered for the last time at the Baghdad airport, no Iraqi dignitaries bothered to show up. In Fallujah, where mansions built with generous "pacification" handouts stand not far from a bridge where the burned bodies of four U.S. contractors were hung, the U.S. withdrawal was brazenly celebrated with banners decorated with photos of burning American Humvees.

It should not come as a surprise that Iraqis are not especially grateful for America's prolonged excursion along the Euphrates. More than 104,000 civilians died during the war. Its chaos unleashed unresolved sectarian tensions that had festered for generations and still menace the future.

A fatal rupture with the Kurds in the north seems as likely today as it did in 2003; Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki has already begun to exhibit alarming authoritarian tendencies. The fate of Iraq's Christians seems grim, though most have already left. Also left behind were thousands of Iraqis who worked closely with U.S. forces over the years as translators, aides or in more dangerous clandestine capacities. Can they expect to survive reprisals from Sunni or Shiite extremists now that their patrons and protectors are gone?

It does not seem likely that a ticker-tape parade along Wall Street will mark the end of this war. Perhaps we did our celebrating too early, during the false "Mission Accomplished" period. Maybe, given the many political, strategic and finally emotional ambiguities, there is no way to "celebrate" the end of the Iraq adventure, even as we strive not to confuse mixed emotions about this war of choice with our positive feelings toward the people who served there.

There might be some satisfaction to be found in saying that at the very least, the United States has learned a valuable, if costly, lesson in Iraq. But the drumbeating along the Potomac has already begun, as our war-mongering punditry primes the cannon for a new "intervention" in Iran. We may begin our next military misadventure long before the tab for this one has been paid in full, if it ever can be.

KEVIN CLARKE

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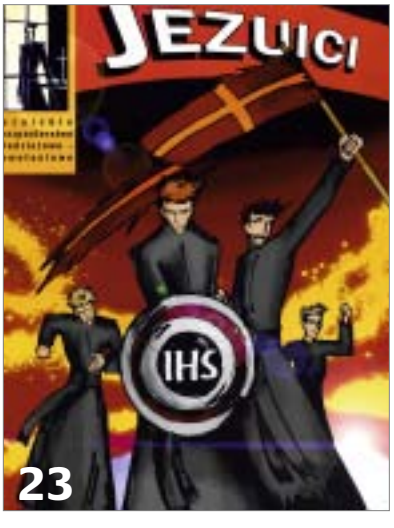

VOCATIONS ISSUE

COLUMNS & DEPARTMENTS

BOOKS & CULTURE

ON THE WEB

The Rev. Brendan Leahy, right, discusses his book ***Ecclesial Movements and Communities*** on our podcast. Plus, a video introduction to the comic book art of **Przemyslaw Wysoglad, S.J.** All at americamagazine.org.

Blood From a Stone

The austerities imposed on Europe's debtor nations in the wake of the 2008 Wall Street collapse are encountering growing skepticism. From the beginning, there should have been fairer sharing of the burdens imposed by bailing out failed financial institutions and speculators. Instead, Ireland and other less-favored European nations, like Portugal, have suffered job cuts, reduced pensions, higher taxes and depleted public services; and every passing year promises further austerity. Simon Johnson, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has commented, "Why Ireland would want to spend its time being a model student in the context of the broader European mishandling of the situation, I don't know." Professor Sean Kay of Ohio Wesleyan University told The New York Times, "The Irish people are being praised for doing what they were asked to do...but it's not paying off."

Forty thousand young professionals have emigrated from Ireland to Australia and other more prosperous countries. Unemployment is at 14 percent and expected to rise. The government deficit has fallen from an exorbitant 30 percent to 10 percent of the budget, but the prospects of bringing it quickly into line with the proposed 3 percent limit required under the new euro zone compact are slim. Asking the people alone to bear the pain for the excesses of the '00s by cutting costs without stimulating economic growth repeats the mistakes of orthodox economics during the Great Depression. For a healthy European economy and public well-being, there has to be greater give in the system, and the financial sector should pay a greater share of the price of recovery.

Don't Waste the Tax Talk

The discussion of taxing financial transactions—trades of stocks, bonds and other financial instruments—and using the money to help the poor has real import. For the public conversation acknowledges that "shareholders," those individuals and entities wealthy enough to trade on the world market, also have a duty to the world's poor. Help for the poor is being described not as a voluntary choice or as philanthropy but as a duty required of all in the name of "fairness" (the Bible calls it justice). Not surprisingly, the idea has been endorsed by the Occupy movement, the Greens and billionaire philanthropists, as well as Pope Benedict and the archbishop of Canterbury. But the "tiny tax" is also being debated among heads of major governments with the power to alter global finance. Leaders of Germany, France and Italy support the tax. The United States prefers to tax only the biggest banks. Still, support for the tax is growing.

This "tax talk" among elites ought to be taken up in business schools, college classrooms and corporate boardrooms. For the subtext—that we are all in this economy together, sharing the gains in good times and the losses in bad times—comes close to a Christian understanding of human dignity in community. The current discussion recognizes that the poor bear the brunt of global economic crises, even though they own no shares and so have no opportunity to share directly in any benefits. This inclusive, Catholic view of the economic life is one that preachers, teachers and other leaders of faith should promote.

More Human Rights

In mid-December Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made a passionate speech in Geneva on the occasion of International Human Rights Day, encouraging nations to support human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people. Much of what she says can, and should, be supported by Catholics. Same-sex marriage has been strongly opposed by the church. But Mrs. Clinton's speech is referring to the more fundamental right of gay and lesbian people to live without fear and without threat of death. Americans may have become so focused on the question of same-sex marriage that they overlook the dire conditions under which many gay and lesbian people live throughout the world.

In Uganda, for example, there are moves to make homosexual activity punishable by death. This is extreme, but Uganda is far from an isolated case. In Kenya conviction brings up to 14 years in prison; in Tanzania up to life in prison; and in Saudi Arabia the penalties include fines, whipping, prison and death. As Mrs. Clinton said, "It is a violation of human rights when people are beaten or killed because of their sexual orientation…." The Catechism teaches that gays and lesbians should be accepted with respect, sensitivity and compassion: "Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided." The church should continue to raise its voice in defense of our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters who suffer unjust discrimination.

Editor's Note: Because of a production error, the third item on the Current Comment page in the Dec. 19–26 issue of ***America****, "A Long Goodbye," was incomplete. The final sentence should have read: "But when the shepherd surveys his flock and spots one sheep straying over a hillside to the right while a third or more of the flock is disappearing into a forest on the left, can there be any doubt about which way he should go?" The complete text can be found at americamagazine.org.*

EDITORIAL

Syrian Winter?

In the days of Syria's president-dictator Hafez al-Assad, so the story goes, a man and his little son were riding a bus through Damascus, whose streets were lined with giant portraits of the ruthless Assad, known to have killed thousands of his political enemies. The little boy gazed in awe at the huge posters and asked his father, "Daddy, isn't that the big, bad man you told us about, the one you hate?" At that the man quickly grabbed his son, lifted him up in the aisle and called out, "Anybody lose a child?"

The story captures the terror of those years, terror that continues today under Assad's son Bashar. Syria must decide whether to follow the path of Egypt and Tunisia in the Arab Spring, from dictatorship to the first steps of democracy, or that of Libya into civil war, which ended in the bloody death of its leader. What happens in Syria is crucial because of its strategic location—west of Iraq, south of Turkey, east of Lebanon and north of Jordan—and because of its ethnic diversity, which includes many Christians.

President Bashar al-Assad seems determined to repeat the horror of Hama, the ancient town where in 1982 his father put down an insurgency by slaughtering between 10,000 and 25,000 citizens over 17 days. Though Damascus and Aleppo remain under government control, other towns, particularly Homs—Syria's third largest city, with a mixed population of Sunnis, Alawites and Christians—are undergoing bloodbaths. In the judgment of the U.N. human rights commissioner, Navi Pillay, a civil war is already underway. The death toll has passed 5,000, including 300 children, and an estimated 14,000 to 40,000 people have been detained. Two hundred thirty-three victims of torture have testified before the U.N. commission. In one bloody December weekend of kidnappings, house raids and random shootings in Homs alone, 36 corpses, many of them headless, were dumped in the town square.

At the center of the crisis is 49-year-old Bashar al-Assad, who had never been interested in politics but was pressed into duty when his older brother died. He presented himself as a reformer and promised a new constitution—in time; but whatever humanitarian instincts he may once have shown have been lost during six years of political indoctrination and the continued integration of the army into the power structure. Some say that his mother's insistence that he be as tough as his father has contributed to his ruthlessness.

In an interview with Barbara Walters broadcast on ABC's "Nightline" on Dec. 7, Mr. Assad was soft-spoken but in utter denial about the angry mobs, dead bodies, slit throats and battered faces of children the world has seen on television. "No government in the world kills its people," he said, "unless it's led by crazy people." According to the government's defenders, the president retains the love of his people and the revolt is the work of the United States, Israel and the Saudis, who wish to undermine the Alawites, Assad's Muslim sect.

The international community must continue efforts to persuade Mr. Assad to stop the killing of his own citizens, and it should then resolve the now localized conflict before Syria morphs into another Libya. In various ways the European Union, the Arab League, Turkey, the United Nations, the United States, Jordan and Hamas have endeavored to persuade President Assad to relent. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has met with the rebels, and the United States has returned its ambassador, Robert Ford, to the scene he had earlier fled for his own safety. Jordan's King Abdullah told the BBC that if he were in President Assad's position, he would step down. Turkish troops might establish a buffer zone on the border for Syrians fleeing persecution.

International sanctions are showing some effect. Foreign investment has halted, and tourism has stopped. Syrians have patiently survived sanctions in the past; but younger businesspeople see Syria as now connected with and dependent on the world economy, and they think it cannot afford to isolate itself. Perhaps, with President Assad determined to hold on to power, the civil war will grind on until Syria resembles Libya or Iraq. Alternatively, the president could immediately institute his promised reforms: pull the army off the streets, end single party rule, present a constitution for a parliamentary republic, and set the stage for elections and a transfer of power.

In the end, Syrians may tell another tale. A Syrian Rip Van Winkle falls asleep in a cave with satellite television. He awakes generations later, turns on the news and finds Tunisia, Libya and Egypt prospering as democracies. On the Syrian channel the announcer drones: "President Assad IV has vowed to liberate the Golan Heights from Israel." The man goes back to sleep.

WORLD DAY OF PEACE

Educating Youth Crucial To Peaceful and Just Future


Ariel Stamper, right, shares the sign of peace during a Mass for young people in Gary, Ind.

Peace and justice are built on "a profound respect for every human being and helping others to live a life consonant with this supreme dignity," Pope Benedict XVI said in his message for the World Day of Peace 2012, celebrated by the church on Jan. 1. When young people recognize the dignity and beauty of every human life, including their own, and are supported in their natural desire to make the world a better place, they become agents of justice and peace in the world, Pope Benedict said. This observation introduced his theme for the 2012 celebration, "Educating Young People in Justice and Peace."

Peace is not simply a gift to be received from God, the pope said; it is a task people of good will must undertake. "In order to be true peacemakers, we must educate ourselves in compassion, solidarity, working together, fraternity, in being active within the community and concerned to raise awareness about national and international issues and the importance of seeking adequate mechanisms for the redistribution of wealth, the promotion of growth, cooperation for development and conflict resolution," he said.

Adults have a serious responsibility to help the young fulfill their potential, Pope Benedict added, not just by sharing information with them, but by being "authentic witnesses" through lives marked by the joy of faith, charity and respect for others. Educating people in justice and peace begins in the family, where young people learn to value the gift of life, solidarity, respect for rules, forgiveness and hospitality, he said. Too many today are missing that basic human formation because "we are living in a world where families, and life itself, are constantly threatened and not infrequently fragmented."

UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

Seeing the Face of Jesus

An emotional pastoral letter to immigrants from the U.S. Hispanic Catholic bishops offers love, encouragement, welcome and sympathy to undocumented migrants and assurance that "you are not alone or forgotten."

"We recognize that every human being, authorized or not, is an image of God and therefore possesses infinite value and dignity," begins a strongly worded letter released on Dec. 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. "We open our arms and hearts to you, and we receive you as members of our Catholic family.... We urge you not to despair," said the letter, which was signed by 33 bishops. "Keep faith in Jesus the migrant, who continues to walk beside you. Have faith in Our Lady of Guadalupe, who constantly repeats to us the words she spoke to St. Juan Diego, 'Am I, who am your mother, not here?'"

Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento, Calif., said the bishops wanted "to reach out to the immigrant community and express our concern for them, to speak to them in a spirit of solidarity." Bishop Soto said that this outreach might be especially needed now because it "does not look promising" that the federal government will act anytime soon to improve the legal situation of millions of undocumented immigrants.

Bishop Soto said the letter was the result of a collaborative writing process among the Hispanic bishops. The bishops hope it will be used broadly around the country by all U.S. bishops. In the letter, the bishops expressed regret that some have reacted to the current domestic economic crisis by showing disdain for immigrants. "We will not find a solution to our problems by sowing hatred," they said. "We will find the solution by sowing a sense of solidarity among all

Pope Benedict appealed to parents to give their children "the most precious of treasures," which is the gift of their time. The pope also urged governments to make it possible for parents to choose the type of education they want their children to receive and to enact immigration reforms aimed at "reuniting families separated by the need to earn a living."

The pope also asked parents and teachers to be more attentive to the hopes and fears of young people and to their search for true values, and he asked governments to put more resources into education and job creation. Pope Benedict encouraged young people themselves to take their schooling seriously and to be open to the example and knowledge their elders have to share. He urged them "to be patient and persevering in seeking justice and peace, in cultivating the taste for what is just and true, even when it involves sacrifice and swimming against the tide."

Cardinal Peter Turkson, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said Pope Benedict sees young people not only as hope for the future, but as "an active part, the most vital part of the human family" in a world that needs their energy and new ideas now.

Bishop Mario Toso, secretary of the justice and peace council, said the young people who energized the Arab Spring movements toward democracy this past year illustrate the fact that the young have a positive role to play in society. They proclaimed to the world that "there can be social justice in their societies if there is democracy and, vice versa, that if there is democracy, there can be social justice," he said.

The heart of the pope's message focused on what he called the "integral formation of the person, including the moral and spiritual dimension."

"Man is a being who bears within his heart a thirst for truth," Pope Benedict wrote, "a truth which is not partial, but capable of explaining life's meaning—since he was created in the image and likeness of God." Acknowledging God as creator leads to recognizing "one's own profound dignity and the inviolability of every single person," Pope Benedict said.

workers and co-workers—immigrants and citizens—who live together in the United States."

"Your suffering faces" show the "true face of Jesus Christ," the bishops wrote, noting the great sacrifices migrants make for their families.

"Many of you perform the most difficult jobs and receive miserable salaries and no health insurance or Social Security," they continued. "Despite your contributions to the well-being of our country, instead of receiving our thanks, you are often treated as criminals because you have violated current immigration laws."

The bishops also acknowledged the pain suffered by families who have had someone deported or are threatened with deportation; the anxiety of waiting for legal residency status; and the frustration of young people who have grown up in the United States but lack the legal immigration status that would allow them to go on to college and get good jobs. "This situation cries out to God for a worthy and humane solution," they wrote.

They reiterated the position they as individuals and as members of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops have taken in support of comprehensive immigration reform. Such legislation should respect family unity and provide "an orderly and reasonable process for unauthorized persons to attain citizenship." It should include a program for worker visas that protect immigrants' rights and that provides for their basic needs, they said.

Worshipers at a Mass honoring immigrants at St. John the Evangelist Church in Riverhead, N.Y.

Ending Religious Violence in India

Members of the All India Christian Council launched an initiative on Dec. 12, 2011, to raise awareness of the Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence Bill, a measure aimed at curbing violence against religious minorities. John Dayal, general secretary of the council, said the bill is urgently needed "to put an end to hate campaigns and to restore confidence [among] minorities." According to the council, the proposed law strives to provide justice for victims of religious violence, discourage hate speech, censure violent behavior by extremist religious groups and hold law enforcement officials accountable for not stopping or for abetting the violence. Over the past four years close to 4,000 violent acts against religious minorities have occurred in India.

Ricci Venerated In China

Sculptures and statues that express a growing devotion to the priest and scientist Matteo Ricci, S.J., are appearing throughout China. At the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Beijing, a bronze image of Ricci in Mandarin robes dominates the courtyard. Commissioned in 2006, it has become a site of prayer for local Chinese and foreign visitors. Ricci, who arrived in China in 1582, is regarded as the founder of the Catholic Church in China. His tomb on the grounds of the Communist Party Training Academy in Beijing was revered and protected even during the Cultural Revolution. Known in China as Li Madou, Ricci is honored secularly as a great scientist and astronomer who brought Western technology to China and adopted Chinese culture. He has recently become a focus of intercessory prayer for reconciliation between Rome and Beijing. The cause for his beatification, begun in 1984, gained momentum in 2011, the 400th anniversary of his death.

Bishops Renew Antipoverty Campaign

With 15 percent of all Americans, including nearly 1 out of 4 children, living in poverty, the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is renewing its poverty awareness campaign, Poverty USA, with a revamped Web site and a social media campaign encouraging participation in Poverty Awareness Month in January. "Our culture of life begins with a love that binds us to the hopes and joys, the struggles and the sorrows of people, especially those who are poor or any way afflicted," said Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento, Calif., chairman of the bishops' domestic antipoverty effort, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. "We march with immigrant families toward a society made stronger and safer by their inclusion. We embrace the mother and her unborn child, giving to both of them hope and opportunity. We measure our own health by the quality of care we give to those most vulnerable. We labor with those whose work is burdensome."

From CNS and other sources.

NEWS BRIEFS

Hermenegild Makoro

The **new secretary general** of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, Hermenegild Makoro, of the Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood, said on Dec. 12, 2011, "I see my appointment as recognition from the bishops of the work that women are doing in this part of the world." ✦ **Catholic medical professionals are challenging** the reliability of a British medical review released in December that concludes that women who have abortions have no increased risk of developing mental health problems. ✦ Pope Benedict XVI recognized the many years of Christian charity practiced by **Aid to the Church in Need,** giving the organization the status of a pontifical foundation in early December. ✦ U.S. **Cardinal John P. Foley**, longtime Catholic journalist and advocate for Catholic communications, was fondly remembered after his death on Dec. 11 as a friend to the Catholic press around the world. ✦ **Archbishop Thomas C. Kelly, O.P.,** who led the Archdiocese of Louisville from 1982 until his retirement in 2007, passed away on Dec. 14 at his home on the campus of Holy Trinity Church. From 1977 to 1982 he served as general secretary of the N.C.C.B./U.S.C.C.

MARYANN CUSIMANO LOVE

Educating for Peace

My uncle, Francis J. Cusimano, was a member of the New York Province of the Jesuits. Pedro Arrupe, at the time superior general of the order, sent him to Nigeria, where he spent 20 years building schools and parishes before his too-early death over a decade ago. I miss him. He was one of the influences that attracted me to my vocation in Catholic education.

My uncle once led off a homily with the old Jesuit joke: A Franciscan, a Dominican and a Jesuit came upon the Holy Family in the stable. The Franciscan was awed that God was born into poverty among the animals. The Dominican was captivated by the Incarnation. The Jesuit pulled Mary aside and asked her, "Have you thought about where you are going to send him to school?" Uncle Frannie then asked, "Where are you going to school?" Every day the world schools our hearts with lessons in violence, selfishness, greed, materialism—in the false gods of what Blessed Pope John Paul II described as the culture of death. Are we Catholics, then, schooling our hearts instead in God's call to justice and peace?

It is a challenging question, one that Pope Benedict XVI took as his theme for the celebration of the 45th World Day of Peace on Jan. 1, 2012: "Educating Young People in Justice and Peace." The Jasmine Revolutions and the birth of the new South Sudan underscore the pope's message. "Young persons must labor for justice and peace in a complex and globalized world," said a Vatican statement announcing the theme, and we all share responsibility for preparing future generations.

The good news is that peace is breaking out. Internationally, the number of major armed conflicts has decreased by half over the past 20 years. The waning of war creates a challenge: how to keep the guns silent. Sustaining peace in regions torn by decades of violence requires going back to school. Children in war zones have learned more than anyone ought to know of violence. How can people learn peace who have never known peace?

> How can we school our hearts in God's call to justice?

Solidarity with the wider church helps in peace education around the world. In Sudan, the Philippines, Palestine, Colombia and elsewhere, Catholic Relief Services partners with local dioceses, parishes and nongovernmental organizations to integrate peace education into the curricula and methods of schools and madrasas. Teachers are trained in "paths to peace," which include: dismantling the culture of war; building intercultural respect, reconciliation and solidarity; promoting human rights and responsibilities; and cultivating inner peace. Interactive exercises help students and teachers learn how to "do" peace, how to resolve conflict nonviolently.

Peace education is hard in places like South Sudan, where the armed forces of Sudan still bomb civilians in refugee camps in the south. The church in Sudan uses Peace Radio broadcasts to reach people outside school and parish settings. Likewise, Jesuit Refugee Service and local partners educate refugees. Solidarity with South Sudan and pressure by the U.S. government helped bring about a largely peaceful independence for South Sudan last year. International attention and solidarity are still needed to build sustainable peace.

Peace education is also challenging in the United States. In a country at war for over a decade, the word *peace* is treated as suspect. Many dioceses and parishes have renamed their Justice and Peace offices with generic titles like Community Outreach. I understand the political polarization that gives rise to such changes, but I worry: What does it mean if we cannot even name ourselves as followers of the Prince of Peace.

At home, peace education gets personal. Like Ralphie in the movie "The Christmas Story," our pre-school-age son is obsessed with toy guns. We wake each morning to the sounds of hunters killing duck and deer along the Chesapeake Bay. Our three children, all born after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, have only known their country at war, with military deployments of friends and family, and heavily armed men in the capital. Raising children to "Go in peace to love and serve the world" is very much a countercultural stance.

My uncle's question, "Where are we going to school?" is no joke. As the pope notes, we all need to step up to the challenges of educating for peace and justice.

MARYANN CUSIMANO LOVE, *is professor of international relations at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.*

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The Long Black Line

What I learned from three good men

BY PATRICK GILGER

Ordination ceremony, Fordham University Chapel, June 2010

DAVIS STUDIOS, ELMSFORD, N.Y.

On the wall of my room, just below the windowsill and above my dusty homemade altar, I have Scotch-taped three memorial cards. These cards are not rare in Jesuit life. A few weeks after a brother Jesuit dies, I find in my mailbox one of these roughly 3- by 5-inch cards. On the front is a photograph of the man, usually in black-and-white, with his name printed at the bottom. On the back is a prayer—sometimes a passage from the Bible but often the "Suscipe" of St. Ignatius—that attempts to summarize the guiding spirit of the man's life.

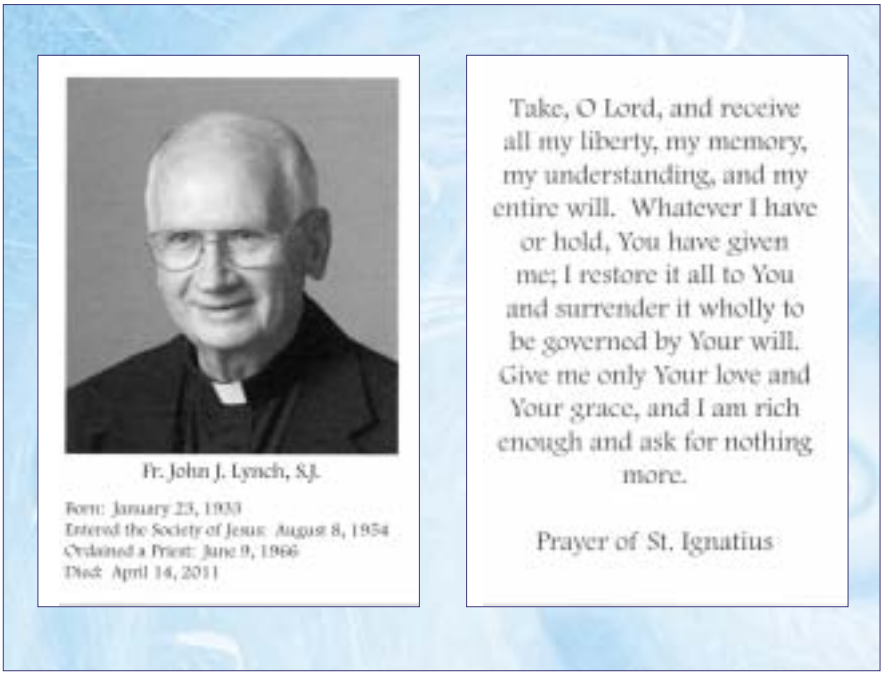
When I entered the Society of Jesus 10 years ago as a bright-eyed 21-year-old, a brother novice and I used to joke that instead of prayers we wanted our memorial cards to have statistics on the back: Father So-and-So performed 1,033 baptisms, had an 83 percent good-homily average and was a three-time campus ministry all-star. In those first few years of learning to live with an "S.J." behind my name, each time I pulled one of these cards from my mailbox I felt a little like a kid opening a pack of baseball cards. But now these are cards from a team I belong to.

Whether lamented or celebrat-

PATRICK GILGER, S.J., *is in his second year of theology studies at the Jesuit School of Theology, Santa Clara University in California.*

ed, it is well established that the formerly tight bonds of U.S. Catholic culture are unwinding quickly. Like many others, I often describe my family as "nominal Catholics." On Sundays when I was young, my parents took my two younger sisters and me to Mass, and that was about it. We were and still are a tightly knit, loving family, but we did not talk "Catholic talk" at home or pray the rosary and the like.

I had never considered being a Jesuit before I showed up at Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., and met some men who made me think, there is something living here that I have never seen before. Those three cards are taped to my wall because I learned to pray the rosary not from my family but in a parking lot in college. I learned the Hail Mary from my best friend (also a young Jesuit), who wrote it on a Post-It note and slipped it into my jacket pocket. The cards are there because I grew to love these men as they gave me roots in the Jesuit family. I loved their stories of that family, stories of playing baseball in cassocks in summertime and storied complaints about being sequestered in the countryside for studies. I learned to love them not for any great homily stats they might have put up but for welcoming me in.



One of the cards is of Bill Pauly, S.J., who would interrupt my slow nights of studying by knocking on my door to ask if he could sit down and read me a poem by Mary Oliver. Another is of Jim Egan, S.J., who could hold all your hurts in his spindly hands. The last is of John Lynch, S.J., who told me when we first met that he knew my Uncle Mark, who had gone to Creighton too; it was the first time I had heard that anyone in my family knew Jesuits. Each of these three Jesuits, their careworn faces still breathing out from their death cards, has sparked in me something I did not know was there, something that said: *this* is how I want to live.

Three Cards

I met Father John on a paddleboat in the summer of 2005. I had been a Jesuit for a few years by then, and we talked in good Wisconsin Jesuit style, with a beer in one hand and cheese in the other, while the boat paddled on. That day and afterward I found him to be a quiet man, one of those good listeners who waited just a little too long between phrases in a conversation, so that I never quite knew whether it was time for me to reply or not. He never minded if I interrupted. When he died in April 2011, I wrote to my uncle to let him know.

"Thank you," Uncle Mark responded, "John was a good friend and mentor to me during my years at Creighton. He used to let me study in the back of St. John's Church where it was quiet. He'd bring me snacks to keep me going." As I read my uncle's note I could see John in my mind, smiling, apple in hand, making his way to the student hunched over his books in the rear pews. I felt stabbed by the scene. "I have never forgotten what John did for me," my uncle concluded, "and I've always felt that I still serve as a man for others." Apparently my life has roots of which I was unaware, growing in surprising places.

Father Jim Egan was a solemn scarecrow of a man. I met him one summer when I was taking care of the old Jesuit vacation house we still use in the middle of Nowhere, Wis. It was an easy job most of the time, just going for doughnuts and the paper early in the morning and making sure there were two new movies to watch every night. So Jim and I had time to sit and talk. Or really, Jim had time to listen, and I had time to speak to him from my heart. His body looked old then, and tired. But when we spoke, it was as if some invisible chasm opened up below his chest and above his stomach to reveal a safe space. It was like being swallowed up by somebody who knew how to hold pain, how to let hurt bring him closer to God.

Jim was beginning the end of his life that summer. I found out later that he had returned home from Uganda for treatment of the cancer that would kill him in the fall of 2008. At 63, Jim had moved to Uganda and learned a new language so he could work with the young African Jesuits studying there. I also learned how much he loved Uganda and how hard it was for him to leave, but he never dwelt on

the difficulties that summer. That summer he was all ears, all soft, safe heart. I am grateful to him, and I hope I can do the same sometime.

Father Bill Pauly's is the only card on my wall printed in color, an exception that seems fitting given the vibrancy of his life. Bill was boisterous, funny and deeply vulnerable, with a humility that came from suffering. His energetic face turned red when he laughed. These were all great qualities for life on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, where he served the Lakota Sioux people as a priest for nearly 20 years. It was a shock for the community to learn, just after Thanksgiving in 2006, that he had died of a sudden heart attack at 59. Hundreds of Lakota people turned out for the two-night wake and the funeral Mass held on the reservation. Years before, he had been honored with the Lakota name Wacin Yanpi, "Depends on Him." It was a perfect name for Bill, a name that said everything about how the people felt about him—how he would always be there for them and how he depended on Jesus in everything.

ON THE WEB

John P. Schlegel, S.J., reflects on the hymn "We Three Kings."
americamagazine.org/video

One evening during philosophy studies, I sat at my computer, working on some obscure paper with my shoulders tensed up, when Bill knocked on my door. Pushing his bald head through the doorway he asked, "Can I read you a poem?" He sat down and read his current favorite, Mary Oliver's "The Summer's Day."

"I don't know exactly what a prayer is" he intoned. "I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down/ into the grass." His voice trembled just a touch, and his eyes held the memory of the South Dakota grasslands as he asked Ms. Oliver's lovely question: "Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?" That moment was over too soon. As I went to bed that night I asked myself: Who is this man who stopped by my room just to read poetry? How can I become someone who does things like that?

Ministry Loves Company

On Oct. 22, 2011, seven young Jesuits were ordained to the diaconate in Oakland's Cathedral of Light. They lay prostrate on the floor as the choir and congregation sang the familiar Litany of the Saints, calling down upon them the blessing of the whole holy community of the church, living and dead. "St. Ignatius," we begged, "pray for us. St. Thérèse, St. Augustine, all you holy men and women, pray for us." Through some mysterious plan, the long black line of the Society of Jesus continues in these men, in these brothers of mine and in the lay men and women who walk before and beside us.

Ministry—whether one is ordained or not—is a challenge in the confusing, fractured world that faces us today. It is a different world from the one in which Jim and Bill and John sought God. In this world it is hard to know which ministry stats I would even think to put on the back of my own memorial card.

But I can say that the great joys of my Jesuit life come in those unearned but long-prepared-for moments when people give me the sudden gift of helping them to let God come close. The long preparation I have needed in order to fill such a fragile role has been much helped by the particular men whose careworn faces I have taped to the wall of my room, men who ushered me into this family's tradition in their own quiet, whimsical, poetic ways. Also sustaining me are my newly ordained brothers, committed to our fallible, tissue-paper-thin church and to Jesus. They carry me along with them in my weaker moments, buoy me up with their own quiet, whimsical, poetic lives.

They rose up, those new deacons, from the cathedral floor when the litany ended. They were consecrated, vested and sent forth into our fragile, confusing world to proclaim Jesus, the Word of God. They, like each of us, were sent into a world that, when you try to love it, leaves stretch marks on the heart. Neither they nor we go forth alone.

John, Bill, Jim, pray for us. A

A Change in Formation

How the sexual abuse crisis has reshaped priestly training

BY KATARINA SCHUTH

Over the past decade, many thoughtful Catholics have wondered if a connection can be established between seminary formation and sexual abuse by clergy. The answer is complicated, but the significant reshaping of seminary programs in recent decades suggests that many church leaders believe there is a relationship. Unraveling the various dimensions of the question requires knowledge of the background research found in the two studies prepared for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice of the City University of New York. The full titles are "The Nature and Scope of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in the United States 1950-2002" (2004) and "The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in the United States 1950-2010" (2011).

These documents paint a picture of how seminary leaders developed instructions on sexuality and celibacy in recent years. In the future, the focus for seminaries needs to be on ways of maintaining practices that very likely contributed to the remarkable decrease in the number of abuse cases. It is timely, as well, to suggest supplemental approaches for formation and to maintain useful programs that promise to ensure even further reductions in abuse.

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Facts and Findings

Research on sexual abuse by Catholic priests is far-reaching, but the John Jay studies are among the few to include information pertinent to seminaries. This research sheds light on the following areas:

Seminaries. Priests with allegations of sexual abuse against minors were enrolled in much higher proportions in some seminaries than in others. Contrary to widespread opinion, those who attended high school seminaries were not more likely to abuse than those who did not.

Timeframes of first abuse. Most priest abusers were in seminary before the 1960s but offended after the 1960s. Priests ordained after 1960 who engaged in abusive behavior did so more quickly after ordination.

The rise and fall of abuse. The rise in abuse cases in the 1960s and 1970s was influenced by social factors in American society. Although widely believed to be a significant ongoing problem, most abuse occurred between 1960

CNS FILE PHOTO/GREGORY A. SHEMITZ

and 1985; after that, the numbers dropped substantially and remain low.

The understanding of sexual abuse by church leaders. By 1985 bishops knew that sexual abuse of minors by priests was a problem, but they understood neither the scope of it nor the impact on victims. The vast majority of these cases were reported after 1995, and a third in the year 2002 alone.

Seminary response. Until 1992, church documents generally did not reflect the need to revise seminary formation to deal with reports of sexual abuse by priests, though seminaries began to modify programs by the late 1980s.

Directives on Formation

The church has issued numerous documents pertaining to preparation for priesthood, but two recent ones stand out. After the Second Vatican Council, the most influential message came in Pope John Paul II's "Pastores Dabo Vobis" (1992) on vocations and seminary formation. In it the pope introduced for the first time a section on human formation, insisting that "the whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation" (No. 43). Commenting on contemporary misunderstandings about love and sex, he said, "In such a context, an education for sexuality becomes more difficult but also more urgent" for those who are called to celibacy (No. 44). These assertions confirmed the direction some seminaries were already taking; now they could implement more fully, with greater support from bishops, the changes required by the pope's instruction.

By 2005 it was clear the bishops understood how crucial seminary formation was in preventing abusive sexual behavior.

The other key document, *The Program of Priestly Formation*, guided seminaries on every aspect of preparing future priests; five editions were published by the American bishops between 1971 and 2005. Of particular relevance is a gradual change in the presentation of celibacy and sexuality. Most notably, the first three editions gave little space or weight to the topics.

In the first edition (1971), for example, four brief paragraphs on celibacy were subsumed under the broad category of "pastoral ministry." The focus was on effective ministry rather than on the person who would be embracing the discipline. The second edition (1976) essentially repeated the content of the first but added one new paragraph underlining the personal value of celibacy as a way of sharing in the life of Christ. Missing from these documents was an appreciation of the limited understanding that some seminarians had about the meaning of celibacy and the seriousness and importance of living a moral life. Perhaps it was taken for granted that this knowledge and these values needed no reinforcement for seminarians.

The third edition (1981) kept most of the earlier material and added an explanation of the value of celibacy in a consumer culture and of the importance of understanding the nature of sexuality, including homosexuality. The shift in tone revolved largely around reinforcing the obligatory nature of celibacy. The content was still inadequate for the times, and not until a decade later did formation documents expand on the goals, expectations and behaviors expected of those to be ordained.

By the time the fourth edition of the program was issued (1992), abusive behavior by priests had become a large issue inside the church and in the wider society. The fourth edition reflected the gravity of the situation. The edition was undoubtedly influenced by two major factors: the publication of "Pastores Dabo Vobis," with its call for an overhaul of formation, and ongoing revelations of sexual abuse by priests. This edition described the negative influences of the social climate on lifelong commitment to celibacy, and it emphasized spiritual goals, behavioral expectations and admission standards. Psychological assessment was acknowledged as integral to the admissions process.

Overall, the document represented a sea-change in that it was more specific and directive. Even this more thorough rendition, oriented toward spiritual practices and evaluation of appropriate celibate lifestyle, however, lacked discussion of sexual abuse and the extraordinary vigilance seminaries would need to exercise to deal with problems that were evident and growing.

Only in the fifth edition (2005), after the bulk of revelations about sexual abuse, was a new, lengthy section on "Human Formation" included. That changed substantially the document's structure and content, outlined a multifaceted program of instruction and provided a detailed explanation of basic attitudes and behavioral expectations about celibacy. Seminarians were expected to understand the theological rationale for celibacy and to develop a solid moral character and conscience through ascetical practices.

Some directives were mentioned for the first time: disqualification for admission if any criminal sexual activity with a minor or inclination toward such was known, an expectation that all guidelines of the Holy See would be followed regarding same-sex experience and/or inclinations and the requirement to investigate certain conditions prior

to orders, such as whether or not the candidate had been sexually abused and whether any remedies would be needed. By 2005 it was clear that the bishops understood how crucial seminary formation was in upholding the commitment to celibacy and helping to prevent abusive sexual behavior.

Sexuality and Celibacy

Paralleling changes in church directives, but at a somewhat faster pace, seminary formation changed considerably over the same time period. In the mid-1980s and before, programs emphasized spiritual and academic formation, with some attention paid to pastoral formation in parishes. Spiritual direction, the focal point for development, was expected to deal with growth in emotional maturity, vocational commitment and acceptance of celibacy. Seminaries used terms like "complete confidentiality and strict secrecy" to emphasize that the exchange between seminarians and spiritual directors was entirely in what is called the internal forum and not to be revealed except in a few rare circumstances. This confidentiality was one of the main problems with this approach. Seminarians who might have identified their struggles with sexuality and celibacy did so in an environment that was handled with a spiritual director and not with other formation personnel who could have acted on the information.

To overcome this, by the mid-1990s most seminaries provided each student with a formation advisor to balance the strictly confidential nature of spiritual direction. These conversations were to be in the "external forum" so as to alleviate the complaint that important information about a seminarian's suitability for priesthood seldom saw the light of day.

By the mid-2000s, other striking changes were introduced, including a separate "human formation" program, which incorporated extensive instruction on celibacy and the moral behavior of priests. The fifth edition stated, "As we have recently seen so dramatically in the church, when such foundations are lacking in priests, the consequent suffering and scandals are devastating" (No. 41). Furthermore, admissions processes were to pay careful attention to matters that might affect a lifelong commitment to celibacy. The effects of the revelations about the extent of sexual abuse from 2002 onward and the Vatican-initiated visitation of seminaries in 2005-06 undoubtedly influenced many changes.

Prevention of Abuse

Implied in the concern about formation of seminarians is the belief that a well-designed program can decrease abusive sexual behavior by priests. Yet it is difficult to prove definitively that better programs produce fewer priests who are likely to abuse minors. Complete histories of seminaries are relatively few, so until recently conclusive evidence has been

unavailable to demonstrate that a given seminary with low abuse rates among its graduates had an excellent program. Did seminaries fulfill their responsibilities in the way they educated seminarians? Perhaps. But given the complex set of causes and contexts discussed in the John Jay report and understood to be operational when abuse occurs, any one cause or means of prevention should not be expected to carry all the weight.

Nonetheless, several anecdotes are telling. One concerns a seminary with a long history of very low rates of sexual abuse of minors among its graduates. In the late 1950s, the history of the school records the positive attitude the faculty had toward psychological testing of its candidates as well as the provision of psychiatric services for seminarians. Through the years the seminary viewed this testing and evaluation more and more in a positive light; it gave great weight to psychological assessment as an admissions criterion, unlike most other seminaries at the time. Some students were rejected and others were dismissed, in part because of the attention given to the psychological health of the seminarian and to the impact this could have on his ability to serve in ministry.

In another instance, a moderate number of a seminary's graduates were accused of abusive sexual behavior during the earliest time of recorded numbers. The data show that the incidences dropped off significantly before most other schools experienced the same decline. That school in the late 1960s adopted a comprehensive formation program and paid substantial attention to thorough instruction on celibacy and sexuality by professionals in the field, both priests and others. It could be argued that the policies of both seminaries experienced a different trajectory when compared with others where abuse cases were more numerous or the abuse continued over a longer period of time.

Over the past 25 years, a remarkable intensification of human formation and deeper understanding of the importance of its role are evident in almost every seminary. Over the same period, the number of accusations of abuse of a minor by a priest has fallen from 975 for the period 1985 through 1989 to 253 for 1995 through 1999, and then to 73 for 2004 through 2008. Awareness of the problem surely informed the development of the curriculum, but ongoing benefits provided by adequate formation may be seen in the continuing low levels of abuse.

Looking to the Future

How are these results to be maintained? Those to be ordained must be thoroughly informed not only about the spiritual aspects of celibacy and sexuality, but also in straightforward, clear language about biological and psychological, social and pastoral dimensions. This balanced approach to sexuality and celibacy must be inculcated in future priests by both clerical and lay professionals who are specifically trained in the appropriate disciplines. To focus purely on pious understandings and practices has not been and will not be a sufficient means of prevention, though some church leaders are voicing concern that this very attitude is gaining prominence. Bishops, vocation directors and seminary personnel must recognize and change the pattern before it takes hold.

Seminarians need to cultivate moral virtues like integrity, justice and prudence, to grow in self-knowledge and self-discipline and to forgo a sense of entitlement. These virtues are integral to their spiritual life. Further, many older priests and other observers find dangerous an attitude prevalent among more than a few recently ordained priests: a tendency to see themselves as entirely different from the laity and therefore socially distant. The potential for separation and isolation in certain circumstances is detrimental and can lead to loneliness and psychologically unhealthy conditions. Priests will benefit from ongoing education about the dangers and pitfalls of a lifestyle that increases vulnerability to abusive behavior. Those who understand that their lives are to be modeled after Jesus Christ and oriented toward humble service in ministry are much less likely to engage in sexual abuse of any kind. A

Out of the Cold

Into a night of quiet grace

BY PATRICK BERGQUIST

It was nearly dusk when the small, single-engine plane landed near a Koyokon Athabaskan Indian village, which clung to the banks of a frozen river in northwestern Alaska. The pilot tossed my old, faded green duffle to me, waved and said, "Good night, Father." I wished him well and blessed him as the plane disappeared downriver. It was early November and already 20 degrees below zero, but the real cold had yet to settle into my bones. I zipped up my parka, slung my duffle over my shoulder and began the journey.

As I walked the two miles to the village, I was aware of only two things: my breathing, deep and labored, and the whispers of my mukluks, or skin boots, upon the snow. But my heart listened and longed for so much more.

Halfway to the village I paused at a small cemetery to catch my breath. Painted crosses and picket fences half buried in the snow marked the graves, which seemed peaceful as they slept among the spruce. I bowed my head and prayed for the repose of these departed souls and prayed, too, for my own soul. Truth be told, being a priest these days can be a lonely journey.

When I arrived at the small mission church, I unlocked the door and flipped the light switch. Two bare bulbs struggled to overcome the darkness, illuminating the four pews with a feeble and yellowed light. I tossed my bag on the back pew, and the sound it made echoed through the emptiness of the place. I bowed to the crucifix, on which my Lord hung upon a cross framed by a fan made of gray feathers from the willow grouse. I knelt and prayed before the tabernacle, pondering the meaning of the bread and the body, broken and blessed. This mystery rested inside a unique ciborium, made of birch bark and adorned in native patterns of dyed porcupine quills. This mystery rested, too, within my heart and soul.

It was 10 degrees below zero inside the little church. Many years ago I would have warmed myself twice, once as I split the wood and again as I built the fire. But that day, I just pushed a button on the oil-burning stove. Carrying a blue plastic water jug, I walked about 200 yards to the washeteria, the site of the village's well and water. Struggling back with my 50-plus pounds of water, I thought and prayed about the burdens and blessings of baptism and the cost of discipleship.

The village appeared abandoned as I wandered about in what the mystics might have called a long loneliness. I stood in awe of an evening sky in which the deep clouds of indigo were pierced through with the blood red of a dying sun. The only sounds I heard came from a raven, black as the sky on the night of a new moon. It perched and preached from high atop the steeple's cross. And it cried like some Old Testament prophet demanding an answer. The only reply, however, was the mournful lament of the sled dogs chained to a tree.

Upon countless cabin doors I knocked, but none opened. I walked into the village post office and immediately was assaulted by the pulsating of florescent lights. The church's box was crammed full of useless junk, not unlike my soul. I dumped all the unnecessary clutter into the trash.

The fullness of night had fallen by the time I noticed many "snowgoes," or snowmobiles, parked beside the tribal hall. I walked over, opened the door,

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ART: SHUTTERSTOCK/LORI KLASZ1.O

paused and took off my fog-covered glasses. The light and warmth of the place filled me. I was welcomed and ushered into the pot-latch, or community meal, without a fuss. I took off my parka, and someone offered me a chair. I took my place at the table. My eyes, as well as my heart, searched out the elders, their faces worn by weather, perfected in patience. I noticed how their eyes looked not to the days long gone but rather across the generations and into the eyes of the children—so full of innocence, so full of promise.

Unseen hands set a bowl of steaming hot soup, some half-dry salmon and a scalding cup of tea in front of me. Even before the spoon touched my lips, the hunger I'd felt all day melted. Ever grateful for my priesthood, I gathered into my heart all who were present, both the living and the dead, and for the third time that night I bowed my head and prayed: *Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts—Your gifts to me….* A

ART | EDWARD W. SCHMIDT

HEAVEN BOY

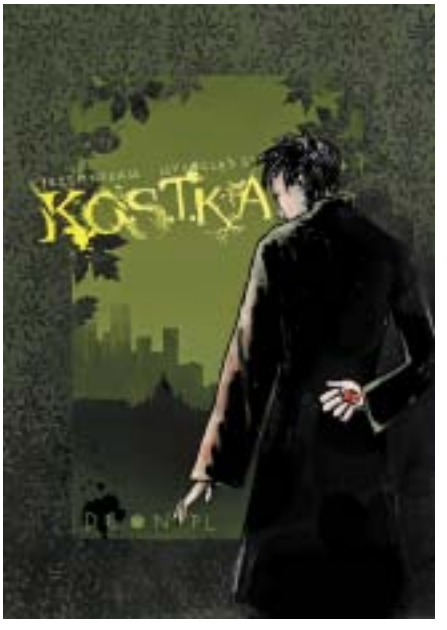
Reimagining a Polish Jesuit saint

Pawel Kostka, standing in front of an image of his brother Stanislaus, wonders, "Who, if not I, should understand him?" Right: "Kostka" mixes modern images into a story from the 1500s. The dice in the young saint's hand are a visual pun on the name Kostka, Polish for "small blocks" or "dice."

ART COURTESY OF PRZEMYSLAW WYSOGLAD

Can comic books and graphic novels tell religious stories in ways that reach young people without diluting the subject? A young Jesuit artist in Krakow, Poland, thinks so. Przemyslaw Wysoglad, S.J., known as Przemo, has combined rich color, clever images and deep reflection in producing his comic paperback **Kostka**, the story of St. Stanislaus Kostka. The saint, born to an aristocratic Polish family in 1550, attended the Jesuit school in Vienna along with his older brother, Pawel. Despite bullying by the worldly Pawel, Stanislaus kept the intense religious leanings he had had since childhood. He even had a vision of the Virgin Mary telling him to become a Jesuit, a vocation he pursued with heroic, holy zeal. Knowing his father would object, he fled to Germany, then to Rome, walking almost 1,000 miles. He became a Jesuit novice, but within a year he fell sick and died on Aug. 15, 1568. He was just 17.

Przemo recently spoke with me about his project. "In 2008 we were preparing Ignatian youth days at our novitiate, and the main topic was the



life of Stanislaus Kostka," he began. "It wasn't my idea to make a comic book; that came from my novitiate friends. I started to think about the comic but didn't get it done before these Ignatian days, only afterward. At first it was very short, eight pages, but my novice master gave me the mission to make a whole book about Stanislaus."

Przemo was born to an artistic family in Wadowice, the hometown of John Paul II. "My whole family is connected with art," he said. "My mother works as an artist; my father was a photographer. Many people from my family studied art. I grew up among artists, and so it was not hard for me to be interested in art.

"I've never studied art, only art history. Everything I learned I learned by myself. Of course, my mom and other members of my family showed me things. I like Art Nouveau (Secession style) and Art Deco, mostly because in this period art had a wide range of forms, mostly in design. My favorite artists are Gustav Klimt and Stanislaw Wyspianski [**Am.** 10/17/11]. I also like the comic book artist Mike Mignola (author of "Hellboy"); he inspires me most."

ON THE WEB
Highlights from the work of Przemysław Wysoglad, S.J.
americamagazine.org/video

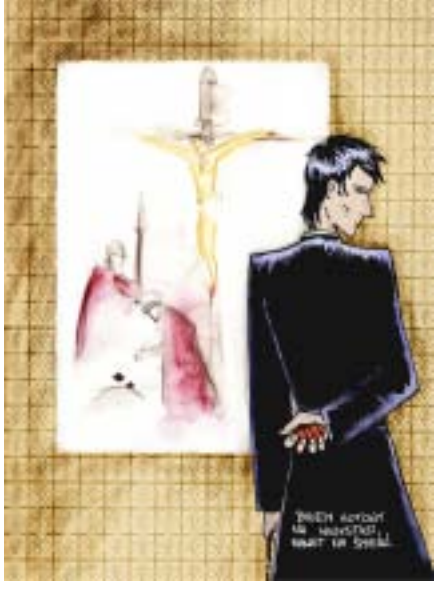
As for the comic book form, Przemo says, "I've always been interested in telling stories rather than just making pictures, so for me the comic book is the best way to combine telling the story and making pictures." He went from Hellboy to a saint.

In "Kostka," Przemo projects modern images and allusions back into scenes from the 1500s: the boys travel to Vienna by train; they go to a disco; the novices have computers; Stanislaus's brother, Pawel is rarely without a cigarette. Hints of Elvis, Batman and pop music appear against 16th-century backgrounds. Readers have had various reactions. "At the beginning they were rather skeptical about putting Stanislaus in modern society," says Przemo. "But after reading this book they said…it was a good idea, because I showed them that in the 16th century youngsters had the same problems as today. That was my main idea."

How did Przemo come to admire the saint? "In the beginning of my novitiate time, pious Stanislaus with his rosy cheeks was very funny for me, but after a year I realized that he was a normal guy, like me and my friends." And Przemo particularly likes his portrait of Stanislaus (p. 23, left): "It is very similar to a painting in our novitiate, and I prayed before this painting each day for almost two years. It's very close to me, and I am very proud of it."

His art connects to tradition. "This is for me a kind of prayer—you know, like orthodox icon painters or, even more, medieval scribes, as in *The Name of the Rose*. This is the best thing I can do, and I want to praise the Lord with

After Stanislaus decides to flee from Vienna and his brother's bullying, he says, "I got on the road right away, traded clothes with a beggar." "I wanted to get to Augsburg as fast as possible." The woman who picks him up hears an Alice Cooper song on the radio.



"I was now ready for anything, even death," Stanislaus says after making the Spiritual Exercises as a Jesuit novice. He did, in fact, die not long after.

that. And of course I want to make things that will lead people to God."

Przemo came to know Jesuits through art history, and he sees art as part of his vocation. "I want as a Jesuit to make comic books—in the future maybe about Francis Xavier, Ignatius Loyola, etc.—and illustrations for books. I also want to work with artists, maybe retreats and formation for them. Right now I'm leading workshops about sacred art for children age 7 to 13: stained glass, icons, mosaics, etc."

Przemo had some trouble getting the book published because the color requirements were greater than typical comic book art and printing costs would be higher. But the print run of 1,000 copies, published by the Jesuit publisher WAM in Krakow, quickly sold out. He has further plans. "Next year in Poland is the year of Peter Skarga, a famous Jesuit preacher at the royal court. Father Rector [the Jesuit superior] has missioned me to make a comic book about him."

It will be fascinating to see how Przemo goes from telling the story of a lively teenage saint to that of a court preacher. No doubt he will make the move with grace.

EDWARD W. SCHMIDT, S.J., *is an associate editor of* ***America****.*

BOOKS | THOMAS J. SHELLEY

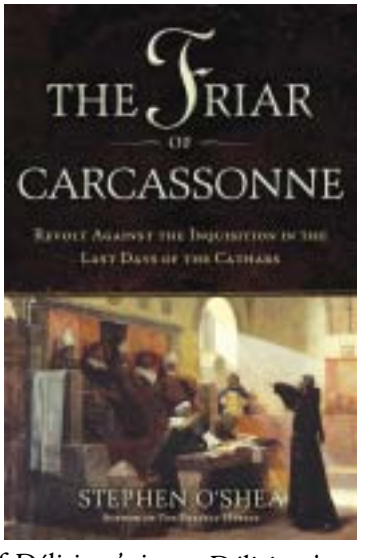
PROFILE IN COURAGE

THE FRIAR OF CARCASSONNE

Revolt Against the Inquisition In the Last Days of the Cathars

By Stephen O'Shea
Walker & Company. 304p $28

One of the greatest books never written was Lord Acton's "History of Freedom." He assembled a research library of 60,000 volumes for the project but failed to produce a single page. If Acton had ever written his magnum opus, one hopes that he might have found room for Bernard Délicieux, the delightfully named Franciscan friar who is the hero, albeit a flawed hero, of this book. A native of Montpellier, Délicieux entered the province of Provence of the Friars Minors in 1284. At considerable cost to himself, he combated the excesses of the papal Inquisition in its campaign against the Cathars, a dissident movement in southern France. Stephen O'Shea, the author of an earlier work on the Cathars, has rescued Délicieux from relative obscurity by tracing his efforts to defend the innocent victims of the ecclesiastical repression of heresy.



The special object of Délicieux's ire was the Friars Preachers, or Dominicans, who were mainly responsible for implementing the Inquisition. He accused them of using tainted and unreliable evidence in their judicial proceedings. One of the most notorious buildings in the city of Carcassonne, where Délicieux was a popular preacher, was the Wall, the popular name for the prison where the Dominicans incarcerated suspected heretics. Not even the dead escaped the attention of the methodical friar-bureaucrats who staffed the Inquisition. There were instances where they exhumed the bodies of deceased suspects and consigned them to the flames.

O'Shea is a gifted storyteller who seems unencumbered by the occupational addiction of some historians to whisper to one another about esoterica in the footnotes. He has a good story to tell and he tells it well. Initially the intrepid Délicieux received strong support from his Franciscan confreres, not only in Carcassonne and Albi, but also elsewhere in Languedoc, the area of southern France that had only recently come under the control of the Capetian kings in Paris. Délicieux was a multitalented character who could rouse the local populace with demagogic sermons in their native *langue d'oc*, and deliver a polished appeal for royal intervention against the Inquisition to King Philip the Fair in the *langue d'oïl* of northern France. He could charm cardinals as they wandered through southern France with the peripatetic papal court, win the favor of Pope Clement V and elude the clutches of the vindictive Dominican pope Benedict XI, whose aversion to him Délicieux more than reciprocated. When Délicieux's prediction of the impend-

ing death of Benedict XI came true, some hailed him as a prophet, while others accused him of making the prophecy come true by poisoning the pope.

One of Délicieux's closest brushes with authority came in 1304. Disappointed with the failure of King Philip the Fair to take stronger measures against the Inquisition, Délicieux risked his neck by dabbling in high treason. He orchestrated a plot to hand over Languedoc to one of the younger sons of the king of Majorca, who was a vassal of the French king. The plotters were hunted down and executed, with the exception of Délicieux, who suffered no harsher penalty than a period of rather pleasant house arrest (at a friary where one of his tablemates was Duns Scotus). One historian speculated that the reason for Délicieux's lenient treatment was that the ruthless French monarch, who was busy destroying the Templars at the time, actually had a grudging respect for the feisty friar from Carcassonne. If true, it is all the more surprising, since O'Shea reminds us that the king's nickname was a reference to his complexion, not his character.

Ironically, after navigating successfully through treacherous shoals on numerous occasions with Talleyrand-like finesse, Délicieux was ultimately done in by his fellow Franciscan friars. His downfall began when he took the side of the Spirituals in their intramural conflict with the Conventuals, although it is not clear to what extent he embraced the apocalypticism and extreme views on poverty of the most radical Spirituals. Délicieux emerged from relative obscurity in May 1317 to lead a contingent of some 60 Spirituals to the papal palace at Avignon, where he made a passionate defense of them before Pope John XXII.

An implacable foe of the Spirituals, the pope ordered Déliceux's arrest on the spot. After two years of incarceration and torture, Délicieux was tried before an ecclesiastical court in Carcassonne. The principal charge against him was that he had not only criticized the corrupt practices of the Inquisition in Languedoc, but that he had criticized the Inquisition itself, a capital offense. The senior prosecutor (who also doubled as the senior judge) was Bishop Jacques Fournier of Pamiers, the future Benedict XII, one of the better Avignon popes.

Broken by two months of torture and harsh cross-examination, Délicieux abandoned his defense, pleaded guilty and threw himself on the mercy of the court. Fournier sentenced him to life imprisonment; but, in view of Délicieux's infirmities, he cancelled the additional penalties that would have kept him manacled in solitary confinement and condemned to a diet of bread and water. When John XXII heard the news, he countermanded Fournier's humane decision and ordered that the sentence should be imposed with full rigor. At that point Délicieux may already have been dead. The friar of Carcassonne perished at an unknown date in the Wall of Carcassonne.

On second thought, Acton might not have considered Délicieux an appropriate candidate for inclusion in his "History of Freedom." As O'Shea points out, neither Délicieux nor any of his contemporaries would pass muster as 19th-century liberals committed to religious tolerance and freedom of conscience, although that did not prevent French anticlericals under the Third Republic from trying to co-opt him as a kindred spirit and partisan of the peculiarly French form of sectarian secularism known as *laïcité*. "Bernard was a follower of Francis, not an imitator," says O'Shea, but even that was no mean achievement in the brutal and turbulent world of 14th-century Languedoc. If it is an anachronism to hail him as a forerunner of the dawn of religious freedom, he deserves credit and respect as a champion of justice and fairness in an intolerant age. No one will mistake this book for hagiography. O'Shea presents Délicieux with the warts fully visible, which makes his portrait all the more convincing and makes the wily friar "with feet of clay" all the more human and sympathetic.

MSGR. THOMAS J. SHELLEY, *a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, is professor of church history at Fordham University.*

FRANKLIN FREEMAN

A WRITER AT SEA

HEMINGWAY'S BOAT
Everything He Loved in Life And Lost, 1934-1961

By Paul Hendrickson
Knopf. 544p $30

The thesis of this book—by turns biography, literary criticism and meditation—is that, yes, Ernest Hemingway was a cruel bastard but that his admittedly vile behavior to his loved ones has been scrutinized to the exclusion of any good that he ever did. Paul Hendrickson, formerly a staff writer for The Washington Post and currently a faculty member of the creative writing program at the University of Pennsylvania, has redressed the imbalance. He uses Hemingway's boat, Pilar, as a motif and dominant image in this chronological narrative.

Not only was Hemingway not vile through and through, Hendrickson writes, he was trying to be a saint:

> I have come to believe deeply that Ernest Hemingway, however unpostmodern it may sound, was

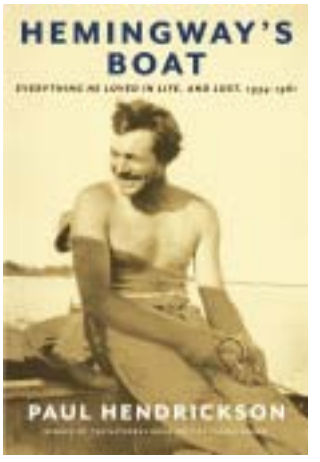
on a lifelong quest for sainthood, and not just literary sainthood, and that at nearly every turn, he defeated himself. How? "By betrayals of himself, and what he believed in," as the dying writer with gangrene going up his leg, says so bitterly in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," one of Hemingway's greatest short stories.... Hemingway once said... "I have always had the illusion it was more important, or as important, to be a good man as to be a great writer."

So Hendrickson tells us not only of incidents when Hemingway spit in his fourth wife's face and machine-gunned sharks so they would "apple core" his friend's record bluefin tuna, but also of his kindness to various people, the most important of whom, in terms of Pilar, are Walter Houk and his wife, Nita. In the 1950s they were often guests of the Hemingways on Pilar, and their marriage reception was held at Hemingway's Cuban home, Finca Vigia (Lookout Point).

ON THE WEB
John P. McCarthy reviews the film "War Horse."
americamagazine.org/culture

Houk has written in magazines and journals about fishing with Hemingway, and even peddled a memoir around; but, in Hendrickson's opinion, it did not sell because it did not have enough dirt. He quotes Houk as saying, "My whole experience with Ernest Hemingway is the conventional *dis*wisdom. He didn't wreck my life. He treated me kindly. He treated my wife, Nita, kindly." It was Walter Houk who urged Hendrickson "to try to rescue Hemingway from his seemingly set-in-stone image of immortal writer and immortal bitch of a human being...."

Hendrickson does so, in Hemingway's words, well and truly. The book is not without its problems—it is a bit of what Henry James called a "loose baggy monster"—the main flaw being that the controlling image of Pilar weakens as the book progresses; and the theme of parents and children, always present, wrests the book from the boat. Hendrickson succinctly expresses this theme in the section on Arnold Samuelson, the aspiring writer who became a mate on Pilar for a year, and on Samuelson's relationship with his children: "The terrible things we do and hand to our children, wittingly and unwittingly."



These terrible things include blaming an ex-wife's death on a son's arrest for cross-dressing—which is what Hemingway did to his youngest son, Gregory, known as Gigi, who fought valiantly against what appears to have been manic depression and a cross-dressing compulsion often accompanied by violent outbursts. Having had a sex-change operation, he ended up dying in a holding cell in Miami, dressed in drag and going by the name of Gloria. He died of a heart attack almost to the same minute and on the same date as his mother, Pauline, had died 50 years earlier in California (after she had an excruciating telephone conversation with Hemingway), a mother who confessed to her son that she could not stand "horrid little children."

This part of the book is agonizingly sad, as is the last chapter on Hemingway's decline and suicide. But a few days before Hemingway shot himself, hearing that a friend's son was sick and entering the hospital, he wrote the boy a letter from his room at the Mayo Clinic: "Saw some good bass jumping in the river," he wrote, and "I hope we'll both be back there shortly and can joke about our hospital experiences together." Scholars are fairly certain this letter was the last thing Hemingway ever wrote, and it is amazing he could write it at all, as he had been unable to write a line for months. As Hendrickson comments several times in his text—it is the motto of the book, really—"Amid so much ruin, still the beauty."

Paul Hendrickson's *Hemingway's Boat*, despite its faults, is not only the best book on Hemingway I have ever read, but it is also one of the best books I have ever read, period. Where Hemingway was contemptible, Hendrickson says so; but he also reminds readers that Hemingway could also be, and longed with his whole heart to be, noble and good and true.

FRANKLIN FREEMAN, *a freelance writer whose work has appeared in The Boston Review and New Oxford Review, lives in Saco, Me.*

LETTERS

Conservative Cafeterianism

Thank you for two essays in your recent issue: "Remembering Justice," by Peter Henriot, S.J., and "Blessed Are the Rich," by John Kavanaugh, S.J. (11/14). Kavanaugh points out George Weigel's consistent attempt to minimalize and "denigrate" Catholic social teaching on social justice with his trivializing comments on the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace statement on the economy and Pope Benedict's "Caritas in Veritate." Weigel is not alone. Inner circles in the Vatican are complicit, as in their attempt to push into oblivion the 1971 "Justice in the World." In both American conservative and Vatican voices, cafeteria Catholicism is alive and well.

WAYNE HELLMANN, O.F.M.CONV.
St. Louis, Mo.

Which Truth Is Central?

I am fascinated by the response of the Austrian bishops in the Signs of the Times report "Laypeople May Not Say Mass" (11/28). To what central truth of our Catholic faith do they refer? I have thought that the central truth is the death and resurrection of Christ. The implication of the story is that only ordained priests can preside at Mass and that this is a central truth. One doubts that the apostolic church was blessed with seminaries and ordained priests in every community of worship among those Jews who followed Jesus as the Messiah in the first century. But they celebrated Mass at those gatherings.

J. H. KEFFER, M.D.
Murphy, N. C.

Get Out of the Kitchen

I read "Laypeople May Not Celebrate Mass" with great reflection. The church in Austria and its Christians should exercise what we call reverential dialogue. It is coming together as a family to resolve challenges. The church is not the bishops. It is the people, but they have their own leaders.

In the basic theology of the church, the laity count; their presence is significant; they should lead in the transformation, cooperate with the ecclesial structures and attain a self-discovery about their role in the church.

Once the Austrian faithful discover that they are not alone, they will see themselves in the universal church. It is important to listen to the bishops and support them. They are mere servants and have to represent Christ's Gospel, which may be perceived as outdated in the modern world. As the saying goes, if you can't resist the smoke in the kitchen, don't be choked; get out into the open air. Then you can see what needs to be done inside.

NYAMUNGA JOSEPH
Nairobi, Kenya,

Defending Israel

Re your editorial "War Is Not An Option" (11/28): Just as Egypt's government was taken unaware by the Arab Spring, as the Soviet Union surprised us by collapsing at our feet, and as Israel was stunned by the overnight disappearance of the regional balance on which it depended, so too our congresspeople, looked down upon by 80 percent of our population, are deluded in the belief that we are prepared to defend Israel with the bodies of our sons.

The day our sons and daughters are drafted to defend Israel, whose existence is not essential to us, our politicians will be called to account for having identified us with Israel. No American has heard a full explanation for why we have a "special relationship" with Israel.

HARRY REYNOLDS
Scarsdale, N.Y.

It's Dog-Eat-Dog

Re "Will the Majority Rule?" (Current Comment, 12/12): It may be that as I have gotten older and, yes, richer, I have become more politically "liberal." That started under the influence of Joe Towle, S.J., at Xavier High School in New York and continued as I went south to work in the late 1960s. I will never forget being referred to as a "N-loving papist," though at the time I didn't know what papist meant.

Now the country is changing again, but not for the good. We have replaced the equality contract with the Me First contract, and Catholics go along with it. My pastor will not speak of social justice for "fear of offending" people. But they need to be offended. Today the United States wealth ratio is near what it was in

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1929 and not too different from what it was in Czarist Russia. Grover Norquist would return the United States to the policies of 1925: no Social Security, no S.E.C., no F.D.I.C., Medicare or Medicaid. We will all live in company housing and pay our rent in company scrip. Is America really a diverse country that believes in morality? Or is this a man-eat-man world?

PETER E. SCHWIMER
Staten Island, N.Y.

What Women Will Lead Us?

Re "A Spirit-Led Future" (Editorial, 12/12): I see a renewal in vocations to the priesthood, but the church is not ministering well to women. The feminine side of the church has not grown in the last 50 years. There is no dialogue among women because the role of women is a dangerous topic and many do not dare to talk about it. Since all dialogue about women is assumed to be about women's ordination, no other useful conversation can take place. Most of the conversation about how women can lead a satisfying moral life happens in the secular context, so theology's contribution is left out. Until women are treated as adults in the church, it will fail to develop much-needed adult women leaders, without whom women will continue to fall away.

LISA WEBER
Spokane, Wash.

Spiritual Food Is on the Table

If so many are not looking to the church to satisfy their spiritual hunger, where are they looking? It's easy to see that certain kinds of contemplative retreats, meditation workshops and wisdom schools are very popular. People flock to yoga classes. My parish centering prayer group is thriving. The bottom line is that most people hunger for spiritual formation, not doctrinal imprinting, in an atmosphere of embodied practice, nonsentimental but profound mystical devotion and open cross-spirituality inquiry that draws on all the great traditions. There is a place for the Catholic Church at the table.

BETH CIOFFOLETTI
Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Acclaim to Ordain

Certainly the Austrian bishops are correct that appointing lay people to preside at the Eucharist is "simply unsustainable" (Signs of the Times, 12/5), but does it have to be an either/or situation? Presumably these "dissident church members" have particular people in mind. Presumably they are recognized to possess the qualities and charisms for ministry and feel they are willing and called to serve the church in this way. Let the "dissidents" propose them for ordination. Then, if they meet the qualifications, let the bishops ordain them for the ministry. I write this on the feast of St. Ambrose, famously ordained both presbyter and bishop as a result of acclamation by the faithful.

MARK A. SCOTT, O.C.S.O.
Gethsemani Abbey
Trappist, Ky.

The New Word

Peter Feldmeier's Christmas commentaries, "The Gift of God" and "Reflecting Love" (The Word, 12/19), are excellent. He uses biblical categories and exegetical detail as matter for serious speculation from principles of ascetical life in our tradition. He notes that in the Advent readings the Jews dared to call on God for real help after they got home. The idea of waiting for God to rebuild what was once thought indestructible befits anyone with a critical awareness these days.

JAMES McCORMICK
Kansas City, Mo.

Where's the Beef?

Thomas Massaro, S.J., a teacher of social ethics at Boston College, mentions in "Occupation Therapy" (11/28) the possibility that the Occupy Wall Street groups might have made more headway for changes in our economy in the last 10 weeks than Catholic social teaching has accomplished in the last 120 years. Not so!

Open minded though Father Massaro is, he did not give any details about what the group stands for. They "spur our conscience," as he says, but they offer no way to cure the abuse of wealth.

Why, for example, are our politicians unwilling to put reasonable taxes on the income of millionaires, billionaires and giant corporations? Why not tax estates when billionaires die? Isn't it because political leaders are bought off by big donations from corporations and millionaires? Why picket Wall Street when we should be blaming politicians who sell out to the very wealthy at the expense of all of us?

DANIEL LYONS
Bloomsbury, N.J.

Study Vatican Statement

Thanks to **America** for its editorial "For the 99 Percent" (11/14) on the statement from the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace analyzing the "sputtering world economy." We members of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good agree with your recommendation that the Catholic universities study it and the issue of inequality. Our office received over 300 messages in support of the document.

We were disappointed, but not surprised, that the conservative Catholic organizations dismissed it for superficial reasons that had nothing to do with its message. The issue of inequality and the decline of economic mobility will affect the future of millions of children in the United States, 25 percent of whom now live in poverty.

FRED ROTONDARO
Washington, D.C.

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Revealing a Mystery

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (B), JAN. 8, 2012

Readings: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-13; Eph 3:2-6; Mt 2:1-12

The Gentiles are co-heirs, members of the same body (Eph 3:6)

Most everyone likes a good mystery. As the narrative starts, we begin to wonder how it is going to come out, and increasingly we just have to know. This need to uncover the mystery lures us on. One important rule is that the conclusion cannot come out of the blue. Even with false leads and red herrings, the mystery's conclusion is satisfying only if we have been given hints along the way. Another rule is that once the mystery is revealed, the whole plot ought to make sense.

God, it seems, has been luring us all along with his own mystery. Over 20 times in his letters Paul refers to God's mystery being revealed. In our second reading, from the Letter to the Ephesians, he tells us that "the mystery was made known to me by revelation." Further, this is the key to "insight into the mystery of Christ" (3:4). And what is that mystery, this key into Christ? Gentiles belong to the same body and are co-heirs and partners in Christ Jesus. This may seem anticlimactic, but do not count Paul (or God) short here. It was a highly controversial idea.

Like any good mystery, hints were laid from the beginning. In Genesis we learn that all the families will be blessed through Abraham (Gn 12:3). Isaiah regularly declares that God's glory and salvation reach to the ends of the earth and that God desires all people to know him (e.g., Is 40:5; 49:6). Peter even sees the Pentecost event as a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy that God's Spirit would be poured out over all peoples (Acts 2:14-21).

Today's first reading, from the Book of Isaiah, reflects this universalism with emphasis that the glory and light for the world are centered on Israel. Israel is the magnet drawing people in. Nations who are covered in "darkness" and "thick clouds" shall "walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance." The nations will also bring gifts to God's people and offerings to the temple. Isaiah mentions gold and frankincense.

The Gospel reading is about the Magi following the star that announces the newborn King of the Jews. Their gifts have been traditionally understood to refer to Christ's royal (gold) and priestly (frankincense) dignity. The myrrh, a kind of perfumed ointment, anticipated his sacrificial death. These gifts from the nations are not the only Old Testament parallels. Consider, for example, that Jesus escapes from Herod's slaying of male infants as did Moses from Pharaoh. Interestingly, Moses and Israel are blessed by Balaam, a *magus* (singular of *magi*) who comes from the East (Nm 22-24). More clues.

The word *epiphany* means manifestation. Surely this includes the star that manifested the birth of the savior. Here the light that Isaiah spoke of shines above the world's darkness, announcing the King of the Jews to the whole world. The Epiphany feast also continues to celebrate the birth of Christ, the ultimate manifestation of God (Col 1:15). Finally, we celebrate the Magi themselves. Their journey to the newborn King of the Jews, their worship of him and gifts for him manifest that God's universal salvation has come. Paul sees this last part as the core mystery of Christ.

While God's will for universal salvation seems obvious to us, really embracing it, really integrating it into our hearts is as challenging as it gets. We may all believe that everyone is created in God's image and loved and cherished by God. Still, we could check ourselves for any penchant to marginalize another. Who in our lives do we tend to dismiss or disregard? While we might easily say that everyone is created in God's image, that God loves all and that all matter, is that really how we live? To truly penetrate this mystery requires that we take its implications seriously in our lives. A great epiphany is to know the glory of God's love reflected in everyone we meet. It is a profound mystery, indeed.

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Take time this week to imagine the Magi's visit and their witness.
- Consider as modern day magi three persons you are likely to marginalize.
- What are the gifts they bring? What mystery do they reveal?

ART: TAD DUNNE

PETER FELDMEIER *is the Murray/Bacik Professor of Catholic Studies at the University of Toledo.*

Into the Light

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), JAN. 15, 2012

Readings: 1 Sm 3:3-19; Ps 40:2-10; 1 Cor 6:13-20; Jn 1:35-42

He said to them, "Come, and you will see" (Jn 1:39).

The contrasts between darkness and light, and blindness and light, dominate the Scriptures this week. Consider the first reading. The young apprentice Samuel is awakened three times in the night, while sleeping in the temple. He thinks he is being summoned by the high priest Eli, but it is the Lord. Finally, instead of going to Eli, he listens to what God promises, which "will cause the ears of everyone who hears it to ring." God plans to strip the priesthood from Eli's family. There is good reason for this. Eli's priest-sons were so corrupt that they stole parts of sacrifices in front of the pilgrims themselves and slept with women at the very door of the temple. Eli knew it and did little.

There are two interesting lines just before this reading. We read that at the time "a revelation of the Lord was uncommon and vision infrequent" (1 Sm 3:1) and that "the lamp of God was not yet extinguished" (3:3a). Why these details, as they seem to have no relation to the story? Oh, but they do. Eli was old and blind, and his blindness reflects the darkness that Israel was under. Without holiness in the priesthood, there would be no revelations or visions. God would seem distant because the people were distant from God. The light of the Lord was growing dim but not yet extinguished. Our reading ends with Samuel getting up in the early morning and opening the temple door. The sun's light now shines into the dark temple. We subsequently find no shortage of divine communications to Samuel.

The language and insight align well with the Gospel. We are still in the first chapter of John, where in the prologue we see that the Word that became flesh was "the light of the human race," while those who did not accept him remained in darkness. In today's Gospel John the Baptist points out Jesus to his disciples: "Behold the Lamb of God." Andrew and another disciple approach Jesus and ask, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" Jesus responds, "Come, and you will see." The statement seems to possess a double meaning: a straightforward "come and see" and "if you come to where I abide, you will end up seeing." This is the great invitation. Still, seeing ends up being quite a challenge.

In the New Testament, darkness and blindness are often metaphors for sin. Actually, the Greek word *skotia* means both darkness and sin. Following this, the desert fathers and mothers used to call cultivated spiritual blindness *scotosis*. When we do not want to address something, we humans have a great gift for remaining blind and in the dark. The *scotosis* of the scribes and Pharisees was particularly alarming to Jesus. They were supposed to see the best and represent the light, but they were the blindest, intent on darkness.

Humans must be the only species with the capacity to lie to themselves and end up actually believing the lie. How odd. We have all the information: we know the liar, the one being lied to and the lie itself. (Think about your golf score claims, if you don't know what I mean.) There is a Buddhist axiom: Awareness is no good news. It can be hard to live in the light.

But the opportunity to rid ourselves of the shackles of darkness offers such possibilities. St. Paul, challenging us in the second reading to live holy lives, offers us a self-image as a temple of the Lord. We can be like Samuel, opening the doors of our hearts and lives to the morning sun. In contrast to a life of infrequent revelations and visions, we can learn to see with new eyes traces of grace. "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J., reminds us.

Perhaps the most moving account of such enlightenment is that written by Thomas Merton in *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*: "At the corner of Fourth and Walnut…I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs…. Now I realize what we all are. And if only everybody could realize this! But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun."

PETER FELDMEIER

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Is there any spiritual blindness in your life?
- Merely hold this *scotosis* up to the Lord.
- Consider how God is present in your ordinary life.

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