America

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Saving Subsidiarity
VINCENT J. MILLER

Spiritual Friendships
DREW CHRISTIANSEN

Politics And the Pulpit
NICHOLAS P. CAFARDI

OF MANY THINGS

I woke up Sunday morning July 1 to the voice of National Public Radio's Krista Tippet posing gentle questions to Jacob Needleman, the philosopher, about his book *American Soul: Rediscovering the Wisdom of the Founders*. The program, entitled "The Inward Work of Democracy," was exploring Needham's view that every achievement of American freedom resulted from a spiritual advance of conscience (http://tunein.com/topic/?TopicId=39623772).

What I found remarkable was how much Needleman found in the life and thought of the founders that Anglo-American philosophy since World War II has made unfashionable: modesty and restraint in public office, the balance between individuals and community, conscience understood as a higher calling and the need for inner freedom among people who would rule themselves.

The following Monday I discovered in my mailbox a new book, *Reborn on the Fourth of July: The Challenge of Faith, Patriotism and Conscience*, an autobiographical account by Logan Mehl-Laituri. The author is an army veteran turned noncombatant conscientious objector, who now lectures about veterans' issues and Christian perspectives on militarism and nationalism for the Centurion Guild, a group he co-founded for other veterans wrestling with issues of "faith and service."

These serendipitous happenings prompted me to ponder the spiritual lessons of the American experience. The Fourth of July will be weeks gone by the time this column appears in print (it was posted on **America**'s Web site in early July), and that other feast of freedom, Bastille Day, will have passed as well. But doing a national account of conscience seems not just right for the season but necessary in these times.

Professor Needleman offers some starting points: the republican modesty of George Washington in stepping down from command of the Continental Army and then from the presidency; Jefferson's penning of ideals he did not live up to himself and his proposal of a bill of rights; the religious sense of equality motivating Quakers in the antislavery movement; the recognition of national failings by Frederick W. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln, as well as Lincoln's magnanimity—"with malice toward none, with charity for all"—and Walt Whitman's hope for America.

As an American Catholic, I look back with gratitude to John Carroll and the Catholic clergy of the young country, who, unlike later immigrants, were able to embrace the democratic virtues of the new nation without defensiveness. Naturally I also look to John Courtney Murray, S.J., who articulated a rapprochement between the later immigrant church and the American experience. From Murray and his traditional conservative interlocutors I learned to value "ordered liberty" as integral to democracy and to prize dialogue as essential not only to a healthy democracy but also to authentic theological development and a truly catholic church.

I also look to Josiah Royce, whose philosophy of loyalty articulates the religious quest of Americans for meaningful, committed freedom in community. Royce later inspired Martin Luther King Jr. with the inclusive vision of "the Great Community" as the destination of the civil rights movement and the longer American journey through history.

Midsummer should not only be a time to celebrate with fireworks, hamburgers and franks but to examine for ourselves, and to relish, "the blessings of liberty" bestowed upon us.

DREW CHRISTIANSEN, S.J.

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ON THE WEB

Edward W. Schmidt, S.J., reports on a Jesuit mission on a **Lakota Sioux** reservation. Plus, Charles C. Camosy talks on our podcast about engaging the work of philosopher **Peter Singer**. All at americamagazine.org.

Small Victories

Although comprehensive immigration reform remains a pipe dream, two small victories can be declared this summer. In Arizona v. the United States, the Supreme Court struck down three out of four provisions of the Arizona immigration law of April 2010: (a) the provision making it a crime for undocumented immigrants to apply for a job or hold one, (b) the provision making it a crime for an immigrant to fail to register with the federal government and (c) the provision authorizing warrantless arrests if the police have probable cause to think a person has done something deportable under federal law.

Days before that court ruling, President Obama issued an executive order lifting the threat of deportation that has hung over young immigrants brought to the United States before the age of 16. Those 30 or younger who have lived in the country for at least five years, are in school, are high school graduates or are military veterans and have no criminal records will no longer be deported. And they will be eligible to apply for a legal work permit, renewable every two years. Unlike the Dream Act, a bill proposed repeatedly in Congress but not passed, this executive order offers immigrants no path to citizenship. Still, it allows some 800,000 young immigrants to remain in the United States and work with legal status.

We hope that the young immigrant activists, or "Dreamers," who have worked for reform are inspired by these small wins and that fairness in the form of more far-reaching immigration reform will soon prevail.

Jobs, Jobs, Jobs

Jobs are clearly the number one concern of voters this election year. But whether or not there is a change of occupant in the White House, people are beginning to grasp that more than the government investment or tax breaks the candidates are offering will be necessary to once more give American workers a stake in the U. S. economy.

Like the piano players who lost their livelihoods to the player piano, every day men and women are being disloged by the digital revolution from productive roles in society. In their new book, *Race Against the Machine*, Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee show how computerization is hollowing out the American middle class, with everyone from ticket agents to tax preparers to draftsmen, journalists and even lawyers losing jobs to machines. Unemployment and underemployment are threats not just to our standard of living, but even more to the dignity of workers. For, as Blessed John Paul II reminded us in his encyclical letter "On Human Work" (1981), labor is essential to our identity as human beings.

Whoever wins the White House, the challenges of re-engineering the economy will be enormous. Government, business and higher education must work together to promote an economic renewal that places greater worth on workers. The raw-meat capitalism of the last 30 years must be replaced by a more responsible economic system. Germany's social market model demonstrates that capitalist systems that minimize inequality and let workers benefit from growth are feasible. An economy in which productivity and profitability grow but employment and wages shrink is neither politically nor economically sustainable.

Saying We're Sorry

Why did it take so long for the United States to formally express regret for air strikes in November that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers? Partly, at least, because the Pentagon believed it had firm evidence that NATO forces were responding to a sustained and organized attack by the Pakistani military—where no apology was in order. But sometimes we say "sorry" to break out of a stalemate between proud wills in the interest of better relations. That is what Secretary of State Hillary Clinton did on July 3. By saying sorry, she gave a face-saving way out for Pakistan to allow the United States transit for crucial supply convoys to Afghanistan and to keep routes open for the drawdown of U.S. forces from that country in 2014.

Learning to say we are sorry is becoming increasingly necessary in U.S. foreign military policy. The apology on July 3 was an outlier precisely because the Pentagon believed the November attack was a lawful defense, not a taking of innocent life. But in an era of cross-border terrorism and counterterrorist drone warfare with noncombatant casualties, the question of how to say sorry for military errors will remain a difficult one for global leaders.

Many innocents have already been caught in the crossfire of the war on terror. If the United States seeks to wage warfare from afar, then it should be clear about the damage incurred and should take responsibility for its mistakes in judgment that result in civilian deaths.

The art of apology is a delicate one. Global leaders may reasonably differ on how it should be applied. Sometimes a call to offer condolences may be preferable to a formal apology. Saying sorry should not be seen as a sign of weakness, but as an inescapable element of statecraft today.

After the Fortnight

The Fortnight for Freedom, a series of public activities sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops opposing infringements on religious freedom, concluded on July 4. The immediate impact of the campaign, however, remains unclear. Reportedly only some 70 of the nation's 198 dioceses announced programs and activities for the fortnight. In some, little attention was paid to the effort; in others it was energetically promoted. The campaign did, however, receive a pre-Independence Day gift from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth District: the voiding of a Baltimore City ordinance that required pro-life pregnancy centers to post signs indicating they do not provide abortion or contraceptive services. But the chief test of the campaign, the effort to persuade the Obama administration to drop the narrow definition of exempt religious institutions under the Affordable Care Act, remains unsettled.

If the White House perceives the mixed response to the fortnight as cause for hope that it can put its contretemps with the Catholic Church in its rear view mirror, it is badly mistaken. The administration might better turn its attention to other pertinent developments: a lawsuit filed by the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago against the Health and Human Services Department mandate and a statement from the Catholic Health Association that rejected the accommodation offered by the administration and called for a broader religious exemption that would cover Catholic health institutions.

President Obama has often described his brief career as a community organizer in Chicago, a job bankrolled by a consortium of South Side Catholic parishes, as an inspiring, formative experience. And it was the pivotal support of C.H.A.'s president and chief executive officer, Sister Carol Keehan, of the Daughters of Charity, that made possible the president's Affordable Care Act. When old friends try to tell you something is amiss, it is wise to listen. Indeed the president could, to paraphrase Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington, D.C., make this problem go away by simply continuing the long-standing practice of allowing Catholic institutions to define themselves.

Preserving religious liberty, a God-given and constitutionally guaranteed freedom, requires the vigorous but measured participation of the church and her leaders. (See Nicholas P. Cafardi, "Politics and the Pulpit," in this issue.) That participation takes place across many civic arenas: in town meetings, in community gatherings, on opinion pages and in courthouses, as well as in the halls of Congress and the Oval Office. Americans like to believe their rights as they understand them are absolute, but in fact their practice is periodically redefined by legislative, judicial and even administrative decisions. If the price of freedom is eternal vigilance, then Catholics must be prepared to engage in debate wherever settled agreement on our rights is at risk of shifting.

The mistake of the religious liberty campaign has been to personalize the problem, assigning singular blame to President Obama. It has also inflated the controversy by trying to make a variety of different local, state and national problems appear to be a vast conspiracy. Its hyperbolic rhetoric, while it charges up "true believers," hardens the hearts of adversaries and alarms people in the middle. It is possible that in overplaying its hand, the campaign, its agents and allies have diminished their ability to share in shaping policy.

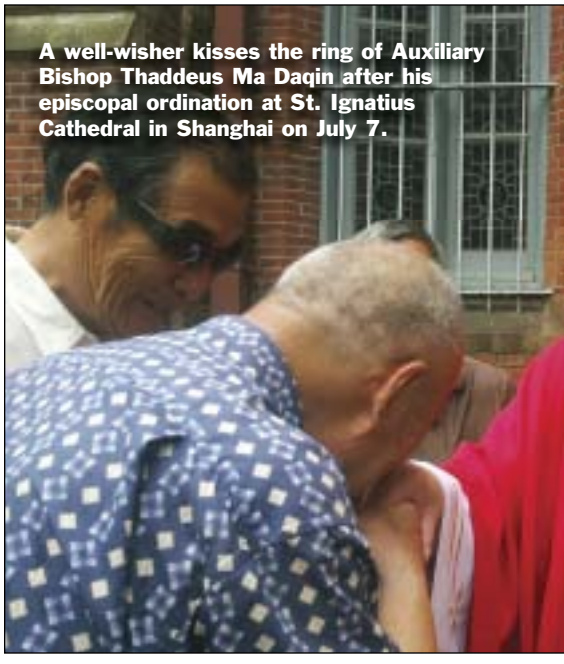
Making public policy is a political process, with back-and-forth, give-and-take. For 40 years, anti-natalists in Congress and successive administrations worked hard to sustain funding for population control in U.S. foreign aid, as pro-life advocates fought to ban it. In 1984 President Ronald Reagan put an end to funding. The restrictions were rescinded by President Bill Clinton in 1993 and reinstated by President George W. Bush in 2001. Similarly, because of its political volatility, the Hyde Amendment, a rider on federal health appropriations that forbids spending on abortions, requires an annual vote. Many actors in government and outside it influenced those policies. The same is true of the Affordable Care Act. Catholics must continue to work to get religious exemption language right.

In recent years Catholic institutions have made defensible moral compromises to deal with state and local health-insurance mandates. Abroad, other bishops' conferences have likewise responded to similar secular challenges without apocalyptic appeals. More attention should be paid to preparing creative, alternative responses before the church finds itself saving face by shutting doors, a response a few bishops have threatened. That outcome would be unfair to the millions who have come to rely on church institutions and one surely undesired by President Obama no less than by most bishops.

CNS PHOTO/SAM LUCERO, THE COMPASS

CHINA

Tensions Persist Between Beijing And Rome on Bishop Ordinations


A well-wisher kisses the ring of Auxiliary Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin after his episcopal ordination at St. Ignatius Cathedral in Shanghai on July 7.

The tug of war between the Vatican and Beijing over the appointment of bishops has once again heated up after the ordination on July 7 of a new auxiliary bishop in Shanghai. The Vatican expressed its satisfaction with the licit ordination of Auxiliary Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin in a statement released on July 10. Although the Vatican complained about the presence at the ceremony of a bishop not in communion with Rome, it said this papally approved ordination "is encouraging and is to be welcomed." Unfortunately Chinese authorities quickly lost their enthusiasm for Bishop Ma. During his ordination ceremony he renounced his role in the government-approved Catholic Patriotic Association.

Local church sources who attended Bishop Ma's ordination said that he was led away shortly after the ceremony by an unidentified group of people and has since been prohibited from assuming the duties of his office. His whereabouts remain unknown. The bishop did not show up for his first Mass at St. Ignatius Cathedral after telling the congregation at his ordination that he would step down from the local and national offices of the Catholic Patriotic Association to devote himself entirely to his ministry.

Bishop Ma is the first government-approved bishop in recent years to announce publicly that he would give up his duties with the Patriotic Association. On July 11 two government-sanctioned Catholic Church organizations announced an investigation of the United Nations on the plight of the Nuba people and urging an acceleration of the resolution of the final status of disputed Sudanese territory. Bishop Gassis' sprawling Diocese of El Obeid includes a number of Sudan hotspots, including Darfur, Abyei and South Kordofan. The relative inattention of the West to the suffering in the Nuba mountains, says Bishop Gassis, has become a mortal threat to the villagers of the region. The Khartoum regime's low-level but relentless attacks against the Nuba people, he charges, repeat a pattern of ethnic cleansing last employed in Darfur. He fears that without international intervention, the Nuba people could be wiped out, driven from their ancestral lands or forced into an undesired assimilation with the Arab north.

According to Bishop Gassis, the

SUDAN

Ethnic Cleansing in South Kordofan?

With most international attention fixed on the newly independent South Sudan in its continuing dispute over territory and oil revenue with the government of Sudan, in Khartoum, the northern regime has continued a campaign of indiscriminate bombing, harassment and starvation against the Nuba people in South Kordofan Province. The encircled territory is held by rebel forces seeking autonomy from the regime of Omar Hassan al-Bashir. In a standoff with the rebels, the military of northern Sudan has maintained a climate of terror through almost daily bombing raids that have driven the Nuba people from their villages and prevented them from attending to their crops or livestock as they seek refuge in the Nuba mountains.

"The situation is becoming grimmer and grimmer every day," said the Sudanese Bishop Macram Max Gassis, M.C.C.I. "Aerial bombardment by Antonov Russian-made planes and by MIG's has become the order of the day. The victims, as usual, are the children, the women and the elderly because the men, they are carrying their guns and they are going to fight their battle, but it is the civilians who are paying the price for the struggle to maintain their [Nuba] identity."

Bishop Gassis was in New York on July 11, attempting to focus the atten-

tion into Bishop Ma's ordination. A church source in Shanghai said on July 11 that the bishops who participated in the ordination ceremony also have been included in the government investigation. Neither government group is recognized by the Vatican. Pope Benedict XVI's letter to Catholics in China in 2007 stated that the aim of the government's Patriotic Association in upholding the national independence of the church in China was incompatible with Catholic doctrine.

Questions linger on the whereabouts of Bishop Ma. Some suggest that he has been arrested, others that he has been restricted to the grounds of the Sheshan Seminary in Shanghai. A Shanghai priest said Bishop Ma was having a difficult time. "It is painful but is good for the conscience of the church in China. His witness is an encouragement for our Catholics, so we can only pray for him," the priest said.

In a related development the Chinese priest Joseph Yue Fusheng has been automatically excommunicated for allowing himself to be illicitly ordained a bishop despite repeated warnings from the Vatican. "The Holy See does not recognize him as bishop of the Apostolic Administration of Harbin, and he lacks the authority to govern the priests and the Catholic community in the Province of Heilongjiang," the Vatican said in the same statement on July 10.

Father Yue was ordained bishop of Harbin on July 6 without a papal mandate, following an acrimonious exchange of notifications between the Vatican and Beijing.

The Vatican said on July 10 that it was still committed to dialogue with Chinese authorities but warned against continued illicit celebrations and episcopal ordinations without papal approval, saying such acts not only harm dialogue but also "cause division and bring suffering to the Catholic communities in China and the universal church."

Nuba people are African and whether Christian or Muslim would prefer complete federal autonomy or to join with South Sudan rather than remain tethered to the Arab north. "[The Nuba people] say, 'We are not Arabs.... Yes, some of us are Muslim, but we live in peace as Nuba in a very extended family.' You find Catholics; you find Protestants; you find Africans of traditional beliefs and you find Muslims," said Bishop Gassis. "It is a beautiful way of finding unity among diversity." He worries that the attacks on the border areas are part of an effort from the north, with military aid from Iran, to Islamicize the Nuba people.

Bishop Gassis said the indiscriminate bombings have been killing and maiming with shrapnel; lately some new chemical agent has also been used by Sudan's bombers, and el Obeid's medical teams, already overwhelmed by the volume of the wounded, face a new challenge treating serious burn wounds from this unknown chemical.

The United States, Britain and Norway helped broker the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, which brought an end to decades of war between the Muslim north and Christian and traditional south. Bishop Gassis said these major international players need to resume their efforts and finish the job in South Kordofan and other Sudan provinces. He urged Catholics in the United States to bring the suffering of the Nuba people to the attention of their members of Congress with the hope of bringing more pressure on the Bashir regime to commit to a cease-fire and renegotiate the political status of South Kordofan.

A wounded child is treated at a field clinic maintained by the Diocese of El Obeid after a bombing attack by Sudan forces.

Lost Confidence

Forty-four percent of Americans have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in "the church or organized religion" today, just below the low points Gallup has found in recent years—45 percent in 2002 and 46 percent in 2007. This follows a long-term decline in confidence in religion since the 1970s. In 1973, "the church or organized religion" was the most highly rated institution in Gallup's measure of confidence in institutions and it continued to rank first in most years through 1985, outranking the military and the U.S. Supreme Court. That began to change in the mid- to late 1980s as confidence in organized religion first fell below 60 percent. The rate returned to 60 percent in 2001, only to be rocked the following year by charges of child molestation and coverup in the Catholic Church. The same poll found Americans' confidence in public schools, banks and television news at all-time lows. Currently 56 percent of Protestants express a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in church/organized religion, compared with 46 percent of Catholics.

Abuse Policies

More than half of the bishops' conferences in the Americas, Europe and Asia complied with a Vatican mandate to draw up anti-abuse guidelines by a May deadline, said the Vatican's top investigator of sexual abuse by clerics, Msgr. Charles Scicluna of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The compliance of African conferences was less satisfactory, possibly because of poor communications infrastructure. Msgr. Scicluna said in an interview with Italian media that those who did not send in their proposed guidelines would be getting "a letter of reminder." Evaluating each country's proposed policies will take "at least a year," he said. Bishops' conferences have been encouraged to develop "effective, quick, articulated, complete and decisive plans for the protection of children," bringing perpetrators to justice and assisting victims. More than 4,000 cases of sexual abuse have been reported to the doctrinal office in the past decade. Those cases revealed that an exclusively canonical response to the crisis had been inadequate and that a multifaceted and more proactive approach by all bishops and religious orders was needed, said the former prefect of the congregation, Cardinal William J. Levada of the United States.

Prayer Interpreter Out

A priest who was removed from his parish for improvising prayers during the celebration of Mass has now been suspended from all other priestly duties—a severe punishment usually only meted out to priests accused of such grave crimes as child abuse. The Rev. Bill Rowe, 72, had been a parish priest at St. Mary Catholic Church in Mount Carmel, Ill., for 18 years. A U.S.-based liturgy specialist and chaplain said: "Many Catholic priests now are over 65. If the church starts going around checking up on the way they are saying Mass, they may find many of them are not always sticking to the exact wording of the Mass—especially since the new translation was introduced…. It is also unpleasant to think that the bishop listened to a small number of parishioners who had been secretly recording Father Rowe. This sends an awful message to our already overstretched clergy."

From CNS and other sources.

NEWS BRIEFS

Muslim man prays amid coffins in Potocari, Bosnia-Herzegovina

In Potocari, **Bosnia-Herzegovina**, on July 11, the 17th anniversary of the massacre of 8,000 Muslim men and boys by Serb forces at Srebrenica, the bodies of 520 recently identified victims were buried. ✦ Christian and Muslim leaders in Kenya appealed for calm and prayer on July 3, a week after **attacks against Christians** left at least 17 people dead. ✦ In a move that could strain relations with the Catholic Church and within the Anglican Communion, the Episcopal Church approved liturgical resources for the **blessing of same-sex relationships** on July 9. ✦ Now that a former Muslim Brotherhood leader, Mohamed Morsi, has been elected president, **Christians in Egypt** can expect a better future after years of being second-class citizens, said Bishop Kyrillos William, administrator of the Coptic Catholic Patriarchate of Alexandria, on July 11, speaking in Madrid, Spain. ✦ On July 11, more than a year after his controversial removal, Bishop **William Morris** of Australia handed over the care of the Diocese of Toowoomba to his successor, Bishop Robert McGuckin.

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MARGARET SILF

An Imperfect Pilgrim

On July 31 we celebrate the feast day of a distinguished saint, Ignatius Loyola. What, we might ask, distinguishes him? Well, he might forgive us for recalling that he is probably the only canonized saint who has a police record—for anti-social behavior in his youth. And he might not (with the hindsight of half a millennium in heaven) object if we remember that he underwent cosmetic surgery—twice—to get an injured leg back into shape in order to show off to best effect his fashionable clothes and attract the highest ladies in the land. In fact he would probably want to remind us that his youth was so misspent as to require a full three days of confession to even begin to address its ramifications.

Another distinguishing feature would be his famous limp—the legacy of his knee injury, inflicted by a cannon ball while he was stubbornly defending the indefensible fortress of Pamplona against an overwhelming French attack. In fact, if he had not had his limp, we would have had to invent it, so powerfully does it speak of imperfection—his own and ours and the world's.

But the truly distinguishing feature of Ignatius Loyola is not the extent of his imperfection, but the fact that such imperfection could, and did, become the channel of an amazingly powerful flow of divine love and transformation. In this man we see writ large what can happen when divine grace and human imperfection meet.

When God goes on a recruitment drive, it seems, God is not looking for those who can do the job, whatever the job might be, but for those who know they cannot. The competent achievers will likely proceed under their own steam, just as the stubborn defender of Pamplona fiercely stood his ground, utterly confident that he could single-handedly overcome the French army. Those who know that they cannot, by their own strength, conquer life's challenges will necessarily fall back on God's power, not their own, as Ignatius would learn through painful experience.

Grace is a mysterious thing. It seeps through the cracks in our defenses and can all too easily be blocked by our imagined self-sufficiency.

Ignatius, intuiting this truth, moved on from the trauma of defeat at Pamplona and the agony of a long convalescence in the castle of Loyola to the heights of Montserrat, where he dramatically lay down his defenses at the altar of the Black Madonna in the Benedictine Abbey there. He still had everything to learn about "how the Creator deals with the creature," but already his heart was telling him that his own defenses would not cut the mustard and were a hindrance to his onward journey in God's service. So sword and dagger were left behind, and the rich man's clothes, once so prized, were exchanged for the garb of a beggar.

To be present to this scene in imagination, as we are invited to do when we pray, is to ask ourselves some searching questions. What defenses could I not live without? What accessories define who I think I am, or who I want others to think I am? What might a 21st-century Black Madonna find on her altar? Credit cards perhaps and smartphones and all manner of status symbols?

Very painfully, Ignatius was learning that access to the pearl of great price involves a great deal of unravelling of the layers and layers of lesser things that we wrap around ourselves to keep out the chilling awareness of our own fragility. But there was more to come. After leaving Montserrat, determined to be a pilgrim for God and heading for Jerusalem, Ignatius passed through the little town of Manresa. And there God had other plans for him. The few days of his intended stay stretched into 11 months, during which time our pilgrim would lurch between the heights of spiritual consolation and the darkest abyss of despair as he learned to recognize those subtle movements in his heart that marked the action of the Spirit of God and the contrary actions of darker motivations. The fruits of his struggles would form the basis of his life-changing, world-changing Spiritual Exercises.

> Grace seeps through the cracks in our defenses.

In Ignatius we recognize how the erratic, limping progress of a very imperfect pilgrim led him to surrender his self-reliance, fall back on God and allow the Spirit free, transforming passage through his life, acknowledging his faith in the simple affirmation: "Give me only your love and your grace; that is enough for me." And that's a good reason to celebrate.

MARGARET SILF, *who lives in Scotland, is the author of* Companions of Christ, The Gift of Prayer, Compass Points *and, most recently,* Just Call Me Lopez.

A homeless persons' encampment at the Embarcadero in San Francisco, Calif., with the headquarters of Gap Inc., the clothing retailer, in the background.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/ERIC BRODER VAN DYKE

Why it is not about small government

Saving Subsidiarity

BY VINCENT J. MILLER

Subsidiarity, though hardly the most exciting element of Catholic social doctrine, has been much in the news lately. It was invoked in the Republican primaries and its praises have been sung in The Wall Street Journal.

In April, Representative Paul D. Ryan, Republican of Wisconsin and chairman of the House Budget Committee, invoked subsidiarity to justify what can only be termed a radical budget, promptly passed by the House. He would cut 22 percent from Medicaid and 17 percent from food stamps over the next 10 years and convert Medicare to a voucher program that partially supports premiums for private insurance. Despite claims that this is a serious response to the deficit, Ryan's budget squanders these cruel savings on an extension of the Bush tax cuts and massive new tax cuts for high earners.

Critics of the Ryan budget have argued that *solidarity*—the virtue that impels us to active concern for the needs of others—must be used to balance *subsidiarity*. While this argument is true, it gives too much away, for subsidiarity is an application of solidarity, not its opposite. Subsidiarity is not a principle of small government. It is a two-edged sword. Subsidiarity warns against the overbearing action of any large social actors and also demands that they render assistance, *subsidium*, when problems are too large to be handled by smaller, local actors.

Subsidiarity envisions not a small government, but a strong, limited one that encourages intermediate bodies and organizations (families, community groups, unions, businesses) to contribute to the common good. It envisions a strong government that protects individuals and small intermediate bodies from the actions of large organizations—not just the state but corporations as well.

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Subsidiarity Transformed

That Representative Ryan could publicly change his allegiance from Ayn Rand to Catholic social doctrine without changing his policies suggests something is terribly amiss. His confusion is the fruit of decades of work by Catholic thinkers serving in neoliberal (so-called "conservative") think tanks of Washington, D.C., aiming to conscript Catholic social doctrine as an ally in their libertarian economic agenda. The debate around the Ryan budget shows they have effectively transformed the concept of subsidiarity into a principle of small government.

This reduction of Catholic social doctrine is evident in that most successful act of public dissent, the 1984 report *Toward the Future*, by Michael Novak and a self-appointed committee of lay Catholics. Drafted to counter the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter "Economic Justice for All," it not only challenged the bishops, but distorted papal teaching as well. As the author Lew Daly has noted, it invoked Pope John Paul II's discussion of "intermediate bodies" but changed their context from the common good to the free-market economy. In their words, "Only an open, free market allows such intermediate bodies economic breathing space."

Ironically, they lifted the quotation concerning intermediate bodies from a sentence in the encyclical "On Human Work" (1981) in which Pope John Paul II discussed the need for new forms of industrial ownership that associate "labor with ownership of capital as far as possible." The entirety of the paragraph displays the full breadth of the principle of subsidiarity. Both Marxist collectivism and "rigid capitalism" are criticized and new political and economic structures are contemplated.

A review of the history of Catholic social thought confirms that John Paul's account is the authentic one and helps us see the full challenge presented by the principle of subsidiarity.

A Response to Two Revolutions

Catholic social thought was born of twin revolutions—one political, the other economic. The modern secular states in France and Germany stripped the church of its property, limited its role in education and marriage and created the modern citizen, equal and alone before the state.

These political revolutions followed upon and accelerated an economic one: the ongoing churning revolution of early capitalism that developed into the Industrial Revolution. Peasants were evicted from estates as agricultural land was turned to more profitable uses.

These twin revolutions stripped away the complex of relationships, affiliations and obligations that constituted medieval and early modern society. Feudal systems of support and obligation were replaced with the wage contract. The peasantry was transformed into a deeply insecure working class. Economic forces left families and communities bereft of support beyond parents' inadequate and unreliable wages.

Catholic social thought and the papal social doctrine that built upon it emerged in response to these two revolutions. For that reason, Catholic social thought has always been directed simultaneously against both excessive state power and unrestrained economic power.

The church has never condemned market economics, but it has likewise never accepted an unregulated market.

Subsidiarity was born of the long struggle to replace the structures that had been swept away in these revolutions. Catholic laity, religious and clergy struggled to build and support charitable organizations, Christian factories, mutual aid societies, schools for laborers, etc. Indeed, social ministries were a major part of the effervescence of new religious orders in the 19th-century Catholic revival. These formed the precursors to both modern social welfare structures and labor unions.

Subsidiarity thus bears this positive imperative to preserve, protect and create new effective mediating structures in society. Yes, subsidiarity guided the church's embrace of social democracy, but it also moved the National Catholic Rural Life Conference to embrace the cooperative movement in the 1940s. Its logic is evident in the church's embrace of community organizing through the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. It influenced the faith-based charitable funding embraced by both the Bush and Obama administrations.

Subsidiarity inspired Catholic rethinking of the economic order as well. The Jesuit economist Heinrich Pesch proposed a "solidarist social order," in which workers and employers collectively oversee their industries for the common good. Distributists like G.K. Chesterton argued for local economies and small-scale firms. Pope John XXIII judged that no matter how much wealth is produced, the structure of industry must allow workers to "express" themselves and to perfect their "own being" in their work and "have their say in, and make their own contribution to the efficient running and development of enterprise"—a theme John Paul II would develop at length in his labor encyclical.

In "Quadragesimo Anno" (1931), Pius XI provided the classic formulation of subsidiarity. That document is worth

revisiting because its teaching is often distorted by being quoted with insufficient context.

The first lines of the paragraph on subsidiarity, which are almost never quoted, alert us that Pius was not simply discussing state power:

> As history abundantly proves, it is true that on account of changed conditions many things which were done by small associations in former times cannot be done now save by large associations.

Then follows the now classic definition:

> Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do.

This is not yet a discussion of the state; it is a general principle for all social actors. "For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help [*subsidium*] to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them." Early translations used the term "corporation" to translate the Latin *consociatio*. Msgr. John A. Ryan's initial review of the encyclical in the July 1931 Ecclesiastical Review made the connection, declaring control of industry by large corporations to be "as bad as socialism."

In his next paragraph, Pius explicitly addressed the state. The "public authority" should "let subordinate groups handle matters and concerns of lesser importance" so that it may more "freely, powerfully, and effectively do all those things that belong to it alone because it alone can do them: directing, watching, urging, restraining, as occasion requires and necessity demands."

This is not the same thing as federalism, as Congressman Ryan has claimed. Pius is not speaking of different levels of government but of the public authority's relationship to other dimensions of society (families, community groups, unions, businesses), all of which are bound by the principle of subsidiarity. Although the state's role is limited, Pius is by no means calling for small government. The state serves the overarching common good by balancing the various subordinate organizations "powerfully and effectively."

In this vision, government must be scaled to the size of the societies and economies being overseen. For this reason, every pope since John XXIII has called for a political authority adequate to the challenge of the global common good. Most recently, in "Charity in Truth" (2009), Benedict XVI called for "a true world political authority" that could "manage the global economy," protect the environment, regulate migration and encourage solidarity.

This is a vision very different from the small government ideology pedaled by Washington think tanks that aims merely to get government out of the way so that the market can work free from moral and political interference. On this matter Pius was shockingly explicit; he denounced that economic vision as a "poisoned spring".

The church has never condemned market economics, but it has likewise never accepted an unregulated market overseen by a minimalist state. In Benedict XVI's words, "Economic activity cannot solve all social problems through the simple application of commercial logic. This needs to be directed towards the pursuit of the common good, for which the political community in particular must also take responsibility."

Writing in the midst of the Great Depression, Pius had only to look about him to see the destructive outcomes of these views. The free market had produced a massive concentration of both "wealth" and "power and might" resulting in a "despotic economic dictatorship...consolidated in the hands of a few."

Pius XI on Limited Free Enterprise

> The right ordering of economic life cannot be left to a free competition of forces. For from this source, as from a poisoned spring, have originated and spread all the errors of individualist economic teaching. Destroying through forgetfulness or ignorance the social and moral character of economic life, it held that economic life must be considered and treated as altogether free from and independent of public authority.... But free competition, while justified and certainly useful provided it is kept within certain limits, clearly cannot direct economic life—a truth which the outcome of the application in practice of the tenets of this evil individualistic spirit has more than sufficiently demonstrated.
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> —"Quadragesimo Anno" (1931), No. 88.

Our Present Crises

Amid an economic crisis that may yet be remembered as another depression, we, like Pius XI, have but to look around to see the powerful economic actors that threaten to usurp the power of families, communities and local and national politics. As the economist Emmanuel Saez has

shown, income inequality in the United States has exceeded 1929 levels. The protective regulations on financial institutions enacted in the wake of the Great Depression have been undone with catastrophic results. No politician seems to possess sufficient will or power to re-enact them.

The Supreme Court decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission has granted individuals and corporations unlimited spending to influence elections. Billionaires have already spent lavishly in the primaries; our fragile republic braces for the deluge that will accompany the general election. Labor unions, those historically crucial mediating bodies, are now the target of multiple, seemingly coordinated, legislative attacks undertaken by the very politicians most given to warnings of government tyranny.

Families and communities are subject to the corrosive instabilities of the market. Unemployment is desperately high, especially among the young. Life plans are radically shaken as hardworking adults lose their jobs in the permanent turmoil of the global economy.

Local communities are profoundly disempowered. Whereas once technological and economic constraints bound corporations to place, now the mobility of capital frees them from attachment to and concern for the local. Factories can be moved at will. Localities are pitted against each other in a race to the bottom, offering tax breaks and other incentives to lure increasingly demanding employers while school budgets are slashed.

Without the full critical power of subsidiarity, we risk misreading the threats of the present. The fate of the U.S. Postal Service should loom as large in our thinking as the Health and Human Services mandate. Cuts are being proposed for deliveries to rural communities deemed too costly. The promise of the national common good is being dismantled by market logic before our eyes. Those who spread fears of a neofascist state imposing euthanasia upon the elderly should contemplate generations growing old without guaranteed health coverage. If the Ryan budget passes, when age and illness push our premiums beyond what our vouchers can cover, no "death panel" will ordain our exit. We will be left to exercise all the freedom our poverty can buy. We will do so knowing that we stood idly by while millions of handicapped on Medicaid and hungry children relying on food stamps were similarly liberated from dependency.

Subsidiarity demands vigilance against both state and corporate power. It also demands, beyond mere limits on power, positive action to serve the common good by the state, business and the myriad groups that make up society. A

ON THE WEB

Gerald J. Beyer writes on subsidiarity and solidarity.
americamagazine.org

Heart and Soul

The role of spiritual conversation in pastoral care

BY DREW CHRISTIANSEN

At the height of the Reformation, an age we associate with controversy and public disputations, St. Ignatius Loyola invested mightily in one-on-one spiritual conversation. According to the late Thomas Clancey, S.J., Ignatius' own ministry was primarily that—spiritual conversation. When he was not talking with others, he was writing letters to those who sought his advice or whose spiritual progress he sought to foster. When Ignatius sent theologians to the Council of Trent, his advice to them was to avoid doctrinal disputes and instead exhort people to virtue. The constant desire of Jesuit theologians, he advised, should be "the progress of souls." Ignatius' ministry of conversation can serve as a model of both apostolic outreach and pastoral care in our own equally tumultuous times.

Today the primary mode of doing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius is the directed retreat, in which the retreatant converses with the director under the inspiration of the Spirit. While God speaks to every person heart to heart, that word needs to be shared in spiritual conversation. In the sharing that word is clarified and freed of self-deception. In spiritual conversation the desire for holiness expands and grows in a spiral of mutual encouragement.

Pope Benedict XVI understands the need for spiritual conversation, in both one-on-one and small group settings. In small communities, he said, speaking to the Central Committee of Catholics last year in Breisgau, Germany, "friendships are lived and deepened in regular communal adoration of God.... There we find people who speak of these faith experiences at their workplaces and within their circle of family and friends, and in doing so bear witness to a new closeness between the Church and society."

Ministry in the contemporary world demands personal, one-on-one and small-group as well as organizational skills. For parish priests, spiritual conversations will require retrieving the ancient practice of the pastoral care of souls. Modeled by Pope Gregory the Great and focused on growth in virtue, this practice was eclipsed by the juridical model of auricular confession. "The care of souls," as Gregory understood it, will require listening and accompanying as a "soul-friend" not only parishioners who seek you out but also those pastors may invite because of their evident spiritual aptitude. Spiritual friendship is demanded by the signs of the times.

The Progress of Souls

In our day pastoring also includes evangelizing searchers, the unchurched and the lapsed and tending the dissatisfied and restless within the church. In Jesuit tradition, "the good of souls" is the aim of the apostolate. After his conversion the hermit and penitent Iñigo de Loyola curtailed his penances and moved out of his cave at Manresa, because he saw the good his spiritual conversation did for an old woman in the village. Later, in his enthusiasm to share the lessons of the Spiritual Exercises, he more than once had to confront the Inquisition in order to continue to practice this ministry.

In St. Ignatius' experience and later counsel, the good of souls is never a static attainment. He often speaks of "the progress of souls," meaning the movement away from sin, growth in holiness and ever greater openness to be led where the Spirit of God beckons, even though that call may mean venturing into uncharted territory. The dynamics of the spiritual life are growth or decline, which demands ongoing conversion on the part of the individual and especially among spiritual friends.

For the pastor of souls, the hardest part of spiritual friendship is that not everyone will be led along the same path that we ourselves have traveled. What matters is that we can share where we have been and what we have learned from others' journeys, listen deeply as to where others are called and be skilled in helping them discern God's will for them.

The theologian Karl Rahner, S.J., argued that God deals with the soul as person to person, and so God can demand of one what he does not demand of others. The church would be better off if more people grasped that axiom, even if only on an elementary level, so zealous individuals would avoid demanding that others conform to the pattern of their particular vocation or charism. The neurotic need to have others conform to their own preferred reading of the Gospel is the source of many tensions in the church today.

For spiritual friends, however, the axiom that our personal God deals with us as persons involves watching others

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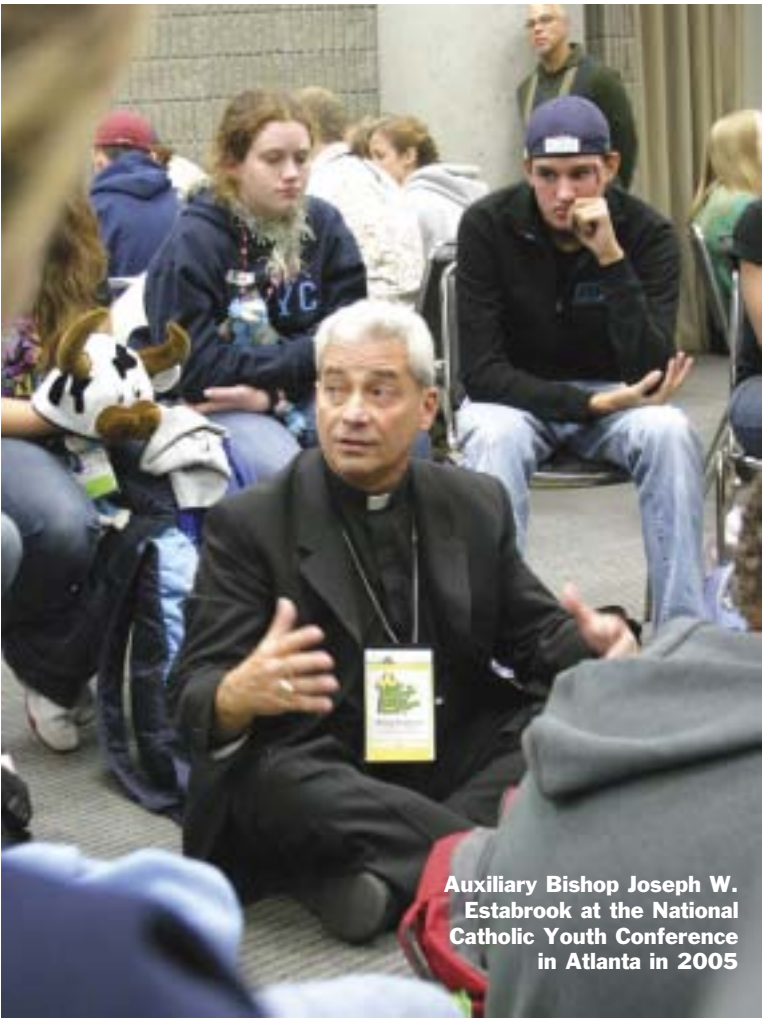
grow beyond where we may be given the grace ourselves to be and witnessing them being led along trajectories that are strange to us. C. S. Lewis once compared our relationship to God to being thrown into the sea at night. The pastor of souls is sometimes asked to swim, float and tread water in the dark with directees and at last, as day dawns, to be thrown up on shore alongside his soul friends.



Auxiliary Bishop Joseph W. Estabrook at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Atlanta in 2005

Intellectual Conversion

Bernard Lonergan, S.J., distinguished three types of conversion—religious, intellectual and moral—with special emphasis on the intellectual conversion from common sense to intellectual self-awareness as thinking persons. To share the riches of the Catholic tradition with our contemporaries requires that we and they experience a variety of intellectual, political and moral as well as religious conversions.

Within the church both the faithful and the hierarchy need to be weaned from fundamentalism: from both biblical literalism and fundamentalist uses of the catechism. In this visual age, with consciousness shaped by visual media, we need to teach the faith with suitable artistic means—visual, musical, dramatic, lyrical—as the church did in the Middle Ages, but not to the neglect of the Catholic intellectual tradition. Our Catholic intellectual heritage is one of the most important things we as a church can offer to the religious yearning of our times for something better than the childish versions of religion most people hold.

Literalist Catholics (more than 40 percent of Catholics are biblical literalists) will be easily misled by the media, which are fascinated by contradictions between Scripture texts and modern cultural assumptions. And, though everything is possible with grace, without some degree of intellectual conversion literalists will also lack the needed human skills to mature in their faith.

Ministry that relies excessively on fundamentalist appeals to a select few church documents will fail to engage the intellectual challenge of unbelief. It will also fail to connect with skeptics whose lack of faith rests on the rejection of childish versions of faith. It may also sow seeds of unbelief among serious and devoted Catholics who in their faith-life will be held suspect unless they make do with something much less intellectually sophisticated than what they are accustomed to in their professional lives and their entertainments. Even more it will deny the faithful, whatever their level of religious development, the opportunity for a mature faith born of serious questioning and probing discussion and nourished by the wisdom of the centuries. Without intellectual conversion on the part of both faithful and clergy, evangelization in the postmodern era will be stillborn.

Political Conversion

Political conversion is an awakening to the need of political involvement in the exercise of social responsibility. This is not politics in the narrow sense of competition for office, though it can include that, but rather politics in the sense of living and working as if institutions matter. A distinguishing part of the Catholic theological tradition is its understanding that the life of society is sustained and enhanced by institutions. Political conversion is essential for what Pope Benedict in his encyclical letter "Caritas in Veritate" called "political charity."

Political conversion is an uncommon phenomenon among those to whom politics does not come naturally. In our day it may be more difficult than ever. Politics has been degraded by constant exposure in the 24/7 news cycle and its reduction of retail politics to sound bytes, "horseraces" and titillating "gotcha" interviews. All over the world, people have become disillusioned with politics as a path to change. The Occupy Wall Street protests are only the latest grassroots rebellion against the status quo. Last year India saw successful hunger strikes against government corruption, and Israel saw its largest domestic demonstrations ever

CNS PHOTO BY MICHAEL ALEXANDER, GEORGIA BULLETIN

against the collusion of government and business that has eroded the life of the middle class. In Europe, not only the Greeks but other populations, including the British, anxious over austerity plans, are rising up against the economic and financial establishment.

At the same time, the post-World War II prosperity and the stagnant but relatively stable economy of succeeding years have created a materialist culture focused on consumer satisfaction and hedonistic distraction. Apart from horror at an occasional outrage or annual recognition of "CNN Heroes," mass entertainment fails to reinforce the nobler values in our society. Instead pettiness, jealousy, deception and manipulation are portrayed again and again as the way people are. Popular culture does not prepare people to ambition great things for the common good. The picture of life in the daily media shows a war of all against all. This is not a context where the church's social vision receives a natural hearing. It is not a world where mobilization for justice will come about without an enormous amount of work. But to evangelize our culture, political conversion of some sort will clearly be necessary.

Communities of Moral Discourse

The starting point is to realize the church's potential as "a community of moral discourse." The church is one place in our society where people discuss moral issues. In focus groups for the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, a coalition to which the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops belongs, our religious leaders learned that men and women look to the church as a natural forum to explore moral problems. But they also discovered that pastors were not prepared to lead these discussions. They were afraid of divisions in the community and of inadvertently fostering dissent in the church.

But through group discussion in dioceses like Houma-Thibodeaux in Louisiana and Cleveland, Ohio, the church has reconciled divided communities and liberated them to move ahead with shared solutions to local and regional problems. In Houma, the issues concerned loss of farmland and marine estuaries due to coastal erosion and surface subsidence resulting from oil drilling. In Cleveland, the issues were the results of urban sprawl: loss of farmland and open space, traffic congestion, water and air pollution among others. Churches could convene discussions because their congregations included people on all sides of the issues. The churches' role was to be a convenor. Solutions arose from within the group.

Pastors do not need to conduct these discussions themselves or mediate differences. They need to sponsor and bless them. Dioceses may have people on staff who can assist these processes, and talented professionals who are members of the congregation can be able leaders. The point is to liberate and empower people to talk things through themselves. A practical approach with a local focus can help make room for progress. That was the secret of success in Houma and Cleveland.

There is a warrant for assemblies of Catholics to take on this task in the Second Vatican Council's mandate to read the signs of the times (GS, Nos. 4 and 11). Pope Paul VI spelled out what scrutinizing the signs of the times should mean in his apostolic letter "A Call to Action" (1971). He wrote:

> It is up to Christian communities to analyze with objectivity the situation which is proper to them, to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgment, and directives for action from the social teaching of the Church.

The pope went on to explain how discerning the signs of the times should be a widely shared effort:

> It is up to these communities, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in communion with the bishops...and in dialogue with other Christian brethren and all men of goodwill, to discern the options and commitments which are called for in order to bring about the social, political and economic changes seen in many places to be urgently necessary.

To proceed, what is needed is trust in the body of the faithful, the gumption to stand up to those who complain through back channels and malign the results of open discussion with higher authorities, and higher authorities who refuse to listen to that kind of gossip and discipline subordinates who do.

Listening in Holy Conversation

Robert Lentz's contemporary icon of Saint Ignatius Loyola depicts him as a spiritual guide, his finger across his lips, signaling the need for silence and listening. In our hyperactive, overly connected society, spiritual friends must become acquainted with silence in order to hear the Spirit speaking within and in the world. We need to cultivate silence to listen deeply to one another. Silence provides the soil in which the Gospel can take root and the air to hear the whispering Spirit as it blows. As we undertake the new evangelization with searchers and the disaffected as well as with zealous souls longing for holiness, pastors of souls who seek to be spiritual friends, more than easy words, will need to be familiar with silence. A

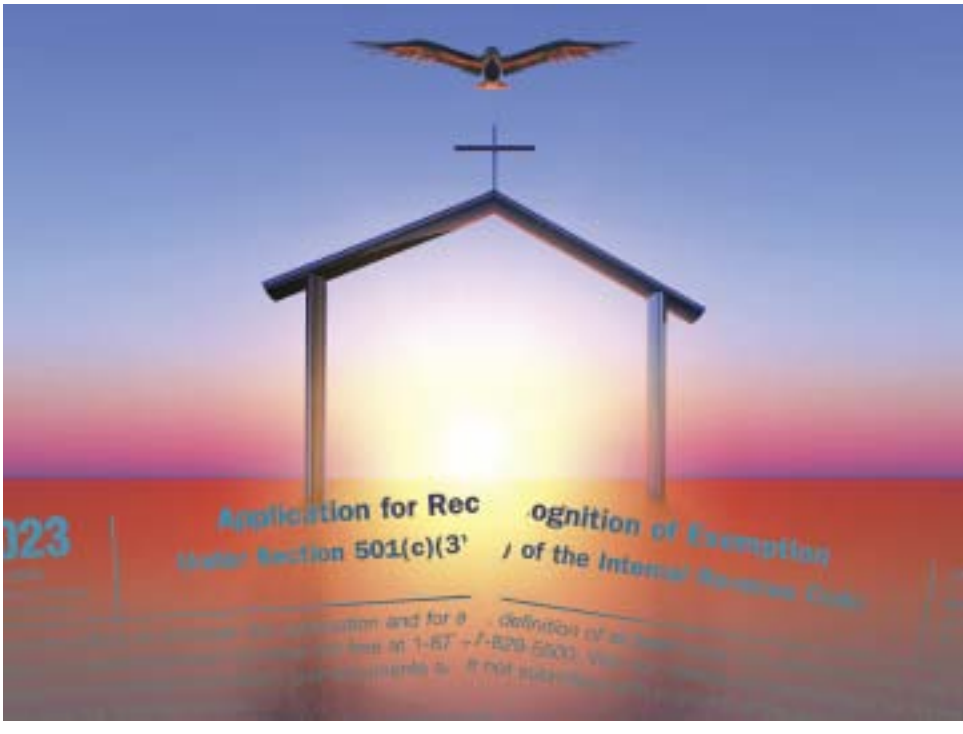
Politics and the Pulpit

Are some bishops putting the church's tax exempt status at risk?

BY NICHOLAS P. CAFARDI

During a sermon in the cathedral church of St. Mary's in Peoria, Ill., on April 14, Bishop Daniel Jenky compared what he called the "extreme secularist agenda" of President Obama with the anti-Catholic programs of, among others, Hitler and Stalin, two of the 20th century's worst mass murderers. In the same month, Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle, Wash., launched a signature drive in every parish of his archdiocese to put Referendum 74 on the statewide ballot. The referendum would repeal Washington's new same-sex marriage law.

What Bishop Jenky did is called "electioneering." He intervened in a political campaign in opposition to one of the candidates. What Archbishop Sartain did is called "lobbying." He intervened in an attempt to pass legislation. Both men did so using their episcopal office. Bishop Jenky spoke from the pulpit of his cathedral during Mass. Archbishop Sartain sent his Referendum 74 letter out on archdiocesan stationery. There is no doubt that both men were acting in their official capacities on behalf of the church and not as Citizen Jenky and Citizen Sartain.



Why does that make a difference? Quite simply because tax-exempt churches—on whose behalf Bishop Jenky and Archbishop Sartain were acting—are under serious legal restrictions when it comes to electioneering and lobbying activities. Churches cannot electioneer at all. The prohibition is absolute. They may not intervene in any way in a campaign for political office either in favor of a candidate or in opposition to one. With lobbying, an attempt to influence legislation, there is some wiggle room. There the law allows churches to lobby, but only to an "insubstantial" degree.

A Privilege, Not a Right

What law is this? It is one that every American is familiar with—the Internal Revenue Code. Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code, the same section that grants churches and other nonprofit charitable organizations their exemption from having to pay federal income taxes, says that as a condition of being tax exempt, organizations like churches may not electioneer or lobby (except insubstantially).

The restrictions of Section 501(c)(3) have survived constitutional challenge in numerous instances because exemption from taxation is a government-granted privilege, not a right, and as such the government is free to put legitimate conditions on it. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit said it best in Christian Echoes National Ministry Inc. v. United States (1972), a case initiated by a religious organization that claimed the tax code's electioneering restrictions violated its First Amendment free-speech rights:

> In light of the fact that tax exemption is a privilege, a matter of grace rather than right, we hold that the limitations contained in Section 501(c)(3) withholding exemption from nonprofit corporations do not deprive Christian Echoes of its constitutionally guaranteed right of free speech. The taxpayer may engage in all such activities without restraint, subject, howev-

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er, to withholding of the exemption or, in the alternative, the taxpayer may refrain from such activities and obtain the privilege of exemption.

Exemption from federal income taxes is a form of taxpayer subsidy. The church gets to keep the money it would otherwise have to pay the federal government as income taxes in order to use that money for religious and charitable purposes instead. But those forgone federal revenues must be made up by the taxes that the rest of us do pay. There is even more to the subsidy. Churches, like most other Section 501(c)(3) charitable organizations, can also attract tax-deductible gifts under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code. Individual taxpayers can take a deduction on federal income taxes for the gifts they give their churches. In effect, they are paying less tax so that the church can more easily raise funds. This means that churches actually receive a double taxpayer subsidy—by not having to pay their own federal income taxes and by receiving gifts that are deductible on the donor's federal income taxes.

Allowing churches to use tax-subsidized dollars for political activities would link church and state in a way that the founders feared.

When Congress adopted the limitations on political activities in Section 501(c)(3), it was simply saying that it did not want taxpayer-subsidized charitable dollars being used for political purposes, which is a rather reasonable restriction. Who among us thinks that politics accomplishes any charitable purpose? The estimable federal judge Learned Hand said it best, "Controversies of the [political] sort must be conducted without public subvention. The Treasury stands apart from them." Exactly. Our tax dollars should not be used to subsidize partisan political activities of tax exempt organizations.

At the same time, by limiting the political influence of tax-exempt churches, Congress was also honoring one of the basic tenets of our nation's founding, namely the separation of church and state. Allowing churches to use tax-subsidized dollars for political activities would link church and state in a way that the founders feared. They knew that a mix of religion and politics would be fatal to our nascent republic. In his "Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments," James Madison, the author of the First Amendment, which created free exercise rights, said, "[Clergy] have been seen to erect a spiritual tyranny on the ruins of Civil authority; in many instances they have been seen upholding the thrones of political tyranny; in no instance have they been seen the guardians of the liberties of the people." He also pointed out in the Federalist Papers, No. 10, that "a zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government and many other points...have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to cooperate for their common good."

Crossing the Line

Bishop Jenky's odious comparison and Archbishop Sartain's support for an initiative to repeal the civil rights of a significant sector of our fellow citizens do seem disposed "to vex and oppress," to use Madison's words. Bishop Jenky's electioneering is a clear violation of the tax code. There is a campaign for president going on this year, and Bishop Jenky attacked one of the candidates from his cathedral pulpit. The question of Archbishop Sartain's lobbying is less clear.

Churches can certainly advocate on social issues they perceive to have a moral component without violating the tax code. But once a church's advocacy goes beyond issues and, without a legitimizing invitation from the legislature itself, addresses a pending law—urging voters directly (called grassroots lobbying) or urging legislators to act (called direct lobbying)—a line has been crossed. Advocacy for or against pending laws and referendums is lobbying, pure and simple, and tax-exempt churches may not use tax-exempt dollars to affect the legislative process, except "insubstantially."

There is the rub for Archbishop Sartain. Depending upon how many church resources he is using (staff time, church publications, advertisements and so on, backed by tax-exempt church dollars) to get Referendum 74 on the statewide ballot, what he is doing may or may not be considered "substantial" lobbying. Using even one tax-exempt church dollar, though, to stir up opposition to the legally recognized civil rights of others is objectionable, no matter what the tax code says about it.

A practical problem with our bishops' violating the tax code's restrictions on political activities is that the Internal Revenue Service has only limited means to stop them. The I.R.S. can either use the nuclear option and revoke the archdiocese's tax exemption, which is so drastic as to be unthinkable, or it can use the fly-swatter option and fine the diocese for the amount it spent on the prohibited political activity under Section 4955 of the tax code. For example, what was the cost to the Diocese of Peoria of Bishop Jenky's political homily? The cost of opening up the cathedral that day? The utility costs? A prorated portion of the bishop's salary? We

are talking about a small amount, hardly the kind of fine that hurts. So legal penalties do not work in such cases. Most Americans might think the simple fact that this is the law would restrain politically overzealous bishops, but that has not worked either.

Millennial Malaise

What might work? How about the bishops' own self-interest? On any given Sunday in the United States, fewer than three out of 10 Catholics are in church, and the Catholics who are not there are mostly young. In a survey conducted among 16- to 29-year-olds by the Barna Group in 2007, nine of this age cohort's top 12 perceptions of Christianity were not good ones. They found Christianity to be judgmental (87 percent), hypocritical (85 percent) and too involved in politics (75 percent). That is some troika.

In another 2012 survey of college-age millennials (18- to 24-year-olds) conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute and Georgetown University's Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, it was found that 64 percent think that "anti-gay" is an accurate description of Christianity today. An almost equal portion in this survey, 62 percent, also find modern Christianity to be "judgmental." Now some readers might opine that religion is supposed to be judgmental; it is supposed to distinguish right from wrong and that these surveys reveal only that young people prefer the relativism of their own generation to the church's rules. Maybe. But perhaps we should also recall that we worship a Lord who said, "Do not judge, so that you may not be judged" (Mt 7:1).

In 2008, during the last presidential election, the Pew Research Center conducted a study on church endorsement of candidates for political office. The results are revealing. When asked if churches should endorse one candidate over another, the Pew poll found that in the total population of those polled, 29 percent said yes, but 66 percent said no. When the breakdown was by faiths, among all Catholics, 30 percent said yes and 67 percent said no. Among white, non-Hispanic Catholics, 26 percent said yes and 70 percent said no. Those are rather overwhelming numbers, indicating that bishops who intervene in politics are working against their own interests. Their people are not going to hear them.

If the bishops' politics are keeping people, especially young people, out of the pews, then perhaps they need to ask themselves a critical question: What is more important to them, political goals or the salvation of souls? If our bishops choose to ignore the law's restrictions on their political activity, they should at least listen to the Lord, who talked about leaving the 99 sheep to go find the lost one (Lk 15:5). In the final analysis, our bishops will not be judged on how many presidents they helped to elect or how many laws they helped to pass, but on how many of those lost sheep they rescued. A

No Place Like It

A new mom makes a case for moving back home.

BY ANNA NUSSBAUM KEATING

My grandmother, lovingly known by her grandchildren and almost everyone else in her final years as simply "Atoo," died at Christmas. My husband and I had driven through the night with our 6-month-old son, hoping to make it to my hometown before she passed. My mother, Atoo's caretaker for the past 10 years, thought Atoo was waiting for us to get there. She had been drifting in and out of consciousness for days and had wanted to meet our son, her newest great-grandchild. A few days earlier, in a moment of clarity she had said: "I don't want to die. I'll miss seeing all these beautiful babies." Atoo loved being a grandmother.

When we walked into her hospital room weary from 20 hours in the car, her face was drawn, her mouth agape; she was unconscious and fighting for every ragged breath but surrounded by people who loved her. I was shocked by her altered appearance and assumed the sights and sounds of imminent death would frighten my child. But my son, so new to the world and full of love, did not know to be afraid and happily laid his head on her chest. He touched her face and hugged her neck. Later that night with my aunt by her side telling her, "It's okay Mother, you can go now," Atoo died.

Three days later my husband and I saw a building in my hometown where we could have our handmade furniture studio on the first floor and live on the second. Despite the fact that our clients

are mostly on the coasts, and our life and friends are in the Midwest, we purchased the building and began making plans to uproot our lives and move closer to a permanent community.

We had not really been looking to move before my grandmother's passing. For the past 10 years I had lived away from home and more or less liked it that way. I saw my family in a couple of intense bursts each year. Those visits were often stressful, as we traveled long distances and attempted to catch up with lots of people in a whirlwind of nonstop activity. We would arrive back in the Midwest exhausted and happy to be home. And yet after my son was born, I saw how content he was in a room full of people, who despite having just met him, already loved him. I longed for him to grow up with his grandparents close by, the way I had grown up with my Atoo.

Moving closer to one's extended family is not something to celebrate among upwardly mobile Americans. Few will think better of you because you live closer to your parents. In fact, some will think you are unwell. Most homes in the United States are zoned as single-family units, and even living across town from one another is often parodied in popular culture as a form of torture. American politicians often speak of "family values." What they usually mean by family is one or two parents raising one or two children. They do not mean a large group of people who are descendents of a common ancestor or other types of intentional communities, which lend support to nuclear families. There is no big "family values" push to reinstate the role of elders or wisdom figures in children's lives, though many were pleasantly surprised and intrigued when the Obamas moved into the White House with their children's grandmother in tow.

In contrast to a spouse or friends, people do not choose their family, and they do not choose you. These nonelective relationships among diverse people can be difficult to navigate. Yet family members regularly go to great lengths to help each other, as my family did—despite the 1,200 miles between us—when my newborn was sick. That experience was life-changing. Inspired by their support, this summer I am moving my little nuclear

ANNA NUSSBAUM KEATING *writes and co-owns Keating Woodworks in Colorado Springs, Co.*

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/SOMCHAI RAKIN

family to a city where my son will be able to be loved by not one but two sets of grandparents. The way I see it, the more good people who love your child, the better. More is more in the love department.

At Atoo's wake, in my parent's living room, the priest asked all the friends and relatives present, including all of us grandchildren, to bring to mind what it was about Atoo that we most wanted to live out in our own lives. I thought of how she loved her grandchildren and encouraged our dreams. If you told her you wanted to be an astronaut, she would never dismiss that or ask if you knew how much schooling that would require. She thought you and your dreams were, as she would say in her smooth Southern drawl, "just wonderful." In fact, to hear her tell it, we had already arrived. My brother, a first-year medical student, was already a doctor. My cousin in a school play "was just the star of the show."

The love of a parent is total and all-encompassing, but it can also be complicated and demanding. Parents have the difficult task of equipping their children with the skills they will need as adults, and perhaps this is as it must be. You have to answer to those you live with daily in a household: Is your plan realistic? Why haven't you done your chores?

If the love of a parent is all-encompassing and at the same time demanding, the love of a grandparent can be simply enfolding. My Atoo did not have to raise me. She never asked me what my major was going to be or how I was going to make a living. She just loved me. When I repeatedly lost my house key in middle school, she would drive over and unlock the front door. It was not her primary responsibility to discipline me or make sure I was not developing bad habits. At her house we were allowed little indulgences like watching cartoons or eating homemade éclairs, things that would not be ideal as daily fare but were fun and harmless in small doses. The same is now true for my son. After trying to rock him to sleep I will often put him in his crib and let him cry for a few minutes before he falls asleep on his own. I know he must learn to deal with some frustration, to soothe himself, and he does—but not at his Grandma Ceci's house. She will rock him for as long as it takes.

A few weeks back my Atoo visited me in a dream so real it was like spending time with her. That week my husband and I were getting ready for a business trip, a design show in New York. As in life, my Atoo was just tickled with us. She was not concerned with the pragmatics of the trip, not fearful for our safety on the road or worried about how we were going to pay for gas. She just clapped her hands as my son crawled around at her feet and said, "Well, I think it's just wonderful!" And then, like a true lady from Texas, exclaimed, "But what are ya'll gonna wear?" A

FILM | JOHN P. McCARTHY

IN SEARCH OF SOLID GROUND

Benh Zeitlin's 'Beasts of the Southern Wild'

Until now, the most powerful depictions of Hurricane Katrina's impact on New Orleans and the gulf region I have seen are Spike Lee's documentary "When the Levees Broke" and the HBO series "Treme." The first treats the immediate consequences of the 2005 storm; the latter considers its lingering psychological effects.

The extraordinary new movie **Beasts of the Southern Wild** does both, without ever mentioning Katrina or the Crescent City. It is the feature-length debut of director Benh Zeitlin, who, together with Lucy Alibar, adapted Alibar's stage play "Juicy and Delicious." Among its offerings are poetic language, transfixing visuals, a mythic narrative and two vivid characters.

Hushpuppy, the 6-year-old heroine, and her ailing father, Wink, reside on the edge of habitable terra firma in a fictional South Louisiana community called the Bathtub—a place where ribbons of soggy earth melt into the Gulf of Mexico. While spinning a tale of survival, "Beasts" finds buried links between morality and a threatened ecosystem. Calling to mind works as disparate as "King Lear," "Precious" and Terence Malick's "The Tree of Life," "Beasts" suggests that our place in the fantasia of existence is both more and less primitive than we tend to assume.

Heady stuff, yet "Beasts" is as tactile as it is spiritual. Indeed, Zeitlin and company seem bent on spanning such dualities as earth and water, human and animal, bounty and deprivation, black and white, realism and fantasy, self-reliance and interdependence, lib-

Quvenzhané Wallis as Hushpuppy and Dwight Henry as Wink on the set of "Beasts of the Southern Wild."

PHOTO: FOX SEARCHLIGHT/CINEREACH LTD

FALLING

It is no matter that you were carrying the heirloom platter
and five silver forks for cheesecake later on.

It is of little concern your cigarette took the opportunity
to burn its brown face into your acrid rug.

On a clear morning where the dawn sun
    will slash the straight line of ocean,
you may or may not see the green flash on the horizon.
You may not see it.
So much hangs upon
the quality of your attention.

So much depends upon
the multiple mind to remain faithful to the waves
of gleaming silverware, the dancing cigarette:
too much for the brain to absorb,
    absent the pleasures of dopamine.

Fear, that night crawler,
whose descent into your shoes while you sleep,
whose precise leap from an overhead branch,
whose starring season in the Garden story
takes down reason,
breaks down communication nerve to muscle
snakes down through your darkest treasures
    to a common vault of shame.

O God, come to my assistance.
O Lord, make haste to help me.

JAMES M. KEEGAN

JAMES M. KEEGAN, S.J., *has been a spiritual director and has trained directors in Cambridge, Mass., as well as in Canada, Europe and Asia. This poem is from the author's collection,* Parkinson's: A Work in Progress.

eral and conservative. And instead of coming off as an anthropological study, political tract or proscriptive exercise, it is an entertaining fable that rises to the level of art.

This would not be possible without astonishing performances by two first-time actors. As Hushpuppy, Quvenzhané Wallis, age 5 when cast, is startlingly poised. You won't soon forget watching this spiky-haired waif trudging through the muck or devouring crabs in her white rubber boots, sleeveless t-shirt and orange underpants. And Dwight Henry, a baker from New Orleans, is terrific playing her gruff dad.

In voice-over, Hushpuppy comments on their circumstances, articulating many of the film's themes. She and Wink live in a kind of idyllic squalor, each in a separate ramshackle dwelling amid a menagerie of dogs, chickens and other wild and semi-domesticated fauna. They travel the waterways in a boat fashioned out of an old Chevy pickup, and he teaches her to fish with her hands ("It's my job to keep you from dying!"). They grill chickens at "feed-up time" and feast on vats of shimmering crawfish with their Bathtub neighbors. Like most every adult, Wink is always swigging alcohol, which can't be good for his heart condition.

The hierarchy within this egalitarian, interspecies community is dictated by the food chain—the strong eat the weak. But the alchemy of survival also depends on another basic principle articulated by Miss Bathsheba, who tells the children: "The most important thing I can teach you—you gotta learn to take care of people smaller and sweeter than you are."

When Wink goes missing, however, Hushpuppy is left to fend for herself. Her mother's whereabouts are unknown, although Hushpuppy associates her with a light that flickers out over the water, on a buoy perhaps. Before we learn more about that light,

Wink returns and a big storm approaches.

Father and daughter make preparations and check in with the Bathtub's other denizens. After the floodwaters recede, several of the men target a levee with explosives, and the authorities evacuate everyone to a government shelter, where Wink's health deteriorates. Hushpuppy, with a few kids in tow, goes in search of her mother.

The disaster, more severe in degree than kind, ruptures the community but is met with fortitude. This tenacity is accompanied by an appreciation for—and desire to create—beauty and meaning. Food is celebrated with authentic locavore relish; and Hushpuppy draws pictures to help make sense of things. Her fears are represented by a set of menacing Paleolithic creatures resembling giant, tusked boars. Throughout the movie, Zeitlin splices in brief fantasy sequences featuring these beasts.

Everything builds toward a eucharistic moment involving another predatory (and prehistoric) creature, plus the region's culinary tradition. In his sickbed, Wink is fed deep-fried alligator, sustenance embodying the dual wisdom that keeps everyone in the Bathtub afloat. Helping fellow creatures in need follows from the realization that all things are connected. Enjoying the fruits and navigating the hazards of one's natural surroundings entails recognizing the necessity of balance and harmony.

This may make the movie sound like a Sierra Club infomercial, particularly in light of Katrina, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill (which happened just days before "Beasts" began filming) or any other of the environmental catastrophes that seem to occur more frequently these days. Yet "Beasts of the Southern Wild" transcends climate-change debates and never tastes like a dose of celluloid medicine dispensed by some indie green machine. Its formal integrity allows it to span tired, easily politicized dichotomies as it offers a timeless, universal message.

Hushpuppy has digested its holistic wisdom. Seeing evacuees receive medical care in the shelter clinic, she notes, "When an animal gets sick, they plug it into the wall." She is not criticizing modern medicine's mechanical approach to healing, despite the mistrust Wink and other Bathtub residents have for our technology-driven civilization. She is expressing wonderment at this unfamiliar means of restoring equilibrium between body and soul.

Talking with a ferry captain while searching for her mother, she declares, "I want to be cohesive," acknowledging the need for a unity and harmony that is simultaneously practical, aesthetic and spiritual. And before feeding Wink the alligator, she courageously dismisses her demons by saying, "I gotta take care of mine."

Acknowledging her place in the larger scheme of things, recognizing the stubborn material and metaphysical truth about the interconnectedness of all things, Hushpuppy believes her highest calling is to care for others, starting with those closest to her—since it is "we who the earth is for."

ON THE WEB
A report from the World Science Festival.
americamagazine.org/culture

JOHN P. McCARTHY *writes about film and theater for various publications. His last piece for* ***America*** *was on the Italian movie "Habemus Papam."*

BOOKS | ANGELA ALAIMO O'DONNELL

DROP EVERYTHING AND READ

WHEN I WAS A CHILD I READ BOOKS

By Marilynne Robinson
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 224p $24

Over the past thirty years, Marilynne Robinson has offered her readers powerful fiction and probing essays that explore the complexity of the human mind and the geography of the human heart. Readers of *Housekeeping*, *Gilead*, and *Home*, and of her essays (many of them collected in three previous volumes) have come to expect a blend of acute observation, deep learning, courageous assertion and compelling prose. Happily, Robinson's new book of essays, *When I Was a Child I Read Books*, provides readers with all of this and more: a rare combination of wisdom and beauty that transforms our vision of our current cultural moment.

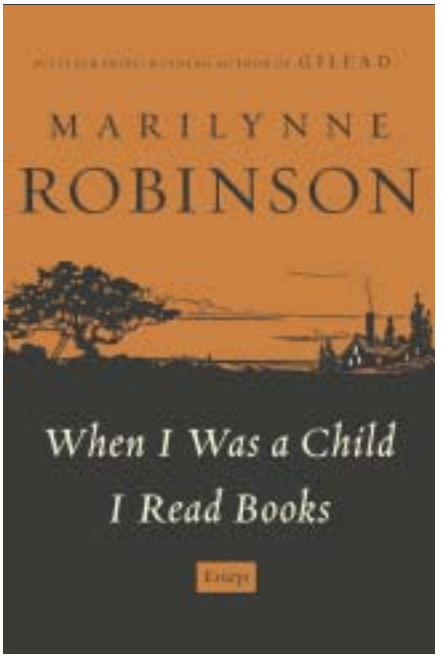
Robinson sounds her keynote early, as the preface calls upon Americans to attend to the voices of the past as a means of understanding, reimagining and reshaping the public discourse of the present. As such, it serves as a brilliant introduction to the 10 essays that follow, each of which engages this theme in various ways. The tutelary spirit of this volume of insightful meditations on the political, social, intellectual and spiritual life in these United States is the visionary poet Walt Whitman. Robinson quotes generously from Whitman's "virtual hymn of praise to America," *Democratic Vistas*, to demonstrate how far we have strayed from our democratic ideals. Despite Whitman's warnings, we have chosen to pledge unholy allegiance to "savage, wolfish parties" who acknowledge "no law but their own will," instead of thinking independently and holding ourselves steady "judge and master over them all."

Consequently, Americans indulge

themselves in fractious, partisan cacophony, the cure for which some leaders mistakenly believe is "the establishment of a kind of religious monoculture we have never had and our institutions have never encouraged." To correct this wrongheaded urge, Robinson reminds us of how deeply America is rooted in the commitment to religious freedom and diversity, asserting that the only common articles of religion Americans have ever professed is belief in the sacredness of the human person and in the social value of the liberation of the individual. The erosion of public support of our institutions designed to promote the flourishing of the human—including our great public education system, our universities, our libraries and even our prisons—suggests that we no longer believe in the human person as the foundation of our nation and as the true source and repository of our wealth.

The reader might view this loss of faith in that old-time religion of the Sacred Self as counterintuitive, at first. An hour spent on Facebook, with its endless loop of self-promotion, self-aggrandizement and self-congratulation, would suggest that we live in an era of unprecedented devotion to the self. However, it is just this narcissism, wherein the beholder's gaze is ever turned inward and fixed on his or her own private person, that has supplanted the outward-looking, other-centered love of The Self we see in our fellow human beings. Indeed, Whitman's "Song of Myself" begins with what may seem to be the language of self-love, but the "I" of Whitman's great poem quickly expands to encompass the reader, and the poem becomes a paean to the beauty and splendor of the universal "I" in all: "I celebrate myself and sing myself,/ And what I assume you shall assume,/ For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you."

Robinson's preface is brief but characteristically dense and full of suggestion; it serves as a dynamo, powering the individual engines of the 10 pieces



that follow. Most of Robinson's essays begin by describing a private encounter with a writer or text—ranging from Edwards to Emerson, Aquinas to Skinner, Moses to Poe—and soon widen their focus to address a major theme relating to American democracy and, even more broadly, to Western Judeo-Christian culture. Like Whitman's signature poem, which moves from the personal to the universal, each piece starts small but thinks big, grounding Robinson's capacious thought in the reality of her lived experience as an American (her identity), as a writer (her vocation), as a teacher (her occupation) and, most important of all, as a reader. True to its title, this is a bookish book.

Each essay engages ideas that are both perennial and pertinent to our current cultural moment. In "Freedom of Thought," Robinson considers our evolving understanding of the relationship between spirit and matter, delineating what science can teach us (the grand structure of the cosmos, the minute transactions of the nervous system) and what it cannot (the beauty, mystery and pathos of creation—the kinds of revelations conveyed to us through art, literature, music and religion). She reminds us of the essential fact in our secular, science-driven world: that "science can give us knowledge, but it cannot give us wisdom." For this we look not to Darwin and Freud, but to the Wisdom tradition offered by Homer, Aeschylus, Virgil, Job and Jesus.

Rounding out the volume, Robinson returns to this theme in the final essay, "Cosmology." Here she takes on neo-Darwinism and the new atheist science, both of whose discourses traffic in "certainty," "a relic, an atavism, a husk we ought to have outgrown." What none of our *isms* and *ologies* can explain is the absolute mystery of the human: "What are we, after all? Why are we such mysteries to ourselves? Why do we stand apart from nature, even to the extent of posing a mortal threat to its continued life?" These are questions no amount of science can help us answer. For these answers, Robinson looks to books.

In "Imagination and Community," the volume's strongest essay, Robinson reminds us that the role of the writer is "to make inroads on the vast terrain of what cannot be said." This is a vocation she has prepared for in the course of a lifetime of reading: "The frontiers of the unsayable...have been opened for me by every book I have ever read that was in any degree ambitious, earnest or imaginative." Robinson's essays serve as both proof of this claim and as an invitation to us, as readers, to join the "community of the written word," to travel side by side with her and the "cloud of witnesses" composed of the authors of books in her considerable library, and to thereby

ON THE WEB
Charles C. Camosy discusses his book *Peter Singer and Christian Ethics.*
americamagazine.org/podcast

engage in "the broadest possible exercise of imagination." It is this latter capability that has fueled the great social transformers of American society—including Jefferson, Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr.—all readers who dared to imagine something that did not yet exist and to bring it into being. Robinson's book urges Americans to stop our herding and our name-calling, to refuse to engage in wolfishness and blather and to nurture the radical power of the individual self through the agency of the word—in short, to drop everything and read.

ANGELA ALAIMO O'DONNELL *is a professor of English and associate director of the Curran Center for American Catholic Studies at Fordham University in New York.*

MICHAEL W. HIGGINS

SEEING WITH FEELING

IN SEARCH OF THE WHOLE:
Twelve Essays on Faith and Academic Life

Ed. John C. Haughey, S.J.
Georgetown University Press. 217p
$29.95

When I was a senior undergraduate writing my thesis on that fin-de-siècle Catholic fiction writer of eccentric genius, Frederick William Austin Lewis Serafino Mary Rolfe (more commonly known by his self-created moniker, Baron Corvo), I was particularly drawn to the final work of his autobiographical tetralogy: *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole*. I liked his ingenious blend of personal narrative, Plato and the quest for integration. It all made sense, though it stood in stark contrast to the ravaged remnants of his own pathos-inducing life.

So I was naturally drawn to the title of John Haughey's recent collection of essays by diverse hands; and, although there is nothing especially Corvinist about the contents, they do not disappoint in the least.

And they are interesting. That matters. Not infrequently essays that explore the complex but fascinating intersection of faith and reason, the role of the academy and the role of the church can be tired exercises in apologetics or fiery examples of polemical conviction, but fail to engage the impartial reader in a broader and more meaningful analysis. *In Search of the Whole* successfully avoids these pitfalls.

Editor Haughey knows in his bones that "subjectivity, consciousness, interiority—whatever you want to call it—tends to be all over the place most of the time in most of us. But it is also always questing," and as a consequence of this self-evident truth he wants to harness the wild stallions of our imagination and rational searching to a common end.

Theologians and philosophers from a variety of locations come together in this volume to make sense of the world about them, to find meaning in their scholarly endeavours, to reflect deeply on the values that inform their judgements and shape their decisions, to break out of the narrow and constricted confines of their disciplines and professions. And they do this in part by integrating and not by rejecting the

personal voice. That can be tricky; they could be held hostage to the priority of the self-disclosure, the private epiphany, if they are unaccustomed to the risks of autobiographical writing. Fortunately, they manage as writers to navigate safely the occasionally treacherous seas of the "I."

Clerics and laypersons, women and men, scientists and humanists combine to make of this volume a genuinely catholic and potent mix of scholarship and individual witness. Haughey divides his collection into two sections—each consisting of six chapters—with both a preface and epilogue to ensure editorial as well as intellectual symmetry.

In "Part One: Whole as Task," we have the following: Patrick Byrne, a philosopher at Boston College, argues for a synthesis of insight and narrative drawn from his expertise in physics and philosophy; Cynthia Crysdale, a theologian at the University of the South, deploys determinative details of her personal history in her treatment of the transformative dimension of Catholic higher education; the Marquette University theologian and dean of professional studies Robert J. Deahl explores the compelling features of an emergent Catholicity; in an especially interesting application of a global ethics perspective, the theologian William P. George, of Dominican University in River Forest, Ill., learns to love the Law of the Sea.

In his contribution, Richard M. Liddy, director of the Center of Catholic Studies at Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J., demonstrates the elasticity of the Catholic intellectual tradition as it reconfigures itself in the light of historical consciousness and pastoral immediacy; and the ethicist J. Michael Stebbins, president of inVia, outlines the practicality and wisdom attached to "doing business well...intelligently, responsibly, with a view to serving the greater good because that is how God intends us to live, and because that way of living ultimately leads to happiness."

"Part Two: Whole as Identity" begins with a piece by the distinguished Indian Jesuit Michael Amaladoss, who skillfully weaves a narrative with rich interreligious and personal resonance and affirms in his conclusion that "God, religions, and spirituality will and should continue to bring people together; the theologian and pharmacologist Ilia Delio, O.S.F., neatly weds a Bonaventuran with a Teilhardian cosmological and Christological perspective to create her own "big bang"; the philosopher-geophysicist Patrick A. Heelan, S.J., paints a wondrous canvas incorporating such disparate components as Van Gogh, quantum physics and Dublin.

The philosopher and long-serving Vassar professor, Michael McCarthy, now retired, succinctly and cogently argues his case for a Catholic Christianity that bears an extraordinary likeness to fellow philosopher Charles Taylor's own view of a renewed conciliar Catholicism; the University of Melbourne's Peter Steele, S.J., provides the best concluding sentence of the entire volume that "perhaps, in the affairs of the spirit, the role of sounds is to give shape to the silences." The actual final contribution by Cristina Vanin, an ethicist at St. Jerome's University, in Waterloo, Ontario, "Attaining Harmony with the Earth," sketches the cosmic vision of Thomas Berry with a moving moral poignancy.

Although the authors craft their arguments aware of the personal voice and the discourse of their respective disciplines, they draw upon a shared lexicon of terms that originate with the presiding genius of their investigations: Bernard Lonergan, S.J. And so we have several terms, like horizon, heuristic and insight, that are deployed frequently throughout *In Search of the Whole* and that reflect the epistemological and methodological priorities

of that foundational thinker from Quebec. Lonergan's presence is ubiquitous but not oppressive, defining but not a straightjacket, and his breadth of understanding and his ecclesial wisdom liberate the writers to explore more deeply the reasons behind their quest for the whole.

Dean Deahl characterizes the project nicely when he observes that on the heath Lear asks Gloucester, "How do you see the world?" And Gloucester, who is blind, answers, "I see it feelingly." Our Catholic liberal arts tradition helps us to see the future feelingly and can fire and inspire our moral imagination in ways that lead us out of the confines of a world too narrow, too immediate, too literal, too restricted, and into something more.

It is that "something more" that this volume reminds us of—a spur to those intimations, those yearnings, that make us whole.

MICHAEL W. HIGGINS *is vice president for mission and identity at Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, Conn.*

DIANE SCHARPER

OUT OF MANY, ONE

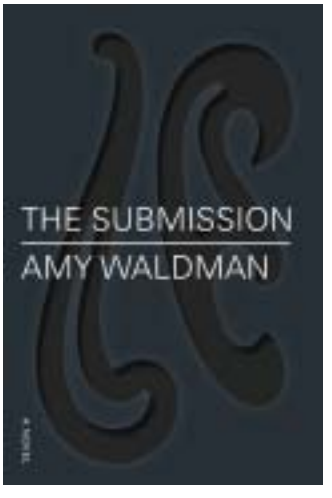
THE SUBMISSION

By Amy Waldman
Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 299p $26; $15 Paperback

Charged with selecting a memorial for the site of the terrorist attacks in New York on Sept. 11, 2001, a jury must choose between two finalists from among 5,000 anonymous submissions. One finalist, the Void, a black granite rectangle 12 stories high, is considered too dark by some. The other finalist, the Garden, with a pavilion, two perpendicular canals, trees in orchard-like rows and a high white wall, seems just right—until the designer's name is revealed. Then all hell breaks loose.

Amy Waldman's first novel, *The Submission*, charts the layers of that hell in a searing tale about racial profiling following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Waldman, whose short fiction has appeared in The Atlantic, The Boston Review and other publications, was a co-chief of the South Asia bureau of The New York Times and knows her territory well. Her depiction of Muslim life, customs, places, rituals and shrines in the United States and in countries like India and Bangladesh is impeccable. Waldman also has a sharp eye for contemporary attitudes of hypocrisy and moral lassitude, which emerge during the numerous arguments, debates and moments of soul-searching that make up much of the plot.

This is a book driven by its theme: a society not held together by principle will break apart. Characters, action and even setting are secondary to the ideas Waldman espouses. That is not necessarily a flaw, but it does make the reading slow.



Among the major players are Claire Burwell and Paul Rubin. Claire, whose husband was one of the victims on 9/11, is among the jurors, as is Paul, a retired banker. Initially, they believe a garden would speak to mankind's need for healing, and they convince the others to go along.

But the Garden, or at least the concept of a garden, does not heal. It causes chaos, hatred, destruction and death—not because there is anything wrong with the design but because the designer, Mo (Mohammed) Khan, is a Muslim.

As people learn Mo's identity, they try to change the rules of the competition to eliminate his entry. Some question whether the garden is even the clear winner. Some say the public, not the jury, should have picked the winner. The governor conveniently decides that she alone should have the final word.

Most of the story is concerned with reactions to Mo's ethnicity as opposed to his winning design. Even though he was born and raised in the United States and is not a practicing Muslim, his religious orientation upsets nearly everyone—from the jurors to the media to the families of the victims to the average citizen who reads about the process in the newspapers to members of the New York Muslim community.

Only Asma Anwar, an illegal immigrant from Bangladesh who lost her husband at the World Trade Center, speaks for Mo, for the right thing and for the God of Islam. Eloquently and in broken English, she brings the audience to tears during a town hall meeting. For her courage, she pays a price, yet she never loses her faith. "He [God] would not abandon her if she did not abandon Him," she says. But God seems to do just that as the story tragically unfolds.

Several people, including Mo's family, advise him to withdraw his design and submit to the pressure of anti-Muslim sentiment. If he does bow out, will the other finalist, the Void, automatically become the winner? As one of the jurors puts it, there was no joy on 9/11, so its memorial should be a kind of created destruction, visceral, angry, dark, raw—just (ironically) as the atmosphere surrounding Mo and his ethnicity is emotional and angry.

In another of the book's many

ironies, a brother of one of the victims asks whatever happened to right and wrong. Significantly, no one answers him. But since his idea of right and wrong is based on his anger over the loss of his brother, his question—situation ethics at its finest—is just another example of the difficulties found in a world where, to paraphrase Hamlet, nothing is inherently good or bad but thinking makes it so.

Ultimately, this true-to-life but fictional account is chilling not because the book calls to mind the circumstances surrounding 9/11 but because those circumstances, with their mindless prejudice against all things Muslim, continue. As Waldman brings back the era's poisonous atmosphere, she shows readers that the poison has not abated. In fact, it has mushroomed.

DIANE SCHARPER *is the author of several books, including* Radiant, Prayer Poems. *She teaches English at Towson University in Maryland.*

CLASSIFIED

DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION AND EVANGELIZATION, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Seattle, Wash. This medium-sized Dominican parish, which includes the University of Washington community, is seeking a Director of Faith Formation and Evangelization. The Director will motivate parishioners to gain a greater understanding of the Catholic faith, deepen their spiritual life and enable them to preach the Gospel by speaking openly in the world about our relationship with God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Working with our community, the Director will take a leadership role in designing and implementing programs which will enhance our parish vision as a center of evangelization in the Northwest, a place where Catholics and non-Catholics gather to converse at the intersection of faith and culture.

This position requires energy, commitment, courage and creativity. Successful candidates will be proficient in organizing and teaching, with exceptional leadership and communication skills.

Preferred candidates will hold a master's degree in religious education, theology or pastoral studies and have five years of parish experience. The candidate must be a practicing Catholic.

The position is currently available. Salary is D.O.E., based upon Archdiocesan guidelines. Finalists will be interviewed in Seattle. To obtain a job description and application, please send your résumé to: hr@bspwa.org by Oct. 15, 2012. Blessed Sacrament Parish is located at 5050 8th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98105.

PARISH LIFE COORDINATOR (Canon 517§2). The Diocese of Great Falls-Billings, Mont., has an opening for the position of Parish Life Coordinator at St. Margaret Mary parish, Colstrip, Mont. A master's degree in theology or closely related field and three years of experience in pastoral ministry and administration are required. Salary is based on diocesan guidelines. Position description, etc., is available at www.dioceseofgfb.org. Send résumé, three letters of recommendation and college transcript to: Chancellor, P.O. Box 1399, Great Falls, MT 59403-1399; or send e-mail to: chancellor@dioceseofgfb.org.

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LETTERS

Labor's Love Lost?

As the editors note in "Union Sunset?" (Editorial, 7/2), there are reasons for concern about the future of organized labor, the failed recall of Gov. Scott Walker in Wisconsin being an important one. That will fuel an anti-union movement already under way that ignores the significant contributions of labor unions to the high standard of living of working women and men, whether they belong to a union or not.

There is no doubt that union leaders have not always led prudently or wisely. Nonetheless, I share the editors' concern that the gains of the working class in the 20th century may fall away "in this new century," which would be a serious blow to many people trying to escape the degradation of poverty.

The editors refer to a "muted response" from the church. Perhaps one reason for that is that the church's traditional support of organized labor, led by such luminaries as Cardinal James Gibbons and Msgr. George Higgins, is not well known among Catholics today, including some young bishops and priests.

An important step was taken during the June bishops' meeting to address this lacuna. The bishops voted overwhelmingly, 171 to 26, to issue a special message entitled "Catholic Reflections on Work, Poverty and a Broken Economy." This important teaching document should be ready for a vote at the bishop's meeting in November. The proposed statement is timely because there are public Catholic voices who claim that the church's teaching on unions has been overstated. They go so far as to say that Pope Leo XIII's groundbreaking encyclical, "Rerum Novarum" (1891) is time-bound and not applicable today. Such an outlandish statement seems to ignore that popes since Leo XIII have referred to this encyclical as foundational for the church's teaching on the rights of labor to organize and to engage in collective bargaining.

It is also amazing that these same voices seem to ignore the very strong support for unions in the magisterial teachings of both Blessed John Paul II and Benedict XVI. The forthcoming bishops' special message is needed because too many are influenced by these public Catholic voices rather than by the teachings of the church, proclaimed by the U.S. bishops, on unions and poverty.

JOSEPH A. FIORENZA
Archbishop Emeritus of Galveston-Houston
Houston, Tex.

Union Blues

Your editorial blames the demise of unions on everyone except yourselves, the unions and their leadership. Unions, **America** and Catholic social activists have lost their focus on workers' rights. What about the right of workers not to join a union; the right of union members to oppose their union leadership without fear of intimidation and coercion; their right to a say in what political causes their leadership spends their dues money on or their freedom from having the state collect their dues money from them whether they want it to or not? If corporations were abusing workers' rights the way the union bosses do, **America** would be screaming about the injustice. Would you want the Teamsters managing your pension fund?

JAMES COLLINS
Farmington Hills, Mich.

De-Fence-less

Re the reflection by John P. Schlegel, S.J., in Of Many Things, 7/2: Being in nature can surely be restorative. Father Schlegel reminds me of the elaborate gift of being able to witness so much beauty on so many different continents. My call to action is to appreciate more deeply every opportunity I have had and to work harder to help others have the same opportunities, knowing full well that there will always be people fenced in by circumstance who will never see the sun set on a different environment.

NOELLE FITZPATRICK
Cavan, Ireland

CARTOON BY HARLEY SCHWADRON

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A Neglected Work of Mercy

Thanks to Kerry Weber for "Theology Behind Bars" (7/2). Matthew 25 calls us to feed, clothe, shelter, minister to the sick and to visit "Christ" in prison. We Catholics invest heavily in all these works of mercy except prison ministry, which in most instances appears to be a near-afterthought. Surely shortages of priests and distances to jails and prisons make the ministry difficult, but anecdotal evidence suggests that incarcerated persons are among the very last attended to and rarely ministered to or visited.

We are extraordinarily fortunate to have writings of the U.S. bishops, including their statements in 1973, 1978 and especially 2000, on criminal justice, that are rich in insight and in guidance. Now we need preaching in our parishes and from our bishops, along with structures and personnel and budgets to find Christ in prisoners, in their victims, families and communities and in public policies affecting crime, responsibility, rehabilitation and restoration.

THOMAS PETERSIK
Richmond, Va.

Not Forgotten

As the chairperson of the prison ministry for the American Association of the Order of Malta, I read with great interest Kerry Weber's excellent article pertaining to the work of George Williams, S.J., among the incarcerated at San Quentin. What Father Williams, a chaplain of the Order of Malta, is offering is hope to men largely forgotten in our society.

In 2007, the American Association of the Order of Malta embarked upon prison ministry as its national work. We now have some 200 knights, dames, auxiliary and volunteers working in prison ministry. This encompasses visiting inmates and bringing the Word of God to them, mentoring their children and helping ex-offenders find a place to live, regain their driver's license and find a job. We distribute approximately 125,000 Bibles and prayer books annually to prisons and jails in the territory of the American Association of Malta, which is primarily the Eastern United States. In this way we hope to convey to our incarcerated brothers and sisters and their families that the Catholic Church is praying for them and has not forgotten them.

ROBERT J. FREDERICKS, K.M.O.B.
Morristown, N.J.

Failure to Communicate

Re "U.S. Bishops: How well Are They Being Heard?" (Signs of the Times, 7/2): The problem is not the message. The problem is the messenger. Doesn't the bishops' "wondering aloud" if they need to hire professional public relations managers show how far they are from understanding the purpose of the church and their role in it? If the church is only a corporation, then there is reason to "wonder." If the church is the body of Christ, led by the Spirit, then something else needs to be done.

Save our money! Here are six things I hope will help:

1. Communicate to God's people as compassionate leaders. Stop talking down.

2. Recognize how deeply the evil (sin) of clericalism is ingrained in clerical leadership.

3. Spend time contemplating the crucified, powerless Jesus. This is the true model of leadership.

4. As Jesus did, treat women as equals; treat them with dignity.

5. Take off the outdated clothes that distinguish your levels of power. They hinder you from communicating.

6. Show your sincerity by public penance.

(REV.) WILFRED STEINBACHER
Madison, Tenn.

Due Credit

Re "Pathfinder," by Jon Sweeney (7/2): I wonder what the author's frame of reference was for the claim that Rabindranath Tagore was India's greatest poet. No doubt Tagore was a giant for his time, but others before him were already enshrined among India's classic poets. I wonder if Sweeney would try to substantiate his claim for Tagore in comparison with the poet Valmiki, composer of the classic epic "Ramayana," or Kalidasa, composer in verse of the famous play "Shakuntala," and even poetry attributed to the renowned Bhartrihari.

Sweeney's article gives due credit to the breadth of Tagore's accomplishments, but Tagore would not have seen himself as outdoing the other "greats" of the Indian tradition or the other classic writers of Asia and the West.

WM. THEODORE DE BARY
John Mitchell Mason Professor and
Provost Emeritus, Columbia University
New York, N.Y.

Octavian Restoration?

Concerning the lament by Drew Christiansen, S.J., for "the now-suppressed octave of Pentecost" (Of Many Things, 6/18): Why couldn't Pope Paul VI have reinstituted the octave? I think that moving the feast of the Epiphany and the dropping of the Pentecost octave is detrimental to the overall appreciation of liturgical celebrations on the part of the laity.

Is there anything that can be done to restore what has already been changed? We have Advent preparing us for Christmas and Christmastide after that; Lent preparing us for Easter and Eastertide after that, leading to Pentecost Sunday. But I bet dollars to donuts that at least 90 percent of the faithful attending Mass that day did not realize it was Pentecost until it was announced from the altar or read in the bulletin. And it was probably just as easily forgotten a day or two later.

DICK RYAN
Waldwick, N.J.

It's All About Jesus

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), AUG. 5, 2012

Readings: Ex 16:2–15; Ps 78:3–54; Eph 4:17–24; Jn 6:24–35

"I am the bread of life" (Jn 6:35)

Are you ever annoyed by obtuse people? How do you know you're not one of them? After all, being obtuse is exactly what would keep one from recognizing the problem. John's Gospel is filled with contrasts between people who are obtuse and those who possess genuine spiritual acuity. Of course, we are complex enough that we do not neatly fall into such an either/or framework. But John's Gospel heightens the contrast. It is a narrative of seeing and not seeing, of spiritually dense metaphors often taken literally and superficially. Jesus spoke of being reborn and was thought to be promoting a return to the womb (3:3–4). He offered an inner fountain of life-giving spirit and was imagined to promise lighter water-carting chores (4:14–15). In last week's Gospel, he fed the multitude as a sign of the reign of God. The people wanted to make him their political ruler, but that was not the kingdom he intended.

This brings us to today's Gospel reading. When Jesus discovers that the crowd has found him after his narrow escape, he responds, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled." The crowd seeks another sign, something by which he could prove himself worthy of being followed. "What can you do? Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it was written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus switches tenses: "It was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread." And while the crowd stays focused on physical bread, Jesus becomes explicit: "I am the bread of life."

To believe and internalize this truth, Jesus teaches, is the game-changer. It literally makes one a child of God (1:12). It moves one from being an obtuse spirit to an enlightened soul (8:12). To believe in Jesus is the work of God (6:29). Nothing can replace this, and nothing is more valuable.

The church teaches that non-Christians are saved by grace working through their consciences and even their religions. And our call to dialogue means we can learn profoundly from them. While recognizing these truths, it is imperative that we place our minds and hearts squarely on Jesus. He is the icon of the Father through whom we experience the Father's glory and know what the Father's being (*charactēr*) is like (Heb 1:3).

One of the many great insights in the Second Vatican Council's "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation" is its understanding of revelation not as a set of doctrines but rather as Christ himself, "the fullness of all revelation," by whom God speaks to us and lives with us (No. 2). This is Jesus' point to the crowds in today's Gospel. "Where's the sign?" they want to know. "I'm the sign," Jesus responds. "I am the sign and the reality. I am the bread from heaven."

One of the holiest people I ever met was a retreat director I got to know during a monthlong retreat. He meditated on the Gospels constantly, and his prayer life was deep and rich. It was obvious he enjoyed great intimacy with Christ. I noticed that he regularly expressed what seemed spiritually wise or unwise by saying, "that feels like the Lord" or "that doesn't feel like the Lord." While such proclamations can be instruments of projection or self-delusion in naïve hands, in the hands of one intensely immersed in the Lord, they can reflect Christ himself, who is the ultimate truth. Paul makes a similar point in the second reading: You "were taught in him, as truth is in Jesus."

How can we be sure we are not spiritually obtuse or at least far less so than we would otherwise be? We must immerse ourselves in him, seek intimacy with him and take on the perspectives, values and imagination he models in the Gospels. When we feed on him, his Spirit dwells ever more deeply in us, and we become increasingly like him.

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Meditate on one of the four Gospels this week.
- Consider three values that are decisively the Lord's.
- Ask Jesus to imbue you with his spirit.

ART: TAD DUNNE

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

Communion and the Cross

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), AUG. 12, 2012

Readings: 1 Kgs 19:4–8; Ps 34:2–9; Eph 4:30–5:2; Jn 6:41–51

"The bread I give is my flesh for the life of the world" (Jn 6:51)

Cracking the mystery of the Incarnation is a fool's errand. Even different starting places for the attempt require us to rethink so much. Matthew and Luke suggest that the history of the Son begins with the Holy Spirit's overshadowing of Mary. After Jesus' earthly ministry, he then went to the right hand of the Father and is awaiting the final Day of Judgment. John, on the other hand, takes us to the perspective of the eternal Word, through whom the universe was created. Here the Son's history is that he enjoyed intimacy with the Father from eternity and then came to earth from his glorious existence. And his presence already conditions judgment (9:39). He alludes to this heavenly history in our Gospel reading today. We continue to follow the Bread of Life Discourse that we started last week. "I am the bread that came down from heaven," Jesus tells the crowd. As is typical in John, the listeners go for the surface understanding and miss the spiritual depth he intends. "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph?" they ask.

Recall that in last week's Gospel the crowd wanted a sign from Jesus and reminded him that Moses fed them manna from heaven. Jesus now tells them: "Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died.... I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever." The manna, at best, prefigured Jesus, the true bread. While manna was considered bread from heaven (Ex 16:4), it could do no more than hold off starvation. But this living bread brings eternal life.

The Gospel reading ends with what appears to be a terrible mixture of metaphors: "The bread I give is my flesh for the life of the world." Jesus' crucified body is bread? It is hard to imagine how Jesus' sacrifice on the cross actually feeds us. This insight is unique to John's Gospel, as is the whole sense of the cross. In contrast to the synoptic Gospels, the cross in John is a place of glory for Jesus (17:1) and a place where he reveals the divine most clearly (8:28). Most important, it is on the cross that Jesus will draw all people to himself (12:33).

None of this sounds like standard feeding, but collectively the self-offering of Jesus becomes the context and even the content of our communion with God and one another. Paul thinks so too. In today's second reading, from the Letter to the Ephesians, Paul urges the community to deeper communion. Earlier he exhorted them to maintain their unity by recognizing they had "one body and one spirit…one hope…one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (4:3–5). In today's reading, Paul continues to encourage spiritually skillful behavior. The section ends with a plea to "live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God for a fragrant aroma."

So the communion that we have with God in Christ's self-offering is the same communion we have with one another when we live in self-offering love, for it is all of a piece. Paul makes this utterly clear: we are the body of Christ who dwells in us (Eph 1:22–23; 3:17; 4:12). In associating the cross with our mutual communion, Paul will even say that what divided the church (Jews and Gentiles) was nailed to the cross: "For he is our peace, he who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of enmity through his flesh...that he might create in himself one new person...and might reconcile both with God, in one body, through the cross, putting that enmity to death by it" (Eph 2:14–16).

Think about it: the cross is not only the place where the ultimate sin offering was made (as if that were not enough). It is far more. The cross calls us; it draws us. We find the Father through the cross. We encounter the Son's glory on the cross. We discover love by the cross. We find each other in the cross. In short, the cross is a place of communion. And there we are well fed.

PETER FELDMEIER

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Consider two events of your own self-offering.
- How did they feed other persons?
- How did they deepen your love?

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