

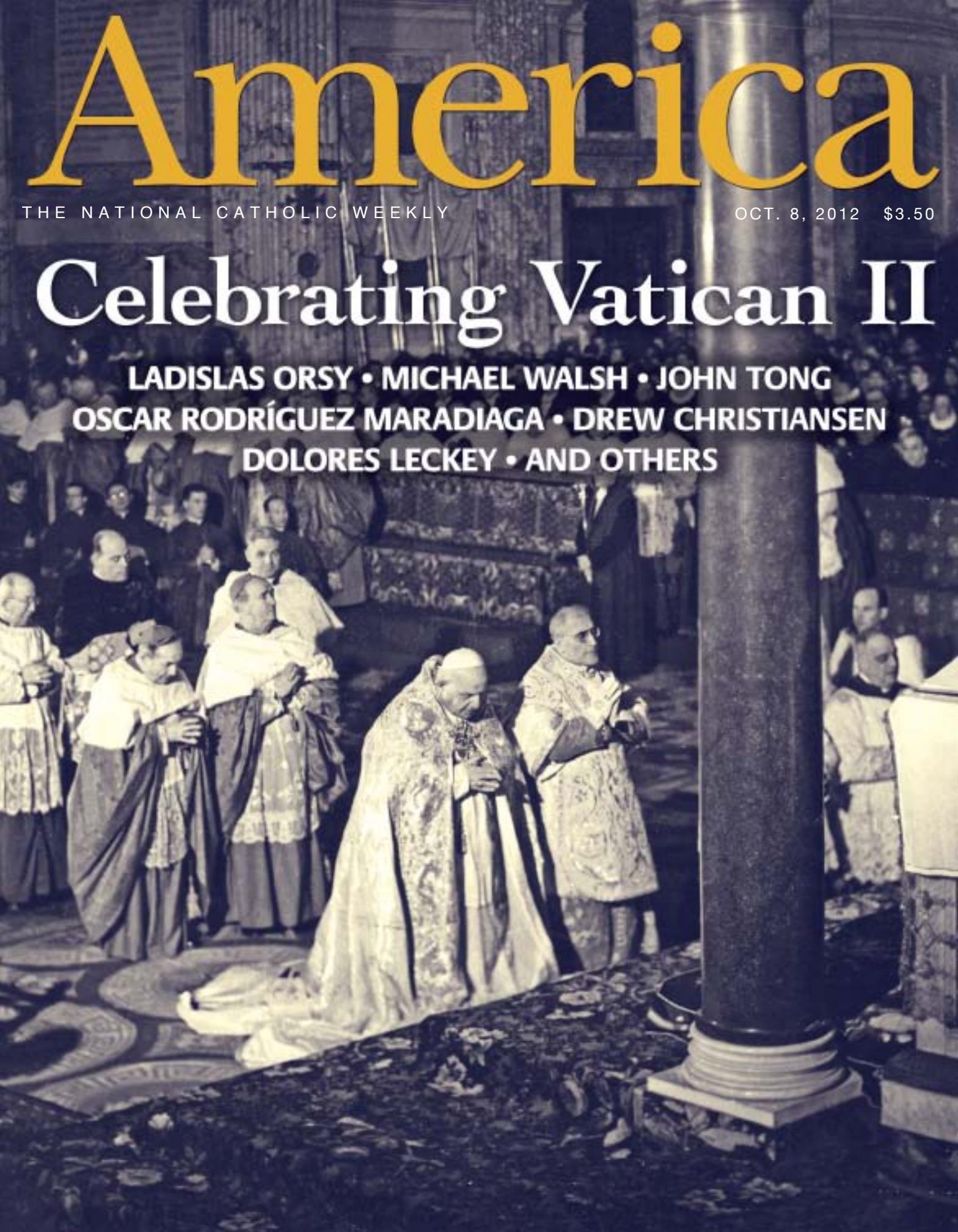
# America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY

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## Celebrating Vatican II

LADISLAS ORSY • MICHAEL WALSH • JOHN TONG  
OSCAR RODRÍGUEZ MARADIAGA • DREW CHRISTIANSEN  
DOLORES LECKEY • AND OTHERS



# OF MANY THINGS

**W**hen I finish my last full day at *America* on Sept. 28, it will be 10 years to the day that I arrived here. My assignment came late the previous spring while I was serving as interim director of the Woodstock Theological Center and had just been selected director. I caused consternation for my superiors as I bargained for time to leave the center in good order before departing for New York. I didn't quite understand their urgency for me to move on quickly.

When Tom Reese, S.J., suddenly resigned as editor in chief in 2005, it took the Jesuit provincials just 36 hours to ask me to serve as editor in chief. Only afterward was I told that my earlier appointment had been part of a succession plan.

Rick Ryscavage, S.J., of Fairfield University taught me an expression for leadership in hard times: "white-water management." I am proud of my time at *America* and what our team has achieved, especially during the seven-plus years I have been editor in chief. But beyond what readers see in the magazine or encounter on the Web site, *America* Press has gone through a period of transformation these last seven years that has often seemed like a succession of rapids.

My first task was to promote organizational healing after Tom's painful departure and to regain the confidence of our readers. Then I had to lawyer-up for a trademark dispute over our *America* brand. Soon major change came with reworking our state charter and by-laws to become a modern-day nonprofit with a largely lay board and to find a publisher to take on fundraising and board-building responsibilities.

All this came about in the midst of a major decline in print publishing and the shift first to the Web and then to multiple platforms to carry on our "media ministry." With the help of Tim Reidy, whom we brought on to be our online editor, that's a transition we

managed with success. The site has been named the number one Catholic magazine Web site by the Catholic Press Association five years running. In a few months *America* will be available on tablet devices as well as online and on e-readers.

Tim is one of a group of lay editors who are the future of *America*. First among them is Karen Sue Smith, our editorial director. Much of the credit for *America's* quality these last years goes to Karen, who has been responsible for soliciting articles, coaching authors and negotiating with them. Along with Tim and Karen, we welcomed Kevin Clarke and Kerry Weber.

I want to offer a special word of thanks to Lisa Pope, our chief financial officer, who has helped us pilot through the financial crisis and recession and has managed to sustain our subscriptions and regain advertising in the face of adverse trends. A word, too, for Father Jim Martin, whose publishing and speaking contribute to our financial solvency and whose work with the wider media is an asset to the whole church.

After a few weeks to wind down, I will begin a sabbatical at Boston College to prepare for my new position in 2014 as distinguished professor of ethics and human development at Georgetown University. At last I can imagine myself paddling through flat water.

In the years ahead I hope to be able to continue to contribute to *America* with blogs and occasional articles. I will also continue to be a reader and viewer; I hope you will too.

**DREW CHRISTIANSEN, S.J.**

Sept. 28 will also be the last workday for Karen Sue Smith, our editorial director. Besides being a great editor, she has been our number one work: poring over polls, interpreting data and legislative arcana. We will miss her. We wish her much happiness in the next phase of her life.

**THE EDITORS**

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*Cover:* Pope John XXIII prays in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls on Jan. 25, 1959, just before announcing his plans to convoke the Second Vatican Council. CNS file photo.

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## ON THE WEB

Ladislav Orsy, S.J., talks by Skype and Catherine E. Clifford, right, speaks on our podcast about the legacy of the **Second Vatican Council**. Plus, follow **America's** coverage of the council as it happened at [conciliaria.com](http://conciliaria.com).



# Aggiornamento 2012

On Oct. 11 Pope Benedict XVI, will celebrate the golden jubilee of the opening of the Second Vatican Council with a Mass at Saint Peter's Basilica. In a grand gesture, he has invited Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, to attend. **America** began its observance of the anniversary last February with a series of special articles, and we will continue to celebrate the council's achievements as anniversaries of its landmark developments unfold over the next three years. With this issue, we want to reflect on Vatican II as a council of reform, considering how it re-imagined a centuries-old institution as the people of God, so that the holiness of the church would become visible through the full participation of all the baptized.

This golden jubilee is an appropriate time for the whole church to assess where the people of God find themselves today in their pilgrimage through history. What, we may ask, are the elements in the church's life today that are continuous with the work of the council? Which are discontinuous? What practices have not been reformed as the council intended? From which reforms have we deviated? What are new signs of the times that were not even anticipated 50 years ago? What new stirrings of the Spirit do we experience within the church and within the world? We can only begin to address these questions here, but we hope that during the extended anniversary observance, with the Spirit's guidance, persistent questioning will bear fruit in greater fidelity to the council's legacy.

"In its pilgrimage on earth," the council fathers wrote, "Christ summons the church to continual reformation of which it is always in need in so far as it is an institution of human beings here on earth" ("Decree on Ecumenism," No. 6). That famous statement recaptured for Catholics of that day the ancient image of the church as a pilgrim people, marked by "a genuine yet imperfect holiness," who in their institutions take on "the appearance of this passing world" ("Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," No. 48). Because our holiness is imperfect and our institutions time-bound, reform and renewal will always be necessary on the church's pilgrim journey through history.

For three centuries St. Robert Bellarmine's notion of the church as a perfect institution blocked out any thought in Catholic minds of possible flaws. The church of the 1950s suffered from a veritable allergy to the idea of reform. Even Archbishop Angelo Roncalli, who later as Pope John XXIII

convoked the council, asked, "Reform of the church—is such a thing possible?" Only in Blessed John Paul II's ministry of repentance and especially in the Service for the Day of Pardon that opened the Great Jubilee Year of 2000 did the church confess a millennium of sins by its members before God and a watching world.

In his much examined talk to the Roman Curia in 2005, Pope Benedict XVI put his seal of approval on the interpretation of Vatican II as a council of reform. "It is precisely in this blending, at different levels, of continuity and discontinuity," he said, "that the nature of true reform consists." To the late medieval maxim *ecclesia semper reformanda est*, "the church is always in need of reform," Vatican II added its own counsel for the necessity of *perennis reformatio*, "continual reform."

*The People of God.* One of the most significant deeds of the council was its reimagining of the church as the people of God. That image took root in the minds and hearts of the faithful. While it was one of several biblical images the council used to illuminate the mystery of the church, it conveyed in a special way, in the words of Avery Dulles, S.J., the "more biblical, more historical, more vital and dynamic" vision of the church that inspired Vatican II. It encouraged a keen awareness of corporate belonging to the one body of Christ based on the unity of baptism, the priesthood of all believers and the universal call to holiness. Appropriating the image as their own, hierarchy and faithful, clergy and religious experienced an intensified sense of communion in one body.

The most practical way in which the unity of God's people appeared was in the reform of the liturgy. The use of vernacular languages, turning the altar toward the congregation, removing the altar rail separating priest and people and, most of all, inviting the full participation of the congregation in the liturgy gave a new sense of inclusion. The opening of the offices of acolytes, lectors and eucharistic ministers to lay men and women opened up still greater scope for active participation. Such participation was no historical novelty, but a return to the early practice of the church.

In recent years, however, various developments have diminished the sense of belonging at the table of the Lord, most of all the retranslation of the Mass into clumsy, Latinate prose darkened by feudal images of the divine-human relationship. Furthermore, rubrical changes, like requiring that only a cleric purify the vessels, the separate communication of the celebrant and restrictions on sharing the sign of peace,

have re-enforced the cultic status of the clergy at the expense of an inclusive sense of the worshipping community.

**Participation and Accountability.** Other institutional innovations intended to promote participation, like diocesan pastoral councils and parish councils, were haphazardly implemented and underutilized. The right of the faithful to make their views known never led to regular channels of communication between the people and the hierarchy. The Synod of Bishops, meant to be an expression of the collegial exercise of the episcopal office, was stillborn and became in effect a consultative body to the pope under the control of the Roman Curia. Likewise, the scope of bishops' conferences has been narrowed and routinely subordinated to curial approval. All in all, the hopes of the council that the people of God experience the full participation of all its members have waned before the pressures of centralization.

In 2012 aggiornamento demands reviving the sense of inclusion and participation encouraged by the council, beginning with those institutions first proposed by Vatican II: diocesan and pastoral councils and bishops' conferences. Without neglecting papal primacy, another attempt ought to be made to express episcopal collegiality more adequately in the Synod of Bishops. Furthermore, in a day when transparency and accountability, whether for financial affairs or sexual improprieties, are so much a part of institutional life, the church must also cease to claim exemptions for itself and its leaders from the norms of a just society. The sacredness of the church in no way justifies standing outside the scrutiny of its members.

**Education and Lay Leadership.** One major development in the character of the Catholic people since the Second Vatican Council has been the great expansion in the number of educated Catholics. Sizeable numbers of laypeople are now educated in theology and religious studies to a degree unimaginable in the 1950s. Teaching theology is no longer the sole province of the clergy. Priest-theologians today are a minority amid a field of lay professionals, both women and men. Women in significant numbers have entered even the ranks of canon lawyers.

Today more Catholics generally enjoy the benefits of advanced education. American society, and society worldwide, requires a higher level of literacy and technical competence than at the time of the council. Men and women are used to employing their minds in demanding ways in their jobs and professions and as consumers of information in a digital world. Preaching and teaching ought to be adapted to these new realities, as should the training of clergy. In every aspect of church life, and at every level, the religious dialogue and conversation that marked the council, and its times,

ought to be cherished and widely cultivated.

While religious illiteracy and indifferentism are rampant in the general population, the graduates of Catholic colleges and universities, the veterans of postgraduate volunteer programs and especially the alumni of graduate programs in theology, ministry and religious studies often form the cadres of active Catholic parishioners when they return home. They are prepared to assist in adult education programs, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and the new evangelization. But while there are fewer priests to meet the needs of the Catholic community, there are, ironically, fewer parish job openings for laypeople than there were only a few years ago. The gifts of educated lay men and women are ignored or even spurned by pastors who are uncomfortable with broad theological learning.



The continuing reform of the church in accord with the direction set by Vatican II demands fuller incorporation of the laity's gifts in building up the church at all levels. Bishops and pastors should understand that their pastoring will to a great extent consist in fostering and guiding the gifts of their parishioners. While wide-scale ignorance of the Catholic tradition needs to be addressed,

for educated Catholics re-evangelization and catechesis will be effective only if they rely primarily on richer, more sophisticated readings of the Catholic tradition. Even those without advanced theological training but whose work and general culture involve more complex modes of thinking require better, more informed homilies. More dialogic forms of adult communication are especially needed to assist in the growth of mature faith among Catholics.

Reinvigorating the people of God demands fuller participation of the educated laity in ways commensurate with their baptismal calling and their intellectual training. Appreciating an educated laity as a gift of God intended for proclamation of the Gospel and the upbuilding of the church are prerequisites of any sound pastoral strategy in our times. "Each member of the faithful," Pope Benedict reminded bishops last month, "must feel the responsibility to announce and bear witness to the Gospel."

The legacy of Vatican II remains in dispute. The reforms of the council, not to mention the call to continual reform, cannot be taken for granted. Many forces opposed to the council's vision are busy rolling back its work. In all humility, however, we must admit space for the demands of our own age, for corrections of deviations made in what was alleged to be the spirit of the council and for new promptings of the Spirit. The successful appropriation of the Second Vatican Council requires that the people of God continue their pilgrim journey, aware that we move in contested terrain.

# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

LEBANON

## As Protests Rage in Middle East, Pope Urges Interfaith Dialogue

**W**hen Pope Benedict XVI stepped off the plane in Beirut on Sept. 14, he said he had come to Lebanon, and to the Middle East in general, as a “pilgrim of peace.” In five major talks over the next three days, the pope repeatedly called for peace and underscored the role of Christians in promoting it. Yet his most eloquent message of hope to the troubled region lay not in the diplomatic language of his public statements, but in his very presence and the response it evoked from his hosts.

Throughout his trip, Pope Benedict limited himself to general statements of principle on the most contentious political issues, and he avoided some topics altogether. His insistence that religious freedom is a basic human right and a prerequisite for social harmony was a bold statement to make in a region where most countries restrict and even prohibit the practice of any faith other than Islam. But like the document he came to Lebanon to present, a collection of his reflections on the special Synod of Bishops in 2010, the pope said nothing specific about where and how the region’s Christians are regularly deprived of that right.

The pope twice deplored the human cost of the civil war in neighboring Syria, but his only practical recommendation for an end to the fighting there was a neutral call to end the importation of military arms, which he called a “grave sin.” Pope Benedict said nothing at all about the incendiary subject that dominated news coverage in the run-up to his trip: an American-made anti-Islamic film that had inspired often-violent protests in at least a dozen Muslim countries, including Lebanon. Awareness of that furor no doubt heightened the caution with which the pope treated the most volatile topics during his trip. Ironically, the crisis may also have helped him to get his message across.

For the Lebanese, the pope’s willingness to carry out his planned visit in spite of security concerns powerfully underscored his commitment to the country and the region. “The mere fact that the Holy Father came at this difficult moment is an indication that Christians here are not forgotten,” said Habib Malik, a professor of history at Lebanese American University.

Back in Rome, on Sept. 19 Pope

Benedict XVI said his three-day trip to Lebanon convinced him that now is the time for Christians and Muslims to bear witness together against violence and in favor of dialogue and peace. In Lebanon, he said, Muslims “welcomed me with great respect.

“I believe the time has come to give a sincere and decisive witness together against divisions, against violence and against war,” the pope said at his weekly general audience.

During a ceremony at the Melkite Catholic Basilica of St. Paul in Harissa, Lebanon, on Sept. 14, Pope Benedict signed the 90-page document of his reflections on the synod, which was dedicated to Christians in the Middle East. A section dedicated to interreligious dialogue encouraged Christians to “esteem” the region’s dominant religion, Islam, lamenting that “both sides have used doctrinal differences as a pretext for justifying, in the name of religion, acts of intoler-



ance, discrimination, marginalization and even of persecution.”

Yet in a reflection of the precarious position of Christians in most of the region today, where they frequently experience negative legal and social discrimination, the pope called for Arab societies to “move beyond tolerance to religious freedom.”

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

## Pew Tracks Growing Intolerance

**A** new study by the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life notes an uptick on social intolerance and government restrictions on religion around the world and in the United States between 2009 and mid-2010. Restrictions on religion rose not



only in countries that already maintained high government restrictions or religious hostilities, such as Indonesia and Nigeria, but also in many countries that began the study period with low or moderate restrictions or hostilities, like Switzerland and the United States. Over all, restrictions increased at least somewhat in 66 percent of the 197 countries and territories included in the study and decreased in 28 percent.

Pew researchers report that the United States moved from the lower end of the moderate range of social hostilities to religion to the range's upper end. A key factor behind the U.S. increase was a spike in religion-related terrorist attacks. In November 2009, for

instance, U.S. Army Major Nidal Hasan killed 13 people and wounded 32 others at a military base in Fort Hood, Tex. In December 2009 Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian national, attempted to set off a bomb hidden in his underwear while aboard a Detroit-bound aircraft; and in May 2010, Faisal Shahzad, a Pakistani-born resident of Bridgeport, Conn., attempted to detonate a car bomb in Times Square in New York.

The Pew study also reports an increase in the number of incidents at the state and local level in the United States, in which members of religious groups faced restrictions on their ability to practice their faith. Some were prevented from wearing certain religious attire or symbols, including beards, in judicial settings or in prisons, penitentiaries or other correctional facilities; some religious groups also faced difficulties in obtaining zoning permits to build or expand houses of worship, religious schools or other religious institutions.

In Murfreesboro, Tenn., for example, some residents attempted in the

spring of 2010 to block the construction of a mosque, claiming that Islam is a "political ideology rather than a religion." The mosque officially opened in August 2012, but opponents are still challenging it in federal court.

According to the study, restrictions on religion increased in each of the five major regions of the world, including the Americas and sub-Saharan Africa, the two regions where overall restrictions had been declining. The share of countries with high or very high restrictions on religious beliefs and practices rose from 31 percent in the year ending in mid-2009 to 37 percent in the year ending in mid-2010. Because some of the most restrictive countries also have high populations, three-quarters of the world's approximately seven billion people live in countries with high government restrictions on religion or high social hostilities involving religion, up from 70 percent a year earlier.

The rising intolerance was tracked by increases in malicious acts and violence motivated by religious hatred or bias, as well as increased government interference with worship or other religious practices. A constitutional referendum in Switzerland in November 2009 banned the construction of minarets on mosques in the country. In Indonesia more than two dozen churches were forced to close because of pressure from Islamist extremists or local officials. And in Nigeria violence between Christian and Muslim communities, including a series of deadly attacks, escalated throughout the period.



**Interfaith leaders hold a prayer service at the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, Mich., in April 2011. Two pastors in Florida had threatened to burn a Koran there the next day, Good Friday.**

## Preaching Together

The potential power, but also the limits, of an ecumenical proclamation of the Gospel and defense of Gospel values is likely to be a key topic during the meeting in October of the Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization. The ecumenical focus will be particularly sharp on Oct. 10, when Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury, head of the Anglican Communion, will deliver a major address to synod members at the invitation of Pope Benedict XVI. Bishop Brian Farrell, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, said such ecumenical invitations demonstrate the pope's recognition that the "challenges facing religious belief itself and church life are common...and we need one another and can learn from one another." He added that ecumenical and interreligious cooperation shows the world that "we are together in promoting the values of belief and the moral-ethical values that we stand by."

## Christian Families Displaced in Pakistan

Rimsha Masih, a Pakistani Christian girl, was arrested on Aug. 17 for allegedly burning pages from the Koran. She has since been released. A Muslim cleric was arrested for fabricating evidence against her, and Pakistan's noxious blasphemy laws were once again discredited. But Rimsha was not the only victim in the case. Hundreds of her Christian neighbors from Umara Jaffar, a slum near Islamabad, were forced to flee their homes after her arrest when they were threatened by angry mobs. These Christian families remain homeless and afraid to return. On Sept. 18 they held a rally in Islamabad calling for the resignation of Paul Bhatti, Pakistan's federal minister for interfaith harmo-

## NEWS BRIEFS

In **Bosnia-Herzegovina** "real dialogue" is being impeded by "legalized war crimes and injustices" and failure to implement the peace accord that ended the country's 1992-95 war, said Msgr. Ivo Tomasevic, secretary-general of the Bosnian bishops' conference.

• After heated debate, the Australian parliament voted overwhelmingly on Sept. 19 to reject **gay marriage**. • **Jonathan Reyes**, president and chief executive officer of Catholic Charities in Denver, will replace John Carr in December as executive director of the U.S. bishops' Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development. • Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury will attend the Mass that Pope Benedict will celebrate to mark the 50th anniversary of the opening of the **Second Vatican Council**. • About 3,000 students and guests at Fordham University cheered mightily as the comedian **Stephen Colbert** joined Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York and James Martin, S.J., on Sept. 14 in a discussion of faith, humor and spirituality. • The Archdiocese of Liverpool has become the first diocese in England and Wales to commission **laypeople to preside at funerals** in an effort to assist overwhelmed priests.



Faith and laughter at Fordham

ny. Demonstrators claim Bhatti raised funds for the displaced families and offered to help resettle them but has not lived up to his commitments. The families are sleeping out in the open and surviving on one meal a day. Minister Bhatti denied the allegations.

## Can't Rely on Nukes

Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, the Vatican secretary for relations with states, called for the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East and elsewhere around the world to demonstrate that "global security must not rely on nuclear weapons." He spoke on Sept. 19 at the general conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. The archbishop said the Holy See believes that

the ratification and enforcement of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty "will represent a great leap forward for the future of humanity, as well as for the protection of the earth and environment entrusted to our care by the Creator." The archbishop also noted that the disaster at the nuclear facility Fukushima Daiichi, which followed the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in March 2011, "quickly revealed that a local nuclear crisis is indeed a global problem. It also revealed that the world is exposed to real and systemic risks, and not just hypothetical ones, with incalculable costs, and the necessity of developing international political coordination the likes of which have never been seen."

From CNS and other sources.

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# Whiskey's Wisdom

I can really identify with a fridge magnet that reads: "I'm not aging. I'm marinating." Sometimes you hear a story that validates this hopeful proposition. Sometimes, like the wine at Cana, the best-kept secrets reveal themselves in the later chapters of our lives.

An hour's boat ride off the southwest coast of Scotland lies the little Isle of Arran, where I discovered one such story. The island, like many other parts of Scotland, has a long and inglorious history of illegal whiskey distilling, finally regularized in 1995 with the arrival of a new and entirely legal enterprise. Its founder was a man whose lifelong passion reached its fulfillment in his retirement years.

After a long and successful career in the corporate world, he was inspired to create a very special small distillery on an island that is often described as "the whole of Scotland in miniature," with its own high peaks, lonely beaches, small harbors and lowland plains. Such a miniature Scotland must, of course, have its own distillery.

Three ingredients make this island's whiskey what it is. They might also help us to discover the pure spirit that God is distilling from our own lives. The first is the purity of the water on the island, flowing from deep natural sources over ancient granite. The second is the barley that yields the malt that is the basis of the brew. The third is yeast, the catalyst for the fermentation process. The rest of the recipe is intangible. It is the combination of nature's time and human patience.

---

MARGARET SILF lives in Scotland. Her latest books are *Companions of Christ*, *The Gift of Prayer*, *Compass Points* and *Just Call Me Lopez*.

How pure is the flow of my life, I might ask myself—the integrity that springs from unseen wells and flows through the granite of my years? Is it clear or polluted with artificial additives like status, prestige and wealth? What grain is growing in the fields of my experience? Will I let it be harvested for the greater good of all creation? And will I allow the yeast of the Holy Spirit to break down my familiar assumptions and expectations and transform me into something new?

Out of these two simple offerings, the flow and the fruit of my life, God is constantly distilling the essence of who I truly am. The word *whiskey* originates from the Gaelic *uisge beatha*, which means "water of life." Our own water of life can be distilled only when the fruits of our experience have been given time to ferment and take on their own particular flavor of wisdom.

As I listened to the story of this place, my mind kept returning to the intuition that sometimes God saves the best till last. Like the whiskey, we also have to bide our time in the casks of experience, allowing the aging process to bring out our finest flavors as we reflect on it, noticing the divine hand active within it.

Distillation happens in its own time, not according to our schedules. Could we be missing out on the finest malt of life in our frenzied 21st-century lifestyles? Could we be ignoring the wisdom that is vested in the elders of our society, the ones we dispatch to nursing homes, disregarding the riches

their lives have distilled?

As we ourselves experience the aging process, we may feel that much of who we thought we were has been lost in the mists of time, leaving no trace behind. Whiskey has the same problem. As a cask ages over the 14 years or so that its contents take to mature into the finest of single malts, it can happen that up to 25 percent of it evaporates. This is known as the angels' share. This may well account for the angels' ability to fly, but for us it can amount to a great deal of frustration.

So much of our energy, passion, love, commitment and effort seems to evaporate in a similar manner, apparently wasted. Anyone who has given unstintingly of themselves to an unappreciative employer, a brood of thankless children or a querulous partner or parent knows how this feels.

In the Spiritual Exercises, St. Ignatius Loyola urges us to seek the grace to love one another with the same quality of love with which God loves us. This is the kind of loving that expects no payback, but is willing to let itself be spent, and become "the angels' share." It is a big task. It needs a large injection of grace.

So, as we raise the wee dram that God has distilled from our lives and offer the toast *Slainte!* ("Good health!"), let us listen carefully for an echo from heaven, as the angels respond "*Slainte Mhor*" ("Great health!"), blessing our waters of life all the way to eternity.

This is the kind of loving that expects no payback, but is willing to be spent.



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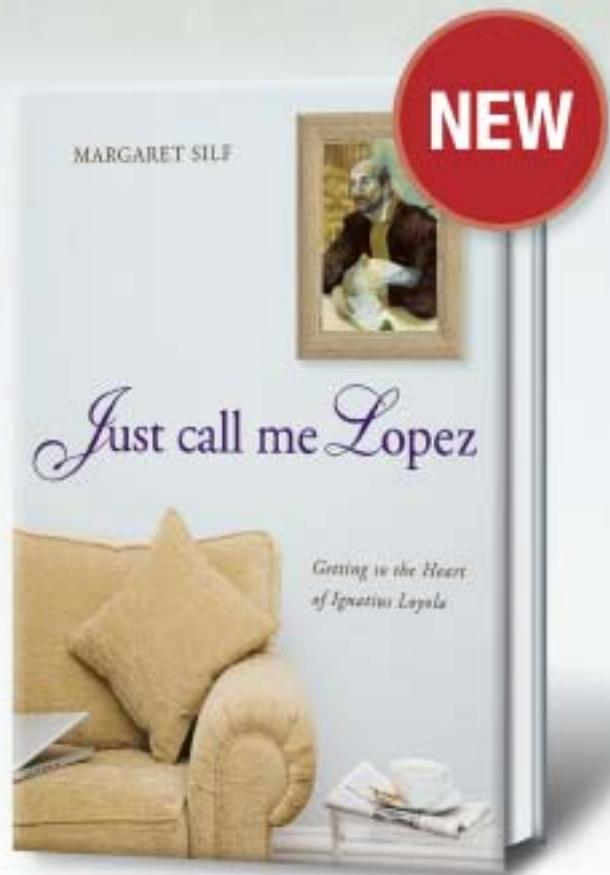
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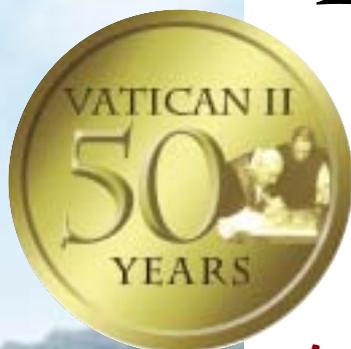
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THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL WAS THE  
SOWER. NOW WE ARE THE LABORERS.

# A Time to Harvest

BY LADISLAS ORSY



**T**he message of this article is simple: the Second Vatican Council lives, and we are bound to sustain it. The council lives because the impulse of the Spirit that “caused” the council continues in the community at large. The Catholics of today, therefore, ought to call out daily *Adsumus*, that is, “We are present,” just as the bishops in St. Peter’s Basilica cried out at the beginning of every session. The invocation indicates the willingness of the community to be open to the Spirit and to do the work of the Spirit.

Such an approach relies on the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” which affirms that “the holy people of God...anointed by the holy One...[remains] attached unfailingly to the faith, penetrates it more deeply through correct judgment and applies it more fully to life” (No. 12). An equivalent formulation could be: God’s people own the Tradition, are unfailingly faithful to it and have the capacity to order their lives accordingly. By a subtle divine law, the faithful of today are the legitimate heirs of the council. If so, they are bound to continue the council’s quest for a fuller understanding of faith and to work for the renewal of the church in a practical way.

To better understand our situation today, it may be helpful to look at it through the lens of the biblical parable of the sower (Mk 4:1-9). The council was the sower; now we are the laborers in God’s own household. Fifty years later in God’s plantation, we are surrounded by varied scenery. Here and there seeds contend with rocks and struggle to strike roots. In other places tender plants push for space to expand;

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**LADISLAS ORSY, S.J.**, author of *Receiving the Council* (Liturgical Press, 2009), teaches at Georgetown University Law Center. During the council he was a professor at the Gregorian University in Rome and the official expert for the Archbishop of Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (now Harare, Zimbabwe); he also had the opportunity to participate in many conversations and debates among the council fathers.

elsewhere, growing trees reach for nourishing sun and warm rain. It is a rich ambiance, no doubt, and an intricate one; the multiplicity of the creatures on the ground demands alert caretakers with wisdom and expertise. Fifty years after the council, our destiny and obligation are to take stock of what we inherited from the council and to continue its work, not as a council in the technical sense but as a synod, *synodos*, in the old Christian sense—the community of those who are marching on the same road toward the same promised land.

## The Long March

At the beginning of the postconciliar years, the future looked bright and promising. On Dec. 8, 1965, Yves Congar, O.P., one of the leading theologians at the council, wrote in his diary: “Today the church is sent into the world, to the nations, to the peoples. It is a beginning, not in Jerusalem but in Rome. The Council will explode in the world. For the Council, this is the day of Pentecost foretold by John XXIII” (author’s translation). Father Congar’s imagination was inspired by the history of the first century. Within a few decades after the Pentecost in Jerusalem, the Gospel message exploded far and wide in the Roman Empire.

Today many thoughtful people see something else: the council’s impact is waning. What was once celebrated as a momentous event is now redefined as insignificant. We hear their questions no matter where we turn. Here are some examples:

*What happened to the liturgy?* The council intended to renew it by reaching back to old and rich traditions, but in place of embracing the conciliar initiative, we see a return to the Tridentine form. In many locations, the people must contend with rival celebrations at the same time and place. This is something unheard of in Catholic history. The sacrament of unity is dividing communities.

*What happened to synodality?* The Orthodox churches, our sister churches, are sending messages that no unity between East and West is conceivable unless we Westerners are willing to return to an ancient tradition of government where synodality and primacy operate in a balanced harmony. Surely this is not a demand that would “smell” of schism or heresy. Why then not seek unity—even at the price of our nonessential practices?

*As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the council, why are we mandated and urged to study the Catechism of the*

*Catholic Church and not the documents of the Second Vatican Council?* The catechism deserves respect; each part of it has the authority of the source of that part. But why are we spending our time and energy on the disparate sources of the catechism when we could study (should study) the proclamations of a council that—as the church teaches—was assisted by the Spirit?

These questions are legitimate, but even if the questions were incorrect, they deserve a considered response. Behind the inquiry, an honest conscience may be searching for the light of truth.

Between the conflicting moods (exulting hope and gloomy depression), let us return to the parable of the sower. It should help us gain a more wholesome perspective.

Father Congar sensed the divine force in the seed, but he forgot that the soil could be rocky and unreceptive even in God’s field, the church. Nor did he think of the enemies who may sow weeds among the wheat (Mt 13:24-30). Nonetheless, in substance he was right. The word of

God as it was proclaimed at the council was full of restless energy. Eventually it will explode, in God’s own appointed time.

Those who today are depressed by the slow pace of renewal and are asking “What happened?” may need to recall that within the kingdom, human measures do not work well. The struggle of the truth for recognition may be slow by our measure, and it may try our patience. Good ideas, however, are resilient and assertive; when expelled they tend to return. And the impulse of the Spirit cannot be halted.

Today, as laborers on God’s own estate, we find ourselves in vastly different circumstances from those of 50 years ago. We are able to assess to a fair extent how far the implementation of the council has progressed; we can make some calculations as to what more is needed. We are called to cooperate. Of course, as we enter into such a holy adventure, we should be aware that we may not see the result of our work. We may not be among the harvesters. That, however, is not the issue. The issue is in fulfilling our own modest role in a divine play in our allotted time; we must promote a good cause according to our capacity and with the ways and means available to us.

## Next Steps

The question we need to ask is: *What should we do to help the council’s work flourish and expand?* We should promote

**Good ideas are resilient  
and assertive; when expelled  
they tend to return.  
And the impulse of the Spirit  
cannot be halted.**

the right environment for healthy developments, and we should press for some basic improvements in the church's constitutional operations and structures. Much that follows here can be done within the existing laws. For the right environment we need trust in the Spirit, the capacity for friendly debates and an air of freedom in God's field. Without trust in the Holy Spirit and each other our efforts would be in vain. The council was born from the trust of Pope John XXIII in the Holy Spirit. He said so from the first announcement of the council, and later he confirmed it by talking about a new Pentecost. He was aware that the Spirit alone had the intelligence and the strength to hold such an assembly together and to make it productive. Later, when the participants rejected most of the preparatory work over which he presided, he trusted the bishops (and rejoiced). He sensed the Spirit behind their movements, and he kept learning from them while he guided them.

Friendly debates only flourish in an atmosphere of trust. Without friendly debates, there is little progress in the understanding of faith. In recent decades, we all have become familiar with the utterly serious lecturer in theology who delivers the last word on a delicate matter. But a solitary thinker can hardly be a Christian theologian. The reason is that God imparted his revelation to a community; no one single person was ever privileged to hold it all in his or her own memory. Truth reveals itself through conversations in the community.

Meaningful conversations or debates can take place only in an atmosphere of freedom. When fear takes possession of human minds and hearts, the dignity of the persons is diminished. They will be reluctant to talk about their struggles and their combat with good and evil spirits. They become muted or, worse, they hide behind double talk. When such a camouflage happens in a community, friendly debates become extinct. Once we achieve a climate of trust in the divine and we have cheerful disputations among ourselves in an atmosphere of freedom, then we can better focus on some of the pressing needs of the church in the coming decades. Such needs are: a more intense awareness among the bishops of their own calling, a new way of doing justice and a more intense participation of the baptized but not ordained in the government of the community.

*Concerning bishops.* The constitution on the church contains a sentence that has been commented on abundantly in the theoretical order, but in the practical order does not seem to have had much impact. It reads, "Episcopal consecration, together with the office of sanctifying, also confers the office of teaching and of governing, which, however, of its very nature, can be exercised only in hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college" (No. 21, translation from the Vatican Web site).

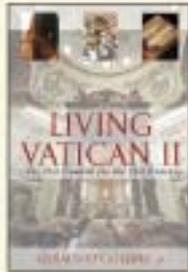
In ordinary language, this means that the Holy Spirit is

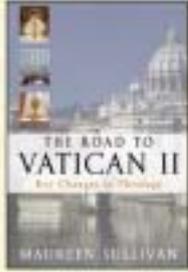
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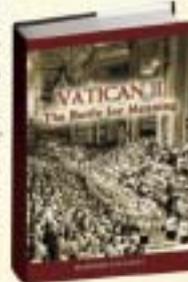
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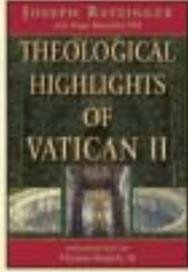




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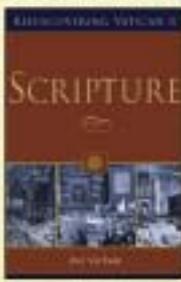
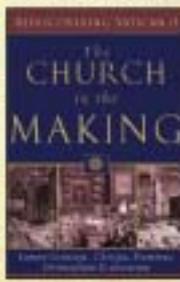




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the one who (through the sacrament of orders) gives the bishop the power to shepherd his flock; then, afterwards, the pope assigns the person so endowed to a particular diocese. It follows that every bishop, first and foremost, is accountable to the Holy Spirit. This hierarchy lays the ground for a healthy equilibrium in the administration of the community; the pope is the principle of unity and the bishops are the representatives of diversity. No bishop in his diocese can ever be a mere executive officer of the pope. No pope can function well without the help of his brother bishops.

*Concerning the administration of justice.* The 1983 edition of the Code of Canon law carefully enumerates and solemnly affirms the rights of the faithful. But as lawyers well know, no declaration of rights is worth much unless it is backed up by courts that have the necessary autonomy to operate, are seen to do justice, work without undue delays and have the means to enforce their judgment. Admittedly, we have ecclesiastical courts, but there is need for much improvement in the administration of justice.

*Concerning the baptized, nonordained faithful.* Last, but truly not least, the church needs to bring the laity into its organizational and governmental operations far more than it has done thus far. Among them immense and diverse gifts

of nature and grace are lying fallow and so do not benefit the Christian community. This is all because of a doctrinal position taken unnecessarily by the drafters of Canon 129: "Lay members of the Christian faithful can cooperate in the exercise of the power [of governance] according to the norm of law." Note the canon says "cooperate," not "participate"—a world of difference. The former calls for passive obedience, the latter for active contribution. This view has no justification in tradition beyond the basic rule that a layperson cannot participate in the sacramental power given by ordination. For many activities in church government no anointing is necessary. Radical exclusion of the laity is a novelty in the church's 2,000 years of history. The best witnesses against the new rule would be the Byzantine emperors and empresses (surely not ordained); they called all the ecumenical councils in the first millennium. This was participation in church governance if ever there was any.

Fifty years after the council, the point of this article is not so much to celebrate the past as to look to the future. Its point of departure is in the diagnosis: the council lives and its vital signs can be seen all around. The task of our generation is to labor in the field of God, nourish the plants and support the fledgling trees. As for the rest? Let us leave it to the Lord of the harvest. **A**

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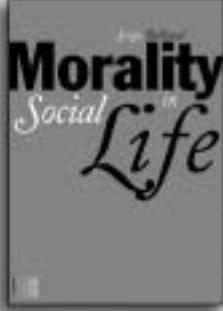
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# Opening the Windows

Why the gifts of Vatican II are still needed today

BY MICHAEL J. WALSH



It is a useful rule of thumb—and something you can count on—that popes do not like councils. From time to time they feel obliged seriously to consider calling a gathering of the world’s bishops, only to eschew the thought. We know Pope Pius XI toyed with the idea at the beginning of his pontificate but had rejected it by 1925. In 1948 Pius XII set up a commission to consider whether he ought to convoke an ecumenical council (the suggestion that it might be a good idea had been aired almost a decade earlier at the conclave that elected him), but by 1951 he had put an end to any such radical speculation. Considering the success of the Second Vatican Council just a decade later, it is a relief to us all that he did so. A council during the pontificate of Papa Pacelli would have been a very different animal.

There are many reasons why popes do not like councils. They are a logistical nightmare: where to hold it, who is going to pay. They also demand a mammoth amount of preparatory work: studying precedents, seeking opinions, analyzing responses from bishops. But the biggest worry is who is going to come out on top? The popes have much to lose. Pope John XXIII’s namesake, Pope John XXIII (there were indeed two popes with that name, which rather makes up for the fact that there was never a John XX), fled from the Council of Constance in the early 15th century and had to be dragged back by the Emperor Sigismund.

Canon 338 claims that calling a council and setting its agenda “is the prerogative of the Roman Pontiff.” Yet the assertion flies in the face of the historical evidence. Councils have often been forced upon recalcitrant pontiffs, not least the aforementioned Council of Constance. The fathers at Constance demanded, and Pope Martin V reluctantly agreed, that councils should meet at regular intervals to govern the church. It took many years before popes managed to wriggle out of what still is, to the best of my knowledge, an abiding conciliar decree. But wriggle out of it they did. Papal power was not to be fettered by having to listen to the views of the bishops.

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MICHAEL J. WALSH, formerly the librarian at Heythrop College, University of London, has written widely on the history of the papacy. He recently revised *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes*.

## Two Papal Exhibits

Two remarkable exhibitions in Rome this year have vied for attention, each demonstrating a different facet of papal power. In the Capitoline Museums an imposing array of items from the Vatican archives has been on display. They include a 60-meter-long parchment roll containing records from the early 14th-century trials of the Templar Knights, that uncomfortable example of papal chicanery in the midst of the “ages of faith”; and a letter from the bishops and nobles of England begging Pope Clement VII to grant King Henry VIII his divorce, impressively adorned with over 80 seals bearing the arms of the signatories. Most remarkable of all is a fragment of parchment containing the *Dictatus Papae*, attributed to the 11th-century Gregory VII, with its extraordinary insistence “That the Roman pontiff, if he have been canonically ordained, is undoubtedly made a saint” and the unequivocal assertion “That he who is not at peace with the Roman church shall not be considered catholic.” The exhibition lays bare the pretensions of papal authority.

It is safe to say that far fewer people than climbed the Capitoline steps found their way to the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. As the name suggests, it is some distance away from Rome’s historic center, though easy enough to reach. A metro stop shares the basilica’s name. Accidentally destroyed by fire in the 19th century, St. Paul’s has been majestically restored and contains some particularly splendid medieval works of art that somehow survived the conflagration. It is especially worth visiting at the moment because, interwoven with its permanent display of treasures, are mementos of the Second Vatican Council, and above all, the original text of the speech delivered by Pope John XXIII in which he announced that the council was to be summoned.

No papal pretensions here. For such a momentous occasion the pope’s speech is on a disconcertingly scrappy bit of paper. He scribbled it down in a barely legible hand, with much crossing-out. A great deal has been made of the fact that Papa Roncalli chose to announce the council (together with a Rome diocesan synod and the revision of canon law) in St. Paul’s on Jan. 25, the feast of the conversion of St. Paul. In light of the apparently impromptu nature of the manner in which the council was proclaimed in the basilica, there will need to be revisions, not least by me in the volume



of the *Cambridge History of Christianity* that deals with the modern church. But it does not alter the fact that one of John XXIII's earliest acts as pope was to call the world's bishops to Rome. Given all the problems councils can and frequently do bring in their wake, it was an extraordinarily brave thing to do.

Problems were not long in coming. Commissions were established to prepare the agenda and devise the documents to be discussed. These commissions were dominated by old curial hands, determined not to let the proceedings run away from them. Yet when the bishops gathered, the first thing they did was to wrest control from the Curia and take charge themselves. The Curia was humbled, no individual more, perhaps, than Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, then in charge of the Holy Office (the present Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith). That must have been another act of bravery on the part of Pope John because, as his recently published diaries reveal, no one had been of greater help to Cardinal Roncalli than Cardinal Ottaviani when the future pope was exiled from Rome in the service of the Vatican's diplomatic corps. Cardinal Ottaviani seems to have been Cardinal Roncalli's closest friend in the curia.

Summoning the council, Papa Roncalli did what popes have long feared to do: he allowed open discussion. Everything, or almost everything, was on the table. He

seemed at ease with debate, more than his successor Paul VI, who was at times clearly afraid that free speech was going too far.

Not that the council was a parliament of bishops. Debate was prolonged and, as far as the use of Latin allowed, lively; but unlike democratic assemblies, no decisions were made on slender majorities. When votes were taken there were three choices: for, against and in favor but with reservations (*juxta modum*). Where there was serious division the issue was referred back to the *periti*, the bishops' personal theological advisors, to come up with an acceptable solution, which was then further debated in the assembly hall. Though there always remained a few doubters about individual texts—sometimes more than a few, but in the end never a substantial number—consensus was aimed for and achieved, a text ultimately being approved that everyone could sign. Well, almost everyone. After the council was long over, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, frequently an ally of Cardinal Ottaviani in the conciliar debates, finally went his own way into schism.

### A Model of Debate

Many people have written in praise of the individual conciliar documents and the impact they made, most of them, on the study of theology outside the Roman Catholic Church

PHOTO: REUTERS/TONY GENTILE

as well as within it. I would like to voice praise of the way in which the texts were agreed upon. We should be celebrating not just Vatican II's theology but its methodology: open debate. It could not be put better than was done in 553 by the fathers of the Second Council of Constantinople, who are quoted on the first page of Norman P. Tanner's excellent little book *The Councils of the Church: A Short History*:

The holy fathers, who have gathered at intervals in the four holy councils, have followed the examples of antiquity. They dealt with heresies and current problems by debate in common, since it was established as certain that when the disputed question is set out by each side in communal discussions, the light of truth drives out the shadows of lying. The truth cannot be made clear in any other way when there are debates about the questions of faith, since everyone requires the assistance of his neighbour.

This affirmation of the need for discussion of the sort that occurred at Vatican II is in stark contrast to the denial of it during the most recent two pontificates. In the interregnum after the death of Pope John Paul II, I took part in a phone interview on the BBC World Service television. Also answering viewers' queries was a distinguished archbishop. One caller wanted to know whether the church was

likely to ordain married men. "I'm not entirely sure what I think about this," said the archbishop with refreshing modesty, "but at least in the next pontificate I hope we will be able to discuss it." I did not know whether to applaud the prelate's boldness or to weep at the fact that a person in so prominent a position within the church had felt unable even to discuss with others a matter of such importance for the church's future.

The archbishop's hopes have been dashed. Nothing has changed; debate is still not the order of the day. If anything, the situation has deteriorated. A new head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Archbishop Gerhard Müller, formerly bishop of Regensburg, has recently been appointed. He has been making waves. In a column in *The National Catholic Reporter* on July 16, John Allen reported that in a recent homily, Archbishop Müller gave a stern warning to the national assembly of German Catholics to be held in Regensburg in 2014. Anti-Roman sentiment won't fly, he declared, according to Mr. Allen: "Being Catholic means being united with the bishop and the priests. Ravings against the truth of the faith and the unity of the church will not be tolerated."

It is worth taking time to reflect on the implications of this statement. You cannot *disagree* with bishops and priests, you can only *dissent* from church teaching. There is no suggestion that differing opinions might be debated; they are "ravings." Only by agreeing with (no doubt select) members of the clergy can one be sure of orthodoxy. This arrogant nonsense is reminiscent of Pope Gregory's *Dictatus Papae* and Pope Boniface VIII's 1302 bull *Unam Sanctam*: only in communion with the pope may one achieve salvation—a view now happily disavowed because of the debates at Vatican II. I suspect, moreover, that if Archbishop Müller added them up, he would find that priests and bishops have led far more schisms than ever have been engendered by laypeople in the pews. "The body of the episcopate was unfaithful to its commission," John Henry Newman remarked of the Arian controversy in his article "On Consulting the Faithful," "while the body of the laity was faithful to its baptism." Pope Benedict XVI beatified Newman, so (by Archbishop Müller's standards) it must be true.

Pope Benedict has launched a "new evangelization" in an effort to win people back to the practice of their faith. But loss of belief is not, I am convinced, the main reason Catholics no longer turn up to church on Sundays. Rather, it is the feeling that their church has been stolen from them. Through debate at Vatican II, the council fathers asserted their ownership of the church. That was what we used to call collegiality, before it went out of fashion. We need it back—and quickly. And this time around collegiality ought not to be limited just to clerics; it should embrace us all. **A**



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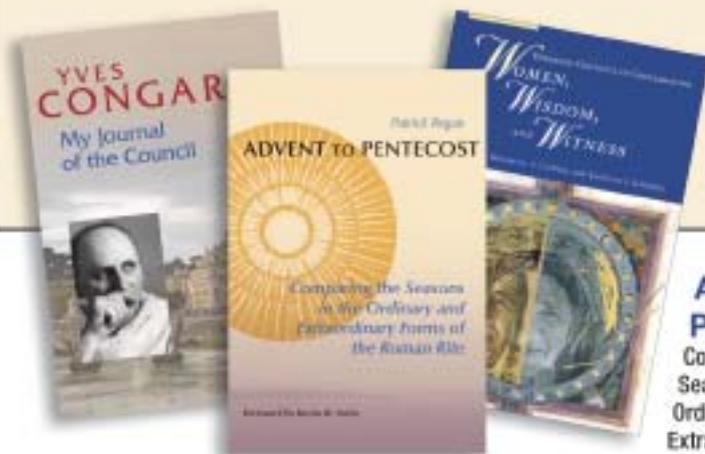
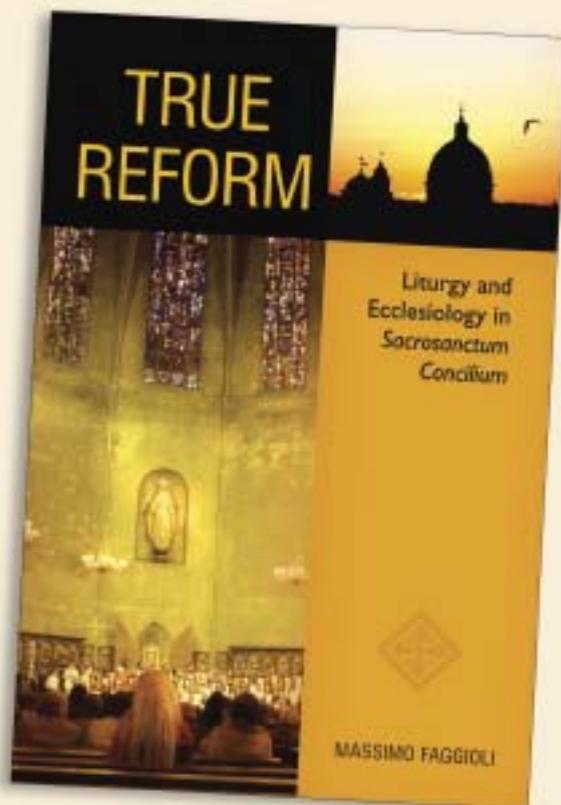
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# Impulses of the Spirit



The servant church after Vatican II

BY DREW CHRISTIANSEN

**D**uring the Second Vatican Council and for many years thereafter, the universal church experienced a joyful confidence in the Spirit. “The People of God believes that it is led by the Spirit of the Lord who fills the earth,” wrote the world’s bishops in 1965 in the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World” (No. 11). Some critics have dismissed the council, and particularly the postconciliar work of justice and peace, as the fruit of a shallow, this-worldly optimism. Yet Pope Paul VI saw it as the work of the Spirit, a power experienced throughout the whole church that fostered its engagement with the world.

“We live in the Church at a privileged moment of the Spirit. Everywhere people are trying to know him better...happy to place themselves under his inspiration...for it is he who causes people to discern the signs of the times—signs willed by God—which evangelization reveals and puts to use within history,” Paul wrote a decade after the council in “Evangelization in the Modern World” (No. 75).

Yet the Spirit is a disruptive, purifying power, especially when it inspires us with new work to do, sometimes work never even imagined before. Advocacy for human rights and peacemaking are just two of the new works the Spirit has



**Riot policemen try to stop priests from marching toward the presidential palace in Manila on Oct. 12, 2006, to protest the killing of Bishop Alberto Ramento.**

led the church to undertake. Others include economic justice, the pro-life movement, ecological responsibility and religious freedom. In Pope Paul’s eyes the church was not deluded to take up these labors, for the Spirit of the risen Christ is behind them.

## Imagining a Servant Church

The council took steps to re-imagine and re-organize the church for service of the world. In the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” the council appealed to a variety of biblical images to elucidate the mystery of the church. In the field of social ministry, the key image was that of the servant church.

The whole of Chapter 4 of the first part of the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World” is dedicated to the mutual service the church and the world offer one another. The church, it explains, “serves as a leaven and a kind of soul for human society as it is to be renewed in

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**DREW CHRISTIANSEN, S.J.**, is editor in chief of *America*. He was director of the U.S. Catholic Conference Office of International Justice and Peace from 1991 to 1998 and its counselor for international affairs from 1998 to 2004. This article is an edited excerpt from a lecture delivered at the Atonement Friars’ Centro Pro Unione in Rome during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January 2012.

PHOTO: REUTERS/ROMEO FANOCO

Christ and transformed into God's family" (Nos. 40-44). She serves individuals by affirming the dignity and autonomy of persons and proclaiming "the rights of man." She serves society by affirming and promoting wholesome "socialization" and the promotion of unity in the human family. She serves human activity through the faith-filled activity of laypeople in their secular roles, in allowing legitimate diversity to the faithful in responding to the Gospel, and, notably, in struggling against those defects in the visible church that impede the spread of the Gospel.

Finally, the constitution commends all Christians to work for the good of humanity. "Let us take pains," it urges, "to pattern ourselves after the Gospel more exactly every day, and thus work as brothers in rendering service to the human family. For in Christ Jesus this family is called into the family of the [children] of God" (No. 90). So while servant ecclesiology may still require fuller elaboration by both theologians and the magisterium, it nonetheless stands as the foundation for the integration of the social mission into the full life of the church.

In "Christus Dominus" the council fathers expanded the teaching role of every bishop to include "public witness on matters of justice and peace" (No. 12) and established episcopal conferences, enabling the bishops to offer common witness at national and regional levels.

As social ministry became a global enterprise, the church established the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (as it came to be called), which sets up networks between local churches in the developing world and those in the developed world, and of both with international organizations. In the 1990s, for example, in an effort to reduce the crippling debt burden of impoverished countries, the organization convened conversations between the Latin American Episcopal Conference and the U.S. Catholic Conference with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Subsequently, the church has enhanced its capacity for social mission by transforming its relief agencies (the members of Caritas Internationalis, like Catholic Relief Services, Cafod and Secours Catholique) into agents of justice and peace. In the late 1960s and '70s these agencies added development to their traditional relief work, empowering people to help themselves. During the '80s and early '90s they learned that development would be stymied without advocacy for justice; and as the 20th century turned into the 21st, they understood that peacemaking was necessary for building just and prosperous com-

munities. This organizational structure makes the church a potent agent for social change.

The council fathers also expanded their concept of the household of God to include ecumenical ties to those "not yet living in full communion" and urged Catholics to collaborate on social ministry with their "separated brethren" ("Church in the Modern World," No. 90). Fifty years later, shared social ministry has become a standard expression of the ecumenical character of the church of Christ. And on issues from climate change to Middle East peace, joint advocacy and service programs between Catholics and other Christians, as well as interfaith programs with Jewish and Muslim partners, are so common we take them for granted.

## Upholding Human Rights

After the council, advocacy of human rights was the first impulse of the Spirit within the church's social mission. But its origins lay in an earlier major initiative of Blessed John XXIII, the 1963 encyclical "Peace on Earth." The most remarkable thing about the encyclical, which was born out of the Cuban missile crisis, is that it does not deal extensively with conflict, armed force, just war theory or negotiation (typical issues of peacemaking). Instead it elaborates a theology of political life founded on human rights.

A political theology rooted in the rights of the human person was in itself a revolutionary development. For until then Catholic political theory rested mostly on the natural law and its corollary duties. Pope John's encyclical redefined the common good in terms of the establishment, defense and safeguarding of human rights. It made upholding human rights the goal of all political authority, conditioned the legitimacy of government decisions on the service of those rights and defined peace as a situation in which the rights of persons are upheld.

In Blessed John XXIII's own vision, the church's renewal through the council would contribute to world peace by defending human rights. To Msgr. Loris Capovilla, his secretary, the pope confided: "The world is starving for peace. If the Church responds to its Founder and rediscovers its authentic identity, the world will gain." On the eve of the council, the pope told the diplomatic corps he wanted the council to contribute to a "peace based on a growing respect for the human person and so leading to freedom of religion and worship."

Within a few years, the church itself became a major actor in the human rights movement. The Justice and Peace

Local churches are called...to commit themselves...in an unselfish and impartial manner...to stand up for human rights, proclaim the demands of justice, and denounce injustice not only when their own members are victimized, but independent of the religious allegiance of the victims.

*"Dialogue and Proclamation," 1993  
Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue*

Commission, founded in 1968, publicized the church's teaching on human rights, then elaborated and applied it in a series of special papers issued in connection with United Nations special assemblies (like those on racism and homelessness) and meetings of the World Trade Organization.

Beginning in 1973, with the establishment in Chile of the Vicariate of Solidarity following the overthrow of President Salvador Allende, the church there modeled effective witness on behalf of human rights under autocratic rule. One of the vicariate's executive directors, José "Pepe" Zalaquett, later became president of Amnesty International.

In the coming decades, church-based human rights offices opened in many countries. Of special importance during the dirty wars in Central America in the '80s and '90s were Tutela Legal in El Salvador, the Archdiocesan Human Rights Office in Guatemala City, and the Bartolomé de las Casas and Miguel Pro Centers in Mexico. While defending labor rights, the Solidarity movement in Poland, with the spiritual guidance of Blessed John Paul II, became a bellwether of political emancipation in Eastern Europe.

The defense of human rights has also been an ecumenical and interreligious undertaking. In the early '90s when the U.S.C.C. undertook a campaign for religious liberty in China and sought guidance from the Vatican, the single instruction the conference received from the Holy See was to advocate for liberty for all (not just for Catholics, but for

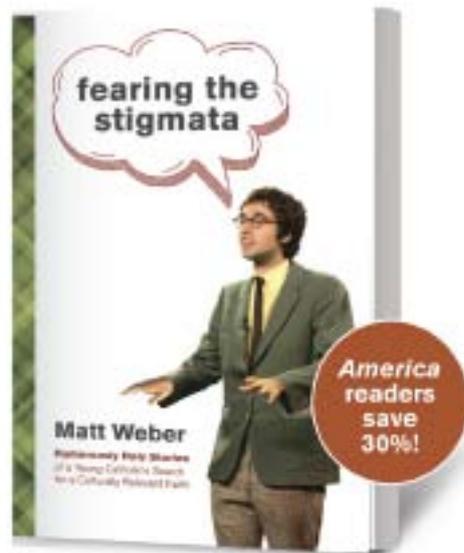
Muslim Uighurs, Tibetan Buddhists and house-church evangelicals as well). During the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, the archbishop of Zagreb, Croatia, defended the rights of Serbs and Muslims as well as of his fellow Croatians. In Jerusalem, when Patriarch Michel Sabbah made the case for justice for his fellow Palestinian Christians, he pled as well for the rights of Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims.

In Bosnia, Bishop Franjo Komarica gave hospitality in his own residence to displaced Bosnian Muslim, Serbian Orthodox and Croat Catholic families, numbering more than 30 people at a time. In Chiapas, Mexico, many of the indigenous people, whose rights the late Dom Samuel Ruiz, the bishop of San Cristóbal de las Casas, defended, were evangelicals. Once, when his opponents threatened him by surrounding his residence, the evangelicals came down from the hills, he related with a mixture of bemusement and pride, to protect "their bishop."

The common witness of the churches, religions and people of good will does build up the unity of the human family and contribute to peace, as Pope John envisioned. In the last decades of the 20th century, many leaders of human rights movements around the world were Catholics. They included laypeople, like Kim Dae Jung in South Korea, Corazon Aquino in the Philippines and Mairead Corrigan Maguire in Northern Ireland; and bishops, like Franjo Komarica in Bosnia, Michel Sabbah

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## Keeping the Peace

Catholic peace activists were heartened by the council's call to "undertake an evaluation of war with an entirely new attitude" and the declaration that "the arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity." But the fathers ceded governments "the right to legitimate defense" and recognized military personnel "as agents of security and freedom" ("Church in the Modern World," Nos. 80-81). In subsequent decades the Holy See has worked to curb the arms trade, especially small arms and landmines, work that resulted in an international treaty.

*Nuclear War and Deterrence.* In Catholic peacemaking the first major postconciliar development came during the 1980s debate over nuclear war. The drafting of a peace pastoral by the U.S. Catholic bishops prompted similar letters by European bishops' conferences. There was agreement on prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons, but the conferences expressed a range of opinions on nuclear deterrence. The Vatican brought American and European bishops together to talk out their differences, and Pope John Paul II settled the deterrence issue with a message to the United Nations in 1982; he argued that "deterrence...as a step on the way toward disarmament may still be judged as morally acceptable." Since then the abolition of nuclear weapons has become a policy goal for both the Holy See and the U.S.C.C.B.

*Nonviolence and R2P.* Beginning with the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989, further developments helped to re-order the position of the just war tradition in church teaching: increasing endorsements of nonviolence, appeals for humanitarian intervention and the United Nations' adoption of the Responsibility to Protect.

In 1991, in the encyclical "Centesimus Annus," Blessed John Paul II praised the nonviolent activists who had defeated the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. He expressed a hope that nonviolence would become the rule in

domestic and international confrontations. Two years later the U.S. bishops declared that nonviolence should be the primary Christian response to conflict, with just war as a back-up when repeated attempts at nonviolent resistance have failed.

The Holy See led the diplomatic world in responding to calls for humanitarian intervention in the Balkans, Rwanda, Central Africa and East Timor. In a surprising transformation in the international order, the United Nations explored what it called "the responsibility to protect." At a meeting of world leaders on the U.N.'s 50th anniversary, it made R2P a principle of international law. In 2008, when Pope Benedict XVI addressed the General Assembly, he voiced the church's strong support for the principle. Along with nonviolence, R2P seems to have displaced just war as the church's ordinary mode of discourse in times of conflict.

*Catholic Peacebuilding.* The conflicts in the Balkans and Central Africa also led to an enormous growth of specialized groups (nongovernmental, governmental and intergovernmental) to carry out conflict prevention, resolution and recovery. The church has contributed to this growth. In part, the situations of bishops as leaders in societies without other institutions, so-called failed states, led dozens of them, like Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo in Congo and the late-Cardinal Rodolfo Quezada Toruño in Guatemala, to become mediators and national conciliators.

Catholic relief and refugee agencies and the Caritas Internationalis network have supported mediation and reconciliation efforts in places as diverse as Burundi, Colombia and the Philippines. Now the Catholic Peacebuilding Network is attempting to coordinate these efforts, share expertise and extend peacemaking initiatives into zones of conflict. The network owes its origin to ecumenical collaboration between the Mennonite conflict-transformation expert John Paul Lederach, Catholic Relief Services and the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. The growth in constructive Catholic peacemaking shows the church making good on her teaching that "peace is more than the absence of war" ("Church in the Modern World," No. 78).

Fifty years after Vatican II, Blessed John XXIII's vision of a world at peace through the witness of the church continues to bear fruit. The council's hope that the church would "serve the world more generously and more effectively" is also being realized. And the way has been set, as Pope Paul VI hoped, for Christians to involve themselves "in building up the human city, one that is peaceful, just, and fraternal, and an acceptable offering to God." **A**

**Pierre Hegy**  
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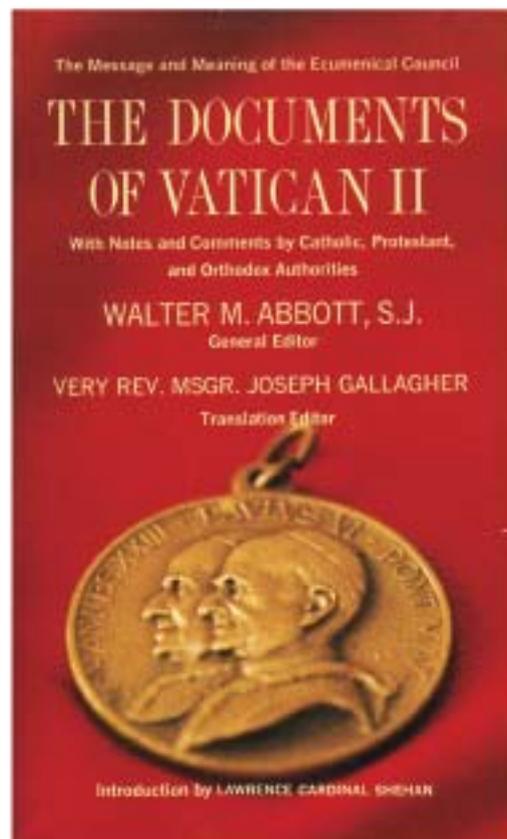
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# A New Pentecost

The council revealed John XXIII's hope for dialogue.

BY OSCAR ANDRÉS RODRÍGUEZ MARADIAGA



**T**he ecumenical council was among the most significant events of the 20th century. To call it simply “Vatican II” is not sufficient. The complex purpose was to celebrate a true ecumenical council. Thus we are referring not only to a Catholic event, but also to one with great ecumenical and worldwide repercussions. Its significance extended well beyond the Christian churches to reach, as was the custom of good Pope John XXIII, all people of good will.

We must contemplate with admiration Pope John in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls on Jan. 25, the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul. There in 1959 the now “blessed” pope convened the Roman Synod and convoked the ecumenical council. His choice of this feast to convene a council revealed his hope of opening a path leading to conversion for the church.

## Resistance to the Spirit

Blessed John XXIII's hope for a council was a real inspiration of the Holy Spirit. That inspiration brought hope to the church and to the whole world. Today we can sincerely affirm that the assimilation of his message is not yet complete. Fifty years after the opening of the council, many who know about it have not yet implemented it or read its documents or understood it.

It is also true that many have sought to erase its memory because the challenges the council set before us, and continues to set before us, are rather uncomfortable for some structures and persons.

“The new Pentecost” convened by Blessed John XXIII opened, and still opens, the doors and windows of a church in which more than a few pastors and laypeople suffer the temptation to close themselves off in a cell that is secure or full of prestige and comfort, little disposed to listen to the anguish and hopes of this world.

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**CARDINAL OSCAR ANDRÉS RODRÍGUEZ MARADIAGA, S.D.B.**, is the archbishop of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and president of Caritas Internationalis. This article, excerpted from a longer text, was translated from the Spanish by Mr. Mario J. Paredes, presidential liaison, Roman Catholic ministries, at the American Bible Society.

Upon becoming the pilot of Peter's barque as its “pastor and guide, navigator and admiral,” John XXIII found the church walled up in a holy city with a very European mentality and too centered in Rome. He was “provoked” by the Spirit of God and by internal and external ferments that caused some discomfort.

Painfully, the comments of the bishops about the new council, gathered in 1959 and 1960, revealed that the ecclesiastical hierarchy had not yet taken the pulse of their world. They considered many of the subjects “foreign” to the mission of the church. Pope John himself did not think that way. He was ready to listen to the voice of renewal and dialogue so that the church might become an apostolic, missionary, servant church. The surprise of the entire world was enormous as he announced that it was necessary to open the doors and windows of the church and to renew the missionary commitment of the baptized. No less a surprise was the affirmation of the universal call to holiness for everyone.

In the prayer to prepare the council, the pope spoke clearly of “a new Pentecost.” It was to be an ecumenical council marked by dialogue, openness, reconciliation and unity. All were convened, all included, all responsible, all holy, all missionaries.

## Celebrating With the People of God

In Saint Peter's Square on the morning of Oct. 11, 1962, some 2,500 bishops, in procession and singing the Litany of the Saints, marched toward the basilica. They were accompanied by the ringing of bells in all the churches of urban Rome.

As the 20th-century council opened, a new epoch began for the church. A new church appeared in the old and majestic Basilica of Saint Peter. General enthusiasm was evident, though the indifference of some was not absent.

In his inaugural discourse, Pope John XXIII surprised everyone. With great simplicity he began, “Mother Church is happy and exults with joy.” He had begun to dispel fears and reservations and to allow all to be filled with the joy of the Spirit.

Then the pope responded directly to critics of the coun-

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cil. "We have a completely different opinion," he said, "than those prophets of unhappiness, who constantly predict disgrace, as if the world were about to perish. In the current state of human affairs, through which humanity seems to be entering into a new order, we should recognize instead a hidden plan of divine providence."

Defining the task of the council and the mission of the church, Pope John affirmed that it was necessary to consider the legacy of 20 centuries of Christianity as something that, beyond all the controversies, had become the common patrimony of humanity. Therefore, he said, we are not talking about continuing to be trapped by the old. Rather we should with joy and hope, and without fear or reserve, move forward with the work required by our time and our Lord Jesus Christ. Already in the bull that convened the council and later in the encyclical "Pacem in Terris," the pope referred to the signs of the times and to the duty to interpret them with discernment. In this way John XXIII re-established the prophetic task of the church in the heart of history.

That day concluded with the pope's famous improvised discourse before 100,000 people gathered with torches in Saint Peter's Square. This spontaneous celebration called to memory the popular acclamation at the Council of Ephesus, where the bishops' definition of Mary as Mother of God was received with acclamation by the people. It was also a clear image of the church as the people of God. The people of God, including the children, were present for all

to see on the first day of the council.

The pope's simple and fatherly words revealed that he was not vindicating primates, infallibilities or privileges, not even before his brother bishops meeting in council, nor before any other persons. Rather he was inviting all to be happy and hopeful because God the Father has looked upon us; we have been anointed by God the Holy Spirit and sent forth by God the Son.



**Pope John XXIII prays in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls Jan. 25, 1959, just before announcing his plans to convoke the Second Vatican Council.**

# A Missionary People

How Vatican II redefined evangelization

BY JOHN TONG



A commissioning Mass at the Franciscan Mission Service house in Washington, D.C.



CNS PHOTO/NANCY PHELAN WIECHEC

**T**wo fundamental questions must be raised when we consider the impact of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) on the life of the church. First, what is the main legacy of the council—that is, what teachings have been particularly meaningful for us in different parts of the world? Second, what are the tasks and challenges ahead?

I had the privilege of being in Rome during the last two years of the council, as a student from 1964 to 1966 in the licentiate program of theological studies at the Pontifical Urbaniana University. I was immersed in and breathed, so to speak, the special atmosphere of those years in Rome. With hundreds of bishops coming from all over the world, the church seemed truly present in all the nations. Ordained a priest by Pope Paul VI in January 1966, only one month after the council's closing ceremony, I consider myself a child

of Vatican II. I grew both as a priest and as a bishop in the light of the legacy and the teaching of the council.

## Profound Renewal

When I think about the multiform and precious treasures inherited from the council, one of the first things that comes to mind is the profound renewal in understanding of the mission of the church in the world. Coming from China, a nation from the “mission territories,” I can deeply appreciate the council's innovative contribution to the idea of mission, expressed mainly through the “Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity” (equally important are the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World” and the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church”). Recently I learned that Professor Joseph Ratzinger was one of the theologians who contributed significantly to the writing of the missionary decree. He was especially instrumental in overcoming the narrowness of the traditional concepts about the

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CARDINAL JOHN TONG *is the bishop of Hong Kong.*

purpose of mission: the salvation of souls and the founding of the church (*plantatio ecclesiae*).

The decree on missionary activity taught us that mission is not merely an activity engaged in by foreign missionaries, but rather an action rooted in the love of God for the world. The council fathers described mission in all its theological dignity as the mission of the Trinity, a realization of love of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The same church, the people of God living in the Trinity, is a missionary people by its very nature. So we are not only the recipients of evangelization, but missionaries as well. What a magnificent vision and inspiring new perspective! Each one of us and each Christian community, no matter how small or remote, is blessed with the same dignity and shares the same mission of the Trinity. The church is the people of God, a community of persons, dignified as disciples of Jesus and as children of God. And the church exists for its mission.

*Inculturation and Dialogue.* From the great rediscovery of the mission of the church, the council drew new tasks and challenges that are most timely and significant for people like me, coming from a place culturally and geographically so distant from Rome. The council affirmed the necessity for the inculturation of the Gospel, for dialogue among believers from different religions and for sharing in the lives of our brothers and sisters. The word *inculturation* might not appear in the council documents, but the fathers reaffirmed the importance of a creative relationship between the Gospel and culture. Even though the phrase “dialogue among believers” might not be in the texts, the council had the courage to affirm the principle of religious freedom and to affirm the existence of true and holy elements present in non-Christian world religions. These are significant steps forward. During the council Pope Paul VI wrote his first encyclical dedicated precisely to dialogue (“*Ecclesiam Suam*,” 1964), introducing both the term and the practice of dialogue into the life of the church.

About dialogue, I am also grateful to the council for calling all believers in Christ to move in the direction of unity. Vatican II was truly ecumenical because the popes of the council, both John XXIII and Paul VI, called members of other Christian ecclesial communities to assist and observe at the council. This gave great impetus to the ecumenical movement. As a diocesan priest in Hong Kong from the 1970s to the 1990s, I was asked to lead both the ecumenical and interreligious dialogue commissions in the diocese. These tasks are still very important in the daily life of our society. The council was my guide.

## Evangelization, a Task for All

The council gave us new and demanding tasks, not fabricated solutions easily achievable in a short span of time. Fifty years is a long time, but in no way have those years

exhausted the treasures we have inherited from the council. The calls of the council set our tasks for mission today. The great vision—that the church exists for its mission of evangelization—has to be translated into a greater awareness that all members of the people of God should participate. Sometimes I feel that the church still relies too much on the role of the ordained ministers, when all the baptized have a unique role to play in announcing the Gospel to all nations. I can see it from my experience in Hong Kong. Every year we are blessed with around 3,500 adults newly baptized at the Easter Vigil. This is not due solely to the efforts of priests, sisters or missionaries, but also a result of the joint efforts of lay Catholics. In our diocese, more than 1,000 volunteer catechists take seriously the task of evangelization.

In the last 50 years, the church and its mission have been blessed with the tremendous participation of men and women from all walks of life. Still, the church should make greater effort to promote the participation of all Christians, and, I would say, particularly of women. The First Vatican Council emphasized the papacy; Vatican II moved on to the importance of the college of bishops. It might be time to take further steps. The universal church must promote and elevate the participation of all the baptized, including the youth with their many precious gifts, in the mission of the church. **A**



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# An Ongoing Renewal

## How the council is still shaping the church

### Creating a New, Evolving Consciousness

BY DOLORES R. LECKEY

Early in my 20-year tenure at the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, now the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, I was privileged to hear stories from bishops who had attended the last two sessions of the Second Vatican Council. They spoke of how being present and participating in the council opened them, and others, to change—something they had never anticipated. I heard stories of well-known prelates who went to Rome with a specific mindset, only to undergo a change in mind and heart during the deliberations.

The dynamic of the council illustrates an argument made by the Jesuit theologian Bernard Lonergan: that the Holy Spirit can move one from a classicist consciousness (which holds, for example, that the church is unchanging) to a historical consciousness, where one ponders questions like “What time is it?” The bishops who spoke with me about these matters referred to them as “miracles,” so fixed had they and other bishops been in the classicist mode.

The changes that rippled through the church pertained not only to the church’s outward signs, however, like the way sacraments were celebrated or the way parishes and dioceses were to be organized. More importantly they pertained to its thinking. The way the church understood its own role in the world changed.

A major shift of consciousness coursed through the people of God, through not only bishops, but also priests, vowed religious and laity—single and married, men and women. The people of God began to understand themselves—in terms of their freedom, their charisms, their competencies, their irreplaceable roles in the church—in new and creative ways. They experienced themselves as authentic bearers of the Gospel and saw the church as circular in form rather than as a pyramid, with the hierarchy at the top.

The theology of baptism undergirded this expanded consciousness, and with it came a desire to know. Religious congregations wanted to know the intentions of their founders, and consequently they engaged in serious, ongoing research and renewal. Laypeople wanted to know the church’s theological tradition and also the “new theology” flowing from the council. Inspired to explore what



forms their now recognized “vocation” might take, the laypeople pursued advanced theological study in ever larger numbers. Women (religious and lay) studied and labored side by side, forming new alliances of “sisterhood.” The “universal call to holiness,” set forth in the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” served as a lever for the expansion of Catholic consciousness. Lay ecclesial ministry, after a long and painful labor, was also born out of that graced ferment and is now growing new cells in the mystical body.

Relationships with other Christian churches have also grown deep and wide. Dialogues of all kinds continue, especially dialogues of life. It is no longer considered strange, for example, to marry outside one’s religious denomination, and at wedding ceremonies a minister and a priest often preside jointly. Dialogues of life extend into the interfaith world as well. Recently I attended a Catholic-Muslim wedding. Three days before the interreligious ceremony and celebration there was a “sacramental ceremony” in the bride’s Catholic church with only the Catholic family in attendance. The next night the bride’s mother hosted a dinner for the imam who was to preside at the large interfaith ceremony (with a Catholic priest) the following day.

All of this joyful accommodation brought to mind the marriage ceremony of my husband’s parents (I heard this story many times)—his Protestant father from Belfast and his Catholic mother from the Republic of Ireland—in the back room of the rectory. Rather than a celebratory morning, there was a mood of mourning on the part of the priest. An atmosphere of suppressed anger emanated from the bride and groom, anger that lasted throughout the marriage. This searing experience separated my mother-in-law from the church for decades.

After consciousness shifts, there is no going back to the restricted classicist form. One cannot pretend not to know God experientially. New horizons become visible, and the future is one of discovery and hope. Anything is possible because of the realization that we are “members of the household of God built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone” (Eph 2:19-20)—all of us, not just a few.

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## Putting Justice on the Agenda

BY GERALD O'COLLINS

**D**uring nearly 2,000 years of Christianity, 20 general councils of the church met, from Nicaea I (in 325) down to Vatican I (1869-70). The creeds and decrees they promulgated quoted and echoed numerous passages from the Bible. But the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) became the first council to cite Gn 1:26-27 and develop its theme that all human beings are “created in the image and likeness of God.” Through the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,” Vatican

II made that scriptural text the basis for its teaching on human dignity and rights.

The constitution spelled out at length the universal rights and duties that flow from the dignity of having been created in the divine image. The document also vigorously recommended a “dialogue of action” that would engage Catholics with others, both Christians and non-Christians, in working together for social justice, peacemaking and the service of those in desperate need.

Believers and nonbelievers alike will always fall short in practicing their commitment to the common good. Yet we

should give our undying admiration to the many laypersons, religious, priests and bishops for what they have done and continue to do in defending human rights, promoting a just political order and maintaining programs for millions of refugees, displaced and homeless persons, indigenous minorities and others who lack opportunities for employment, basic health care or proper education.

To be sure, the history of Catholicism has a long, proud record of providing health care and education, especially where none had been available. Mary Aikenhead, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, Catherine McAuley, St. Mary of the Cross (Mother Mary MacKillop), Nano Nagle, Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice and countless other women and men founded and staffed schools and hospitals around the world. St. Peter Claver devoted 40 years to caring for the African slaves who were brought ashore, often more dead than alive, on the docks of Cartagena. St. Joseph de Veuster gave his life for the lepers of Molokai. The tradition goes back to the origins of the church, when the word *liturgy* referred both to Christian worship and to the obligation of responding to the material needs of others. This double usage of the term suggests the essential bond between community worship and social service.

In the run-up to Vatican II, Dorothy Day, her associates and other Christians expressed this bond by committing themselves to the poor and to working for peace and justice. She knew that promoting peace and justice forms an integral part of the preaching of the good news that is Jesus Christ himself.

Along with the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," Blessed John XXIII, who called and opened the council, put the cause of justice and peace firmly on the church's agenda as an integral part of the good news to be preached and practiced. In the aftermath of Vatican II, church-based human rights offices were opened in numerous countries. And during the "dirty wars" in Central America, many men and women who worked for justice and peace commissions and defended human rights in other ways were martyred for it. Their names remain an inspiration and a call to action: Oscar Romero, Maura Clarke, Jean Donovan, Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, Ignacio Ellacuría and his companions and others.

Around the world, Catholics have drawn inspiration from Pope John and his council to engage in a mission of service to those who suffer and are oppressed. As a Jesuit, I am immensely proud of what the Jesuit Refugee Service stands for and has done. As a Catholic, I am proud to live at a time when bishops in Africa, Central America, the Philippines and South America have been killed for opposing violence and standing up for peace and justice.

In the first and tenth "Tracts for the Times," issued in

1833, Blessed John Henry Newman proposed suffering and even death as essential features of the witness to which bishops are called: "We could not wish them a more blessed termination of their course than the spoiling of their goods and martyrdom."

Vatican II encouraged Catholics everywhere to share a new consciousness. Working for justice and peace belongs squarely to the life and mission of the church. There can be no going back on that teaching.

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GERALD O'COLLINS, S.J., *the author or co-author of 60 books, recently published A Midlife Journey (Connor Court).*

## Growing in Christian Unity

BY CATHERINE E. CLIFFORD

**T**he Second Vatican Council did more to change the relationship between the Catholic Church and other Christian churches than any other single event since the Protestant Reformation 450 years earlier, or perhaps even since the tragic schism of 1054 that divided the churches of East and West. It transformed the way Catholics view other Christians and set a new course for the reconciliation of the churches.

It is significant that Pope John XXIII chose to announce the convocation of the Second Vatican Council on Jan. 25, 1959, at the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The council was to have two principal aims: first, a much-needed *aggiornamento* or updating of the life and teaching of the church so that it might proclaim the Gospel more effectively to contemporary men and women; and second, the re-establishment of unity among the Christian churches. Pope John understood these two goals to be closely related. While the first objective is widely accepted today, the second is too often forgotten.

The Catholic Church remained outside the organized ecumenical movement in the early 20th century and promoted unity through the return of individuals to the Catholic fold. Like Pope Pius XII before him, Pope John recognized the ecumenical movement as a fruit of the Spirit that fostered renewal of ecclesial life. In his vision for the council, renewal and reform were two of the ways of deepening fidelity to the Gospel tradition. By becoming more attuned to the common source of their life in the Gospel, the divided churches would be drawn closer together in Christ.

This represented a marked shift. Since the late Middle Ages, Catholic theology and teaching had envisaged a stark separation between the natural and supernatural orders and tended to portray everything outside the Catholic Church as devoid of God's redemptive grace. Theologians in the mid-20th century, like the Jesuits Henri de Lubac and Karl

Rahner, however, pointed toward a more ancient theological tradition. Centered on the incarnate Word of God, this tradition provided a basis for understanding both the distinction and the proper relationship between the natural and supernatural. Theologians helped to recover a more positive sense of God's creative and redemptive presence in and through all of human history. Drawing on Augustine's thought, Yves Congar, O.P., maintained that the sacrament of baptism and many other elements of the church were effectively mediating God's saving grace in other Christian communities. The presence of these gifts confirmed that the one church of Christ was present and active in them all.

Receiving these ancient insights anew, Vatican II positively affirmed the active presence of the Spirit in the life of other Christian communions and recognized in them effective means of grace. Emphasizing an already existing, albeit imperfect communion among the churches, the council acknowledged the many gifts Catholics share with other Christians: confession of faith in Christ and in a Trinitarian God, common Scriptures, the patrimony of the witness of the early church, sacramental celebrations, witness and service of the Gospel in the world. Since Vatican II, significant consensus has been discovered through official dialogue on a wide range of doctrinal matters once thought to be church-dividing, including historic agreements on Christology with Oriental Orthodox Churches and on the doctrine of justification by faith with churches of the Lutheran World Federation.

The council's "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church" and "Decree on Ecumenism" reflect an important recovery of understanding of the essential nature of the church as communion. Through baptism and faith all Christians are united in Christ. Communion in Christ grounds the ecclesial communion they share in varying degrees. Vatican II calls for collective conversion to Christ and the continual reform of the church. Dialogue, carried out in a spirit of humility and patient self-examination, is the preferred course of action toward reform and unity.

Other Christian communions—some represented by official observers at the council—also have undertaken important reforms of liturgical expression, ministries and governing structures. While full, visible unity may still seem a distant goal today, Vatican II has been the catalyst for an extensive renewal of the inner life of each church. This has created a new set of relationships among the churches and helped us grow in unity. The council continues to be a transforming force for all of Christianity.

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CATHERINE E. CLIFFORD is a professor and vice dean in the faculty of theology at Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Ontario.

## A New Voice at the Pulpit

BY GREG KANDRA

A date most Catholics do not know may be one of the most important anniversaries on the church calendar: June 18, 1967. That was the day Pope Paul VI, following the recommendations of the Second Vatican Council, issued "Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem," which laid out "General Norms for Restoring the Permanent Diaconate in the Latin Church." That document and what followed it had a seismic impact. Nearly 50 years later the earth continues to move.

There are some 31,000 permanent deacons worldwide, over 17,000 of them in the United States. They are increasingly a part of the Catholic landscape, in ways that are vibrant, vocal and visible. Deacons run religious education programs and food pantries; supervise adult Christian initiation teams and bereavement groups; facilitate Pre-Cana classes and annulments. They make regular appearances in the pulpit; some parishes have "deacon weekends," where they preach at all the Masses. In many dioceses, they have assumed leadership responsibilities that once belonged exclusively to priests. More and more, when families flip through photo albums of weddings and baptisms, the vested figure smiling in the background, offering a blessing and a toothy grin, is not the parish priest. It is the deacon.

The deacon has also become a presence in the life of the universal church. Three points spring to mind.

*The diaconate has broadened our idea of what it means to belong to the clergy.* Some of us can remember when the most familiar member of the clergy was the parish priest. He was usually a "lifer" who entered the seminary fresh from college (or a prep seminary), was ordained in his mid-20s and never knew any other kind of life. The restoration of the diaconate opened up membership in the clergy to men who were older, married and had families, jobs and careers. This significant move challenged the church to change its perception of what it means to be ordained. It does not necessarily mean being celibate; a life dedicated to holiness could come from anywhere. A résumé in the world suddenly became an asset. The church came to embrace the idea that life experience could inform and enhance ministry.

For most deacons that includes experience as a husband and father, which has brought into the Roman church the clergyman's wife and family. The wife's role, in particular, is critical. Many wives work closely with their husbands in ministry, helping prepare couples for marriage, assisting at baptisms and/or serving as a prayerful support when the nights get long, the classes become grueling and the parish council meeting turns into a shouting

### ON THE WEB

Catherine E. Clifford talks about the legacy of Vatican II. [americamagazine.org/podcast](http://americamagazine.org/podcast)

# Science & Religion

## IN MODERN AMERICA

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### Talks scheduled for the 2012-13 academic year:

#### Sept. 20 Evolution, Creation and Intelligent Design

Presenter: Francisco J. Ayala, Ph.D., University Professor, Donald Bren Professor of Political Science and Professor of Philosophy, University of California, Irvine

#### Nov. 5 The Three Domains of Science and Religion

Presenter: Wesley J. Wildman, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy, Theology and Ethics, Boston University School of Theology

#### Dec. 6 Evolution and the Problem of Evil

Presenter: Thomas F. Tracy, Ph.D., Phillips Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Bates College, Lewiston, Maine

#### Feb. 7 Jesuit Spirituality and Academic Theology: Karl Rahner and Ignacio Ellacuria

Presenter: J. Matthew Ashley, Chair, Department of Theology, University of Notre Dame

#### March 14 Creation and Cosmology

Presenter: Robert John Russell, Founding Director, Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, Calif.

#### April 25 Emergence: Systems, Organisms, Persons

Presenter: Nancy Murphy, School of Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.

match. (More than a few deacons will tell you that when it comes to homilies, their wives are also their most trustworthy critics.)

*The diaconate has put a new voice in the pulpit.* When deacons arrived on the scene, many in the pews began to hear preaching that connected with their lives in unexpected ways. They heard a father talk about the challenges of raising teenagers; they heard a husband preach about the sacrament of marriage; they heard a worker talk about the pressures of paying off a mortgage or dealing with a difficult boss. This different kind of homiletics can mirror the people in the pews.

*The diaconate has given a new dimension to the sacrament of holy orders.* It has brought the laity closer to the clergy and vice versa. The deacon bridges two worlds. To his bishop and pastor he can be a set of eyes and ears; to the faithful he can be a prayerful advocate and sympathetic voice. He lives down the block, has a child in the parish school and will often be the first person parishioners approach if they have a problem, a question, a worry or a doubt.

As the Code of Canon Law (Canon 1009, No. 3) makes clear: "Those who are constituted in the order of the episcopate or the presbyterate receive the mission and capacity to act in the person of Christ the Head, whereas deacons are empowered to serve the people of God in the ministries of the liturgy, the word and charity." The deacon's faculty—and his defining charisma—is one of service.

It is a service we are still coming to understand, for the restored diaconate is a work in progress. But its impact is unmistakable. The diaconate, a flourishing fruit of the council, has strengthened the church's presence in the modern world and left the church and the world enriched.

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**DEACON GREG KANDRA** of the Diocese of Brooklyn is the executive editor of *ONE* magazine, published by Catholic Near East Welfare Association. He also writes the blog "The Deacon's Bench."

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# BOOKS & CULTURE

FILM | JOHN ANDERSON

## SOULS AT SEA

*Paul Thomas Anderson's 'The Master'*

Attending one of the many sold-out shows of *The Master*, directed by Paul Thomas Anderson, during its opening weekend in New York, I had the misfortune of sitting next to a young man who not only had a laugh like a French poodle's hiccup, but erupted in bewildering mirth at almost everything that happened in the film. When the movie's central character, the maladjusted war veteran Freddie Quell (Joaquin Phoenix), drank photo-

graphic chemicals in an undying effort to remain intoxicated, the kid cracked up. When Freddie debased himself sexually, the barking beside me suggested a kennel. When Freddie smashed his jail-cell toilet—after his arrest with the Svengali-like Lancaster Dodd (Philip Seymour Hoffman)—the poor guy became virtually apoplectic.

Though my seat mate had a particularly volatile nervous giggle, his laughter resembled what you hear at

Hollywood comedies that rely on gross-out jokes and cringe-inducing situations to make the viewer uncomfortable and apt to laugh, simply for lack of knowing what else to do. “The Master” is not a comedy, of course. It is Anderson's masterwork of mood, character and religious criticism, allegedly inspired by the life of L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology. It is less a coherent narrative than a tone poem. Yet the film does make the viewer supremely uncomfortable. Freddie, walking around with his id hanging out, is too much the vulnerable, damaged and malleable disciple-to-be not to strike a chord of kinship with an audience that will try to dismiss him but find it impossible.

Joaquin Phoenix and Philip Seymour Hoffman in “The Master”



## Praise song for my father

What I miss now is not the dark  
it's the light,  
the cone of light from a table lamp,  
my father sitting at the plain deal table  
paying the bills in a shuffle of papers.  
I see him drinking a cup of hot steamy coffee  
staring out at the back yard—  
it's a September night  
and I have to get up for school,  
but I watch him—  
running his hands through his hair  
sipping the coffee,  
as if he hears a kind of song  
out there in the night's dark,  
a music only he remembers.  
The night's coolness  
the sound of crickets  
and the freights slowing  
for the North Side loading dock—  
helps him forget the bills, the work.  
For a few moments  
he sings the song to himself  
and he's far away.  
Praise the early fall dark,  
praise the cool night  
that lets my father daydream,  
singing his own song again.  
Praise my father for the things  
he gave up and lost,  
and could not get back.

GERALD McCARTHY

GERALD McCARTHY's most recent collection of poems is *Trouble Light* (West End Press). He is included in the *New Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*, Vol. III: Postmodernism (Rutgers University Press). This poem was the third runner-up in the *Foley Poetry Contest of 2012*.

While Anderson himself has said "The Master" was inspired by Hubbard, the film companies involved have denied it, probably to avoid incurring the wrath of what has been called the most litigious religious organization since the Spanish Inquisition. In this case, though, the Church of Scientology is something of a scapegoat. Anderson's films—notably, the porn-industry epic "Boogie Nights"—have often dealt with our collective, desperate need for family, for belonging, for an embrace by the proverbial "something greater than ourselves." My pal at the screening might have wanted to deny it, but Freddie is all of us, despite or because of his self-doubt, incendiary anger, profound litany of regret and burning need to believe in what Lancaster Dodd is selling.

Dodd's bill of goods is a hodgepodge of Eastern mysticism, science fiction, eternal life, ego-stroking and a history of consciousness that stretches back "trillions" of years. It is 1950, and World War II—like all wars, despite the retrospective spinning and historical cosmetology—has left its share of human wreckage. This includes Freddie, who has spent time among a company of shell-shocked vets who are assured that, had "normal" citizens been subjected to what they have seen, those people would be shell-shocked, too. Except they are not. And the reintroduction of someone like Freddie into workaday society is going to be fraught with emotional, spiritual and—sometimes—physical peril.

We know, and so does Dodd, that Freddie is an ideal candidate for apostleship. He is a man of blind allegiance, perhaps even faith, although Freddie's most poignant line comes in that aforementioned jail cell, after Dodd has been arrested for defrauding a charity and Freddie has been arrested for attacking the police. "Just tell me something that's true!" he shrieks, wanting so much to believe and given so little reason to. One of the major

accomplishments of “The Master”—in addition to Mihai Milaimare Jr.’s spectacular 70mm cinematography and the angular music by Jonny Greenwood of the band Radiohead—is that we want to believe Dodd, too, even after his own son (Jesse Plemons) tells us, “He’s making it up as he goes along.”

“The Master” should be seen as a portrait, not necessarily of Scientology but of fundamentalism. Like the hope-starved adherents of radical Islam or the members of the Westboro Baptist Church, Freddie has nowhere else to go until he happens upon Dodd, who is first glimpsed from afar aboard a pleasure boat, water being a key medium for Anderson’s message. Freddie, a Navy veteran and able-bodied seaman, is taken on as a ship’s mate and as Dodd’s right-hand man and, eventually, muscle. To those who dare question Dodd’s theology, Freddie brings violent retribution, even if it is a violence he would have vented elsewhere (as he has done throughout the storyline). Dodd establishes a kinship with Freddie by drinking and appreciating the vile moonshine Freddie manages to create with whatever happens to be at hand, much the way Dodd has concocted his religion. Both are intoxicating. Both are dangerous. Both are apt to warp the mind.

Amid all of its splendid acting (Amy Adams, starkly out of character, plays Dodd’s Macbeth-ish wife, Peggy), what “The Master” lacks is a story that hangs together the way audiences may expect it to. The film does not head toward or reach any definite narrative objective. It is more a collection of episodes that reveal character, personality and dysfunction, although the way that is done is (no pun intended) masterful.

Freddie is fascinating, an awkward walking metaphor—his pants are too

high, and so are his shoulders; with his arms frequently akimbo, he gives off the unmistakable impression of a man constantly fighting his own physical gracelessness and losing. He is equally at war with his soul, tortured by the war and by the memory of Doris (Madisen Beaty), the love of his life who was too young at 16 to go away with him and who haunts him like original sin.

Phoenix was nominated for an

#### ON THE WEB

Victor Stepien reviews the film “The Virgin, the Copts and Me.”  
[americamagazine.org/culture](http://americamagazine.org/culture)

Oscar in 2005 for his portrayal of Johnny Cash in “Walk the Line” and lost, coincidentally, to his “Master” co-star, Hoffman (“Capote”). Both are among our greatest screen actors. The pleasures of watching them should override any need people have to simply be told a story, even if that is exactly what the “The Master” is all about.

**JOHN ANDERSON** is a film critic for *Variety* and *The Washington Post* and a regular contributor to the Arts & Leisure section of *The New York Times*.

## BOOKS | JOHN W. O’MALLEY

# BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

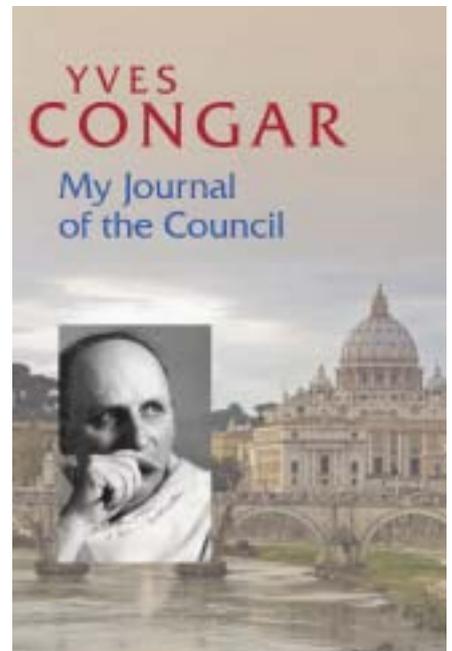
### MY JOURNAL OF THE COUNCIL

By Yves Congar, O.P.  
 Liturgical Press. 979p \$69.95  
 (Hardcover)

Commentators on the Second Vatican Council describe Yves Congar, O.P., as one of the most important theologians at the council. This is no small compliment, for it aligns him with Karl Rahner, S.J., Henri de Lubac, S.J., Joseph Ratzinger and John Courtney Murray, S.J., as well as other luminaries of that remarkable generation. But that assessment is too modest. When account is taken of Congar’s writings before the council and of his influence on so many of the final documents, he must be ranked, in my opinion, as the council’s single most important theologian.

Despite the tremendous workload Congar bore during the council and his persistent health problems, he managed to keep a detailed journal that begins with the announcement of the council in 1959 and continues for almost a year after its conclusion in 1965. The journals of none of the other council participants are as complete, revealing and important as this one.

We are deeply indebted to the publishers for the high physical quality of the volume, to the English-language editor for so ably doing his job and especially to the translators, who have



rendered Congar’s French into excellent, idiomatic English. The volume is much enriched by the inclusion of the introduction to the original French edition by Éric Mahieu and by the new introductory essay by Paul Philibert,

“Congar’s Ecclesiastical Subtext: Intransigent Conservatism.”

But the meat of the book is, of course, Congar’s text. In some high ecclesiastical circles these days, it is fashionable to disdain personal accounts: the only valid source for interpreting the council is the official record. Certainly, the official record must be the foundation on which interpretation is built, but it does not tell the whole story. Without accounts like Congar’s, we would have no clue, for instance, as to why documents took the form they did and what significance participants attached to them.

What comes through clearly in Congar’s journal, moreover, is something of which the official record breathes not a word: the struggle between the majority of the bishops (some 90 percent or more) and an entrenched and unbending minority, which used every means in its power

to derail the direction the council took or, when that failed, to weaken the most salient positions advocated by the majority. Events since the council have demonstrated how successful such efforts were. Taking account of this struggle is essential, therefore, for understanding both the council and its aftermath.

In reading the journal now in English, I had the same eerie feeling I had while reading it in French: change the names and the dates, and the story has a familiar ring. “Rome is a court, where favour from on high is decisive.” “The real battle is between the Curia (above all the Holy Office) and the Ecclesia.” In Rome, “The rule of faith is not Scripture but the living Magisterium.” It is the place where “The pope is God on earth.”

*My Journal* shows how contemporaries of an event, even one as astute and learned as Congar, can miss the significance of certain happenings that

others then or later saw as determining importance. Congar did not find anything particularly notable, for instance, in John XXIII’s address opening the council, an address that many today assess as crucially important in giving the council its direction.

He similarly attached no particular importance to the “Introductory Note” that Paul VI added at the very last minute to the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church” for interpreting the doctrine of collegiality, a move that gave heart to the minority. Likewise, he did not see the significance of Paul’s creation of the Synod of Bishops, which looked like an implementation of collegiality but in fact reduced the bishops’ role to, at best, consultation.

Besides its great historical importance and contemporary relevance, *My Journal of the Council* reveals the author as a warm human being, a humble man devoid of the slightest taint of self-promotion, a man utterly dedicated to the well-being of the church. It also reveals him as severely self-critical: “I’ve been too timid.” Given his great achievements, it is touching and somewhat shocking to read toward the end of the volume, “I feel crushed by the consciousness of the mediocrity of my life and work.”

The text is spiced with frank assessments of personalities. Congar is consistently kind. He for instance described John Courtney Murray, S.J., as “a true gentleman with an astounding command of Latin.” According to Congar, John XXIII introduced into the church “a more humane and more Christian climate” after the “stifling regime of Pius XII.” In Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, head of the Holy Office from 1959 and a leader of the minority in the council, a person therefore whose positions Congar opposed, he recognized “a certain nobility of character.”

But there were people he intensely disliked or disdained. Leading the list



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was Cardinal Giuseppe Pizzardo, former head of the Holy Office, who was “an idiot” and “an imbecile, a sub-human...a wretched freak.” Congar assessed Cardinal Francis Spellman of New York as a man who “understands nothing.” Of the ultra-conservative American theologian Joseph Clifford Fenton, who was the mortal enemy of Murray, he said, “[He is] out of his senses and beyond all reasonable control.”

This is a long book. It has all the appeal of a personal account of a great happening produced on the spot moment by moment as events unfolded. It has the problem, however, of an account written a half-century ago,

filled with names and alluding to events that are now immediately recognizable only to those who were adults at the time of the council and followed it closely. Unless you can transcend that problem, you will, I fear, find the book tedious. But if you are able to transcend it, you will be fascinated by a chronicle that reveals in detail how the council really operated. You will see with newly clear eyes how the impulses at work in the church before and during Vatican II are, for better or worse, with us still.

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**JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J.**, is university professor in theology at Georgetown University and author of *What Happened at Vatican II*.

KEVIN M. DOYLE

## BEYOND HOPELESS

### **A DIFFERENT KIND OF CELL** **The Story of a Murderer Who** **Became a Monk**

By W. Paul Jones

(Foreword by Sr. Helen Prejean)

Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.  
122p \$14

When Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J., published her prophetic masterpiece *Dead Man Walking*, some capital punishment diehards tried to spin her story of death row inmate Patrick Sonnier into an argument for execution. Sonnier, the argument went, would never have repented for his grievous wrongdoing had he not been facing imminent death at the hands of the state. With *A Different Kind of Cell: The Story of a Murderer Who Became a Monk*, W. Paul Jones dispels such nonsense and provides an inspiring account of redemptive transformation.

Jones, a Methodist minister for over 40 years and now a Catholic priest and a Trappist family brother, recounts the spiritual journey of Clayton Anthony

Fountain. Fountain—raised in a family where martial honor and masculine virtue had mutated into ugly, destructive forces—committed his first murder when in uniform. With a 12-gauge shotgun, he cut down an Army superior bent on Fountain's humiliation, if not destruction.

Fountain drew a sentence of life at hard labor to be served in the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks at Leavenworth. The military, however, could not control Fountain.

The federal prison system took a try. It failed: Fountain bloodied his hands further with four more murders. In separate incidents, he helped kill three fellow prisoners. Then, in 1983, Fountain stabbed three guards. One, Robert L. Hoffmann, died. C.O. Hoffmann left behind a wife.

As the law then stood, the federal

death penalty did not reach Fountain's crimes. (He would become a poster boy for legislative change.) So the authorities consigned Fountain to a custom-built underground cell where he was to live out his days in utter isolation.

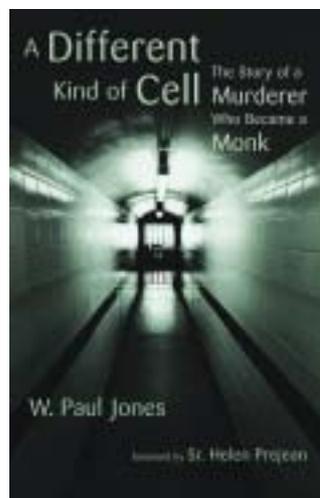
That cell became a crucible. Initially, Fountain shed only his outward defiance. Then an unlikely angel set Fountain off on an interior pilgrimage. Baptized into the Catholic Church in 1992, Fountain declared his 120-foot space was “no longer my burial place but an emptied tomb, for I had become a prisoner for Christ.” Replacing the slayer was a prayerful man of childlike faith. Imagine Mr. Blue, the Myles Connolly figure, but with a brutal criminal history.

Jones came into Fountain's life in 1998. Within two years, Fountain discerned a monastic calling, one born of more than physical confinement. He sought canonical status as a diocesan hermit; the bishop did not respond. Assumption Abbey, however, did. Fountain was welcomed to join Jones as a “Family Brother” of Assumption. Fountain signed the “bond,” which set out the rule under which he would live

(attired in “the short habit with hood provided by the Abbey”). He died unexpectedly days before the abbot could return it with his signature, but not before leaving a moving record of spiritual struggle.

That struggle was not simple. Fountain, to be sure, owned his past. Both he and Jones knew that whatever shunted Fountain toward a life of

killing did not absolve him of the awful grief, fear and suffering he caused. Fountain could understand why a prison guard would, standing in a church, rawly challenge Jones' befriending Fountain.



Still, at times, Fountain was anything but resigned to a life of penitential solitude. He harbored academic aspirations and even envisioned a papal dispensation that would allow his ordination.

The prospects of release into general population and even parole teased his imagination. Neither he nor Jones always took for granted the genuineness or permanence of Fountain's conversion. And yet the reader knows he is hearing something authentic when Fountain embraces his unique hermitage: "What more could I want than my own quiet study cubicle? With no cellmates to distract me with television and chatter, able to pray and work as the spirit moves me? I am a blessed man."

A *Different Kind of Cell*, finally, packs a few bonuses. A tale of conversion within a tale of conversion brings to mind the graced moment in the life

of the poet convert Mary Karr (and increases one's appreciation for kneeling prayer). The truth that grace builds on nature sounds throughout. And the measured actions of Jones the Trappist and the measured storytelling bring the reader briefly into "monastic time," away from the rush and bustle that the Trappist Merton recognized as a form of violence.

Sometimes our faith falters when it comes to imagining the salvation of a really bad guy. Yes, there was Paul and the Good Thief. But what about the cold-blooded killer we meet not in Scripture but in the tabloids or on the evening news? Clayton Fountain's story assures us that we may dare hope for the salvation of every soul—and without setting an execution date.

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KEVIN M. DOYLE, former capital defender for the State of New York, practices law.

Bout's arrest made the United States nervous about what he might reveal. Minin's private jet was a gift from British Aircraft Corporation, but smaller than the one supplied by British Aerospace to Saudi Arabia's Prince Bandar as an arms sales "consultant." His record in arms procurement makes Minin look like a piker.

These men are agents of death, but they are often doing what makes governments and defense contractors happy, since sales are good for business. The United States has been the world's leading exporter of killing machinery for many years. The United States has also regularly spent more on its own military behemoth than is spent by all other countries of the world combined.

Ever since Franklin D. Roosevelt referred to the United States as "the arsenal of democracy," there has been an inverse ratio in the growth of "arsenal" relative to "democracy." And, as if it had become an advocate for an International Rifle Association, our government has helped to flood the world with weapons. The genocidal killing in places like Rwanda—10 percent of its population was killed—are enabled by this scandalous arms dealing.

Andrew Feinstein shows in detail how the myriad schemes used in the procurement of weapons subvert the law. He is well equipped for this project, having already written about his firsthand knowledge of bribery and arms sales in South Africa, where he once served in Parliament.

British Aerospace, the gigantic defense contractor that was privatized under Margaret Thatcher, repeatedly shows up as the creator of complex webs of payments to "consul-

JEROME DONNELLY

## A DIRTY BUSINESS

### THE SHADOW WORLD Inside the Global Arms Trade

By Andrew Feinstein  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 672p \$30

As I write, Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia who was arrested in 2006, has just been given a prison sentence of 50 years for what the judge called "some of the most heinous and brutal crimes recorded in human history." Adam Feinstein recounts in *The Shadow World: Inside the Global Arms Trade* how in 1998 Taylor began illegally trading diamonds for 68 tons of weapons to launch "Operation No Living Thing," a "millennium...terror" that killed 250,000 people in Liberia and countless thousands more in Sierra Leone, where additional thousands were maimed for life.

Leonid Minin, an Israeli who sup-

plied the weapons to Taylor, was arrested in a hotel room in Milan, "a den of debauchery," with a million dollars in diamonds and hundreds of pages of documents showing his connection to defense companies, corrupt politicians, gun runners and banks, along with evidence that he had supplied West African countries, like Taylor's Liberia.

Those involved in arms trafficking, like Minin, or the better known arms procurer, Victor Bout, who was also recently convicted, are often aided in clandestine arms sales by weapons manufacturers and governments.



tants,” who persuade politicians in countries ranging from South Africa and the Czech Republic to Hungary and Tanzania to buy weapons they do not need and cannot afford. The “fees” (bribes and kickbacks) pass through offshore companies to the consultants, who share them with politicians not otherwise inclined to buy weapons. “The arms industry and its powerful political friends have forged a parallel political universe that largely insulates itself against the influence of judgment of others by invoking national security.”

Saudi Arabia’s Prince Bandar made his country B.A.E.’s best customer. He used the Riggs Bank (the Central Intelligence Agency’s bank of choice) to stash millions supplied by B.A.E. in bribes paid to him and various members of the Saudi royalty for buying, in one deal, \$43 billion for an entire menu of weapons, headed by outdated fighter jets. The British fraud office has been largely ineffectual. Feinstein says that “in the arms business, one can act with impunity.”

Arms transfers sometimes result in “blowback.” The late U.S. Con-

gressman Charlie Wilson, regarded by many as a heroic patriot, funneled illegal weapons to Afghanistan’s Taliban to fight the Russians, but those weapons eventually ended up being turned on American troops. The 20,000 ground-to-air rockets missing after Libya’s Gaddafi was overthrown may also become “blowback.”

The events following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, opened new possibilities for corruption in the arms business, especially since there was “little oversight, competition, or transparency.” Claiming “national security” provides a way to avoid public scrutiny of military spending, resulting in an “almost total loss of accountability.” The Pentagon, unaudited for decades, has admitted that it cannot account for over \$1 trillion. The Justice Department says it is so overwhelmed that illegal arms bribery cases involving only \$1 million are too small to pursue.

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**JEROME DONNELLY**, *retired from the English Department of the University of Central Florida, teaches occasionally in the university’s office of international studies.*

employed by Cardinal Bea seems almost routine and inherently sensible. But what John Connelly points out in his new and excellent book, *From Enemy to Brother*, is that Cardinal Bea’s instincts emerged out of a decades-long struggle between an impassioned minority within the church and the hierarchs, lower clergy and ordinary Catholics who stridently and with equal “instincts” opposed the council’s move toward connecting with the Jewish people in a new and heretofore radical way.

Connelly makes a number of bold moves in telling his story of the theological journey from Catholic demonization of Jews to a common bond of solidarity. First, he does not rush to judgment about Catholic participation in anti-Semitism, but rather sets a more complex backdrop through his discussion of Catholic racism. Connelly shows that during the 1920s, influential teachers, including Hermann Muckermann, S.J., in Berlin, were arguing that Catholics should hold as a religious priority the need to “protect the race” from Jewish infiltration. With Muckermann and other German theorists showing the way, the belief that baptism remitted original sin and actual guilt became muddled with skepticism about

whether the “genetic traits” of Jews with “the stain of having killed God” could be equally remitted. As Connelly has put it, “science offered a cloak that fit the contours...of prejudices.” Race science was beginning to undercut sacramental theology.

Many who read Connelly’s book will come away with the idea that it was a core group of Jewish converts to Catholicism who spearheaded and revolutionized Catholic teaching on the

## CHARLES R. GALLAGHER FAMILY THERAPY

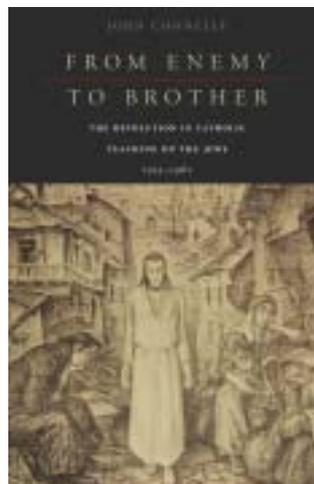
### FROM ENEMY TO BROTHER The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933-1965

By John Connelly  
Harvard University Press. 384p \$35

“The appalling crimes of National Socialism against 6 million Jews,” Augustin Cardinal Bea wrote to Pope John XXIII 50 years ago, require a “purification of spirit and conscience,” on the part of the Catholic Church. For Bea, the driving issue was one of religious solidarity. “The bond of kinship between Christians and Jews,” goes “far deeper than the bond which unites all humans.” Bea’s diction, his

instincts, his sensitivities and his willpower all came to focus on forging a document that three years later would become the landmark declaration of the Second Vatican Council, the “Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions.”

As the church begins to celebrate the rich contributions of the Second Vatican Council, the language



Jews. Largely unstated is the fact that a significant number of Catholic converts from Protestantism, like Karl Thieme (Lutheran), Jacques Maritain (French Reformed) and Dietrich von Hildebrand (baptized Protestant) were the ones who were often pushing and persuading their Jewish-convert colleagues to adopt positions that were first sparked by their own Protestant sensibilities.

When various hierarchs and cardinals began searching for a postwar interreligious dialogue of understanding, they naturally highlighted the writings and opinions of Jews who had converted to Catholicism. But as the institutional church looked in this direction, it was really the profound biblical scholarship of converts from Protestantism that provided courage for their Jewish comrades. The Jewish converts then kept the conversation moving in a direction that would lead to the council's declaration.

For Connelly, the leader of this group

was Johannes (John) Oesterreicher. A Moravian Jew whose conversion took many years, Oesterreicher was ordained a priest in 1927 and arrived in the United States from France in 1940. A vigorous anti-Nazi, Oesterreicher was consumed with reconciling Catholics and Jews. His story provides a leitmotif as Connelly unpacks the larger theological stresses and shadows associated with the circle of Jewish converts looking to crack the façade of Catholic anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism.

During his early years as a priest, and before he established the Institute of Judeo-Christian Studies at Seton Hall University in New Jersey, two forces emerged that caused Oesterreicher doubt and disillusion. The first was the nagging issue of race. Even after his ordination as a priest, the preaching of a prominent Jesuit that Jewish converts "were not equal to Aryans because of

bad genetic material" precipitated not only personal doubt, but cut to the core of Oesterreicher's emerging theology, which was grounded in human solidarity.

In addition, the zealotry of his own conversion compelled Oesterreicher to pursue a ministry precisely aimed at the conversion of

Jews to the Roman Catholic Church. This was a common custom supported by Tridentine theology, but it greatly

handicapped his ability to work with others in the maturing interreligious movement. After Auschwitz (both of Oesterreicher's parents died in concentration camps, his mother at Auschwitz), the small circle who supported Catholic-Jewish relations was beginning to embrace the position that Jews were not in need of conversion at all. This "ecumenical" approach began to change the trajectory of the movement and was grounded in the scriptural reflections of Oesterreicher's fellow (former Protestant) converts.

Toward the end of Connelly's book, the notion of "conversion" returns to an initial theme that Connelly calls "border-crossing." "Border-crossers" like Oesterreicher operated on a front line of shared contact between the religions. It was this shared area of contact that became the seedbed of growth for the council's "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions."

Connelly's book is important because for the first time we have a comprehensive tale of the genesis of a new teaching. This is a book about workers in the vineyard who have largely been overlooked or bypassed in church history. But it is to these workers, who rose before dawn, that the church owes profound, if belated, respect.

CHARLES R. GALLAGHER, S.J., is a professor of history at Boston College.

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## LETTERS

### Preventing a Holocaust

I know not how it happened, but your editorial "Diplomacy and Disarmament" (9/24) fails to mention that Iran has threatened genocide on the Israelis not once but many times. Yet somehow the United States and Israel are found morally lacking and must "come up to snuff" before taking steps to prevent Iran from perpetuating in one hour a greater holocaust than Hitler's final solution? Ridiculous.

KEVIN MURPHY  
New York, N.Y.

### Seek Peace, Not Power

Thank you for your clear-headed editorial on Iran. Unfortunately the hawks are out flying again, ready to commit the United States to more war, more sacrifice and more division. But for what? We have no threat from Iran. We cannot be a true world leader without respect for morality, justice and equality.

And there is the issue of our own belief. How can a military strike against Iran be reconciled with "turning the other cheek, putting away our sword, loving our neighbor"? At times we overwhelm ourselves with our exceptionalism. We don't have to follow the rules; we just make them. Have the last 10 years of useless war not taught us anything? Let's hope and pray we can someday become a nation that really seeks peace, not power.

BOB DUBRUL  
Asheville, N.C.

### What Sister Didn't Say

Re "Political Thrill-Seeking" (Current Comment, 9/24): At the Democratic National Convention, Simone Campbell, S.S.S., executive director of Network, applauded Democratic economic policies as being "pro-life" and "aligned with Catholic values." She equates "I am my brother's keeper" with the obligation that this be carried

out by the federal government.

Absent from Sister Campbell's speech was any mention of abortion, which the Democratic platform endorses. She also failed to mention the controversial mandate from the Department of Health and Human Services. The Catholic bishops and other faith leaders warn that the mandate threatens our religious liberty.

Sister Campbell did not give a truthful speech to millions of people. Her views do not reflect authentic Catholic teaching. As a consecrated religious in the Catholic Church, she is creating scandal. There should be consequences.

LUCY DARTLEY  
Ashtburn, Va.

### The Greatest Clergy

Thanks for the kind reference to my

new book, *The 100 Greatest Americans of the 20th Century: A Social Justice Hall of Fame* (Current Comment, 9/24). You list Abraham Heschel, Martin Luther King Jr. and James Lawson as members of the clergy among the 100 people profiled in the book. Others listed include Norman Thomas, A. J. Muste, William Sloane Coffin, Bill Moyers and Jesse Jackson. Myles Horton went to Union Theological Seminary but was never ordained.

I'm a big fan of Saul Alinsky, but he was hardly a saint! He could be callous and abusive toward people. Dorothy Day, also known for being difficult, is a stronger candidate for sainthood.

PETER DREIER  
Los Angeles, Calif.

## CLASSIFIED

### Positions

St. John Medical Center in Westlake, Ohio, seeks a Vice President of Mission and Ministry to lead and implement activities related to mission, core values, ethics, Catholic identity and social justice. The V.P. of Mission ensures that the mission of the Sisters of Charity Health System is communicated effectively and integrated fully into the strategic direction and operations of the hospital. The V.P. of Mission reports directly to the C.E.O., is a member of the senior staff and oversees the Ethics Committee, Pastoral Care Department, Palliative Care Initiative and Diversity Initiative. The V.P. of Mission and Ministry is a member of the Mission Council of the Sisters of Charity Health System.

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Ohio, and in South Carolina.

Please send applications to: Sr. Rosemarie Carfagna, Senior Vice President for Mission and Ministry, Sisters of Charity Health System; phone: (216) 875-4601; email: rcarfagna@sister-sofcharityhealth.org.

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# Wealth and Poverty

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), OCT. 14, 2012

Readings: Wis 7:7–11; Ps 90:12–17; Heb 4:12–13; Mk 10:17–30

*“How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God” (Mk 10:23)*

The terms *rich* and *poor* are used variously and often confusingly. They can differentiate material resources, from decided surplus to brutal destitution. They can also be used to address the inner life, and here you have to be a little savvy. For example, one who is “poor in spirit” is a humble person who could thereby also have inner wealth. Being poor in spirit is very different from having an impoverished soul.

Today’s Gospel story, in three short acts, reveals something of the relationship Christians ought to have with wealth and poverty. In act one, a wealthy man asks Jesus what he needs to do to inherit eternal life. When Jesus reminds him of the Commandments, he replies, “Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth.” Jesus looks at him lovingly and then says to him: “You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give it to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” The man leaves crestfallen, “for he had many possessions.”

In act two, Jesus tells his disciples that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples are astonished. In the Old Testament, wealth was typically portrayed as a blessing from God and proof that one was righteous. Now it appears to be one of the great

est liabilities.

In act three, Peter announces that they had given up everything to follow Jesus. Jesus assures them that anyone who has given up houses and family for the sake of the Gospel will be repaid “a hundred times more now in this present age...and eternal life in the age to come.”

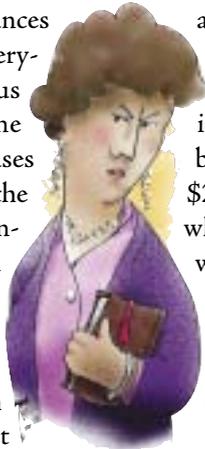
So, what exactly should our relationship to wealth and poverty be? This is not the sort of question that admits a pat answer. If poverty is a curse, then why would Jesus demand it of the rich man? If it is necessary, then why give it to the poor, making them presumably less poor? At least one thing should be obvious: pursuing material wealth at the expense of spiritual wealth is always bad.

Today’s first reading, from the Book of Wisdom, addresses this specifically: “I preferred her [wisdom] to scepter and throne, and deemed riches nothing in comparison to her.” It is also the case that Jesus’ historical mission was marked by itinerancy. He and his disciples were constantly on the move; to follow him on his mission meant literally to leave everything behind.

While this is not our situation today, we would do well to consider the aspiration of focusing on Jesus and his mission, as his disciples did who dropped everything to follow him unreservedly. We could consider that when our time, energy and even iden-

tity are tied up in pursuing material wealth, we have lost sight of the kingdom. Finally and most uncomfortably, we need to recognize that material wealth can insulate us from hearing the cry of the poor. St. John Chrysostom pointed out: “It is madness to fill our wardrobes full of clothes and to regard with indifference a human being—made in the image and likeness of God—who is naked.”

Consider this challenge, inspired by Peter Singer: You just bought a new pair of suede boots for \$200 and you are walking by a pond where a toddler is drowning. You would not hesitate to dash into the water to save the child, even though this would ruin your boots. A child is more important than boots! Now consider the



## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Before the Lord, review your lifestyle.
- Ask him to show you what can be given away.

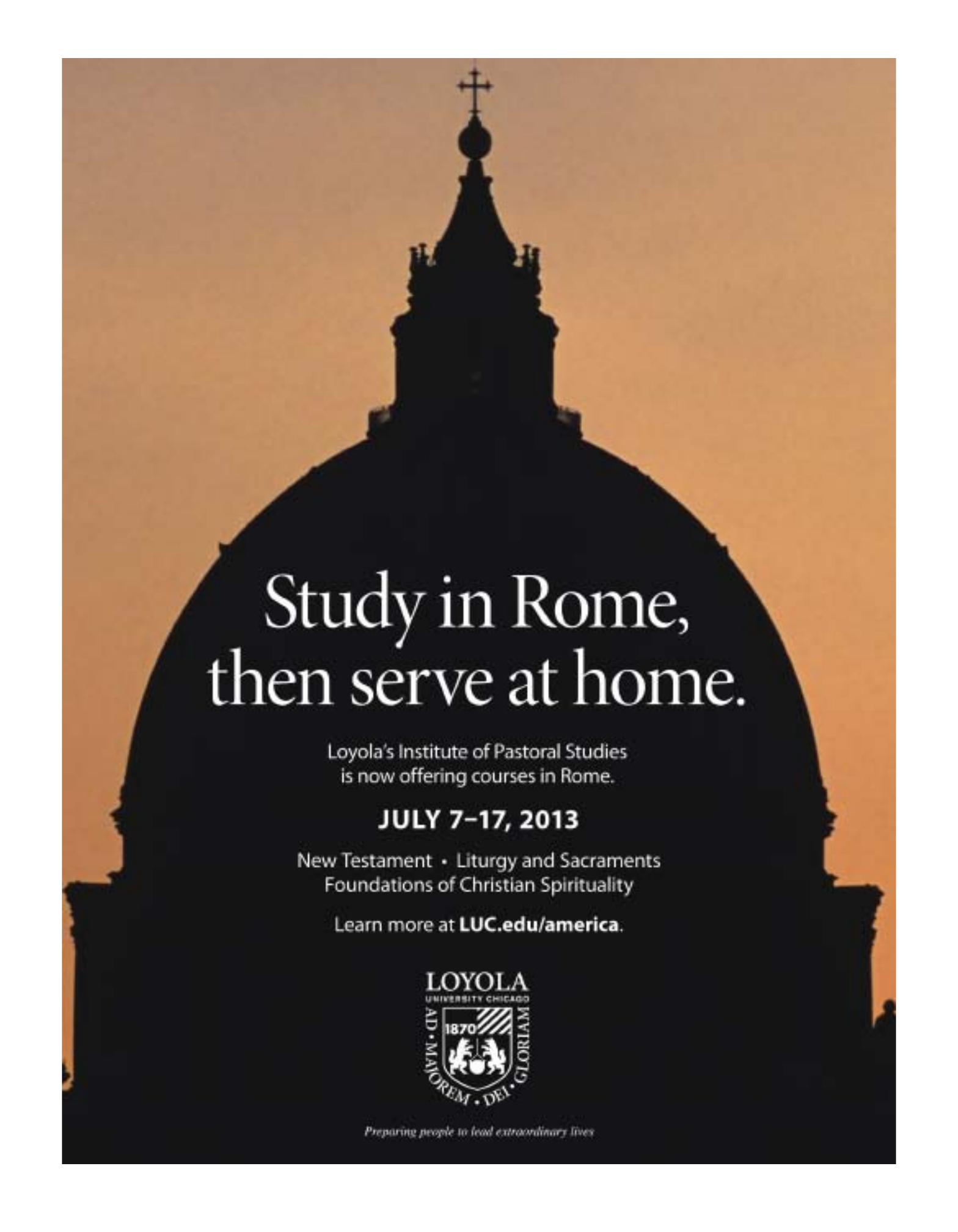
ART: TAD DUNNE

moment just before buying the boots, knowing that those \$200 could feed a starving child. Do you buy the boots, or do you give the money to a charity that feeds starving children?

Where does a poverty calculus like this stop? Would you continue to give your money to the point of starving yourself? Should you liquidate your children’s college tuition fund to feed more starving children? Without collapsing into neurotic absorption about possessions or unhealthy guilt in having them, we could still ask ourselves: How much is enough? Am I hearing the cry of the poor?

PETER FELDMEIER

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



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