America

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Benedict's Jesus

Gerald O'Collins reviews the pope's new book

Olga Bonfiglio *on hope in El Salvador*

Carl Anderson *on faith in the Americas*

George Anderson *interviews Martin Maier of 'Stimmen der Zeit'*

The 2007 Foley Award Poem

Of Many Things

YOU MAY NOT HAVE NOTICED, but the listing of associate editors on the masthead of this journal is determined by seniority. When I returned from the Philippines in the Spring of 1972 to join the staff, my name was added at the end of a list of seven other Jesuits who had preceded me. Immediately ahead of me was John W. Donohue, who had joined the staff earlier that year; and second from the top, following Vincent S. Kearney, was Charles M. Whelan. Charlie Whelan had joined the staff in 1962; since Father Kearney's death in 1981, he has presided at the head of the list as the senior associate editor.

This issue will be the last time in which the names of Charlie Whelan and John Donohue will be listed on the masthead. I know Drew Christiansen, our editor in chief, hopes that both Charlie and John will continue to contribute to our pages in the years ahead, but they are now freed of the regular editorial duties of an associate editor, after a combined 80 years of service to this "National Catholic Weekly," which begins with this issue its traditional biweekly summer schedule.

Charlie Whelan's 45 years on the masthead of **America** is the longest tenure of any editor in this journal's 98-year history. For nearly all of that time, Charlie was also a member of the faculty of Fordham University's School of Law. He had earned his law degree at Georgetown University while still a Jesuit scholastic and was admitted to the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1958, the year he was ordained to the priesthood.

Charlie's first article in these pages was published in 1961. In that article he took issue with a statement by the newly minted first Catholic president of the United States, John F. Kennedy, that the Constitution prohibited any designation of public funds for church-related schools. After observing that neither the president nor his attorney general "enjoy the reputation of great constitutional lawyers," Charlie respectfully pointed out that the constitutional issue was far from settled. In the years that followed, Charlie assisted the legal counsel to the American Catholic bishops in arguing, with some success, that public money could be given to church-related schools for purposes of general education without violating the Constitution.

While teaching at Fordham and assisting the U.S. bishops, in addition to his editorial duties at **America**, Charlie also found time to serve as in-house counsel to a series of Jesuit editors in chief. His paralegal expertise—on such questions as the proper mixing of mint juleps on Kentucky Derby Day—was also sought and appreciated by the America House Jesuit community.

Like Charlie Whelan, John Donohue has had long and lasting links to Fordham University. After earning his doctorate in education from Yale University, John joined the faculty of Fordham's Graduate School of Education and published what is regarded as a classic study of the Jesuit philosophy of education. In the early 1960's, when Fordham ventured into women's undergraduate education at its Rose Hill campus, John was asked to be the first dean of Thomas More College. The school established a high standard for academic excellence in its decade of existence, in the view of some separate but superior, until the idea of coeducational Jesuit colleges had become accepted and Fordham College began accepting women in 1974. By that time, John had left his decanal duties to become director of studies for Jesuits of the New York Province, a task that brought him into contact with young Jesuits of the "new breed," to recall a phrase that had some currency in the 1960's. In 1972 he welcomed the invitation of his good friend, Donald M. Campion, of very happy memory, to join the editorial staff of this journal.

Over the past 35 years, John Donohue has been one of the most prolific contributors to our pages, writing on a wide range of issues that affected all levels of education. His writing, filled with graceful allusions and sly observations, reflected a well-stocked mind and an irrepressible imagination. Among his many contributions were sympathetic profiles of a wide range of accomplished individuals, including a memorable tribute to his beloved Thérèse of Lisieux, when she was declared a doctor of the church in 1997. For members of the America House community, some of John's best contributions never saw print. Over the years, his homilies at our Sunday noon liturgy, rich with original insight into the Christian life, were occasions of grace for many.

As Charlie begins his ninth decade and John approaches the close of his, and as **America** looks forward to its centenary in 2009, their legacy remains an enduring gift.

Joseph A. O'Hare, S.J.

America

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Cover Pope Benedict leads his weekly Angelus blessings, in front of a tapestry of Jesus holding an olive branch, at his summer residence at Castelgandolfo outside Rome Sept. 24, 2006. Reuters/Chris Helgren

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Islamic Reform

Skeptics often ask whether Muslims are capable of democratic self-government. Most often the implied supposition is that they could not possibly be. But two current political struggles suggest that Muslims, like any people, are capable of standing up for democracy. Pakistan has been ruled, since a military coup in 1999, by General Pervez Musharraf. The nation's lawyers are now resisting the general's suspension this spring of Iftikhar Muhammed Chaudhry, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, for what they regard as trumped-up charges of abuse of power and nepotism. Their resistance has become a mass movement. As Chaudry's defenders see it, he is being railroaded for investigating Pakistan's notorious intelligence services and for being a potential obstacle to Musharraf's running for a third term despite an agreement to stand aside to let normal democratic elections return government to civilian leadership.

In Turkey, a secular state with a majority Muslim government, the parliament has approved a constitutional amendment permitting direct election of the president. The crisis is a two-sided one. On the one hand, indirect election of the president has until now guaranteed the election of a secularist to the country's highest office, who in turn has preserved the secularism of the state. On the other, the majority Islamic party, whose candidate is likely to win a popular election, is a moderate one that has so far moved Turkey on a centrist, Western-oriented path.

These developments in Pakistan and Turkey demonstrate that the desire for limited, democratic government lives in the Muslim world. What remains to be seen is whether the military in both countries will permit these movements to grow or will block their forward movement.

A Lost Generation

Children in war-torn countries receive less education aid from wealthy nations than do children in stable middle-income countries. A recent report by Save the Children, *Last in Line*, *Last in School*, asserts that most donor countries prioritize their educational assistance in a manner that shortchanges poor nations embroiled in conflict. Only 18 percent of donor education aid goes to the latter, while almost 50 percent goes to middle-income nations—in part because donors like to see a return for their funding. But even in the midst of conflict, education can go forward. A spokesperson for Save the Children told **America** that the key lies in finding safe spaces, which can be in refugee camps, in someone's house or even under a tree. In fact, one of the Save the Children's signature activities is to set up tents that can be used for schooling. A school, she added, does not have to be a building—a view shared by other human rights groups in conflict areas.

When conflicts erupt, teachers are often forced into armed groups or simply flee. Children themselves may become targets for recruitment as child soldiers or be exploited as cheap labor. The result, says the study, is "a lost generation of children who are unprepared...to help rebuild their countries" when conflicts eventually end. Education, it emphasizes, is a key to the kind of political development that can help stave off warfare and advance economic development.

Resignation Overdue

From his ranch in Crawford, Tex., President George W. Bush dismissed reports that Congress would move to a vote of no confidence in Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales as the "kind of political theater that has caused the American people to lose confidence in the way Washington operates." In contrast, the ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, predicted that a significant number of Republicans would join a vote expressing their lack of confidence in the embattled attorney general. In several appearances before the Judiciary Committee, Mr. Gonzales has given conflicting testimony about possible political bias in the decision to fire several U.S. attorneys.

But the testimony most damaging to the attorney general did not directly address the resignations in question. Former Deputy Attorney General James Comey, in testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 15, 2007, described a confrontation in March 2004 with Mr. Gonzales, then White House counsel, in the hospital room where former Attorney General John Ashcroft was in intensive care with a severe case of pancreatitis. When the Justice Department refused to authorize the renewal of a program of secret surveillance conducted by the National Security Agency, Mr. Gonzales hoped to have Mr. Ashcroft overrule his deputy from his hospital bed. With a show of strength that surprised Mr. Comey, Mr. Ashcroft confirmed his personal support of the position taken by the Justice Department and reminded Mr. Gonzales that Mr. Comey was attorney general while Mr. Ashcroft was hospitalized.

Former New York City Mayor Edward I. Koch, a strong supporter of President Bush in the war on terror, after reviewing Mr. Comey's testimony, declared Mr. Gonzales to be "a villain" who should resign. "Hizzoner" suggested that James Comey be the Republican candidate for president in 2008.

Out of the Shadows?

RAIDS BY FEDERAL AGENTS on five Swift meatpacking plants last December around the country, as well as raids in New Bedford, Mass., in March, called public attention to the fear haunting the lives of undocumented immigrants. As the raids demonstrated, fear of family breakup runs high among the undocumented, with the specter of breadwinners deported and U.S. citizen children left behind in the United States.

In what is seen as a hopeful if flawed sign of possible immigration reform, however, the Senate has introduced a bill aimed at restructuring what has rightly been called our broken immigration system. Whatever the structure of the eventual reform, the U.S. bishops and immigrant advocates in general have outlined the basics of what a humane system of reform should entail. These include a legalization program that allows undocumented persons to earn permanent residency, a program that protects the human rights of foreign-born workers and prevents displacement of U.S. workers and an emphasis on family reunification.

The House has already introduced a bipartisan bill that most advocates see as an acceptable start. The Security Through Regularized Immigration and Vibrant Economy Act, known as the Strive Act, provides a path to legalization, protection from exploitation of foreign-born workers and promotion of family reunification. Bishop Gerald Barnes of San Bernadino, Calif., chairman of the bishops' Committee on Migration, has called the Strive Act "a realistic plan for bringing undocumented immigrants out of the shadows." But the act also has its shortcomings. Critics note, for example, that Title II could place refugees fleeing persecution at risk of deportation if they had resorted to false travel documents in order to escape.

Some immigration restrictionists claim that undocumented immigrants take away jobs from U.S. citizens. It cannot be denied that unscrupulous employers sometimes prefer the former because they can pay them less in off-the-book wages than citizen workers would demand. But it is also true that the presence of immigrants, both documented and undocumented, has led to the creation of new jobs. A 2006 study by the Pew Hispanic Center, moreover, found no evidence that more immigration has resulted in increased unemployment among U.S. citizens.

The proposed Senate bill aims at granting legal status to the millions of undocumented persons already here. They could stay and apply for a Z visa, good for four years and renewable, provided applicants pass a background check and pay fines and penalties. The total cost to apply for permanent residence, though, could be as high as $10,000—an exorbitant sum for most undocumented people. And under the so-called touch-back provision, applicants must return to their own countries before applying for legal permanent residence—a perilous step for those fearful of being denied re-entry. A point system for incoming immigrants would focus on job skills, education and proficiency in English. Opponents of this provision consider it unfairly skewed toward skilled workers, sometimes at the cost of family reunification. Too little emphasis, in fact, is placed on family aspects of the bill. For it would virtually wipe out most of the family preference categories and put a cap on the number of parents of citizens who can enter annually. Donald Kerwin, executive director of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc., told **America** that such anti-family provisions virtually assure a new flow of undocumented people.

Among other contentious aspects of the Senate bill is a guest worker program for up to 600,000 foreign workers to fill jobs, mainly in agriculture and industry, that could not easily be filled by American workers. Such a program would need strong protections against the kinds of exploitation by unscrupulous employers described in a March report by the Southern Poverty Law Center, *Close to Slavery*. The Senate bill would allow workers to enter on two-year visas, but they would have to go home for a year before reapplying. Many, however, might choose to remain and go underground—another worrisome factor, since the bill offers them no path to citizenship. Under-standably, unions have condemned this provision, fearing that it might be used to depress wages for U.S. citizens.

ANY BIPARTISAN BILL THAT EMERGES from the Senate—and much debate is yet to come—will have to be reconciled with the Strive Act, or whatever bill emerges from the House. If no acceptable reform bill is passed by both houses of Congress this year, the matter may be postponed until after the presidential elections. This is undesirable, because many undocumented persons already here would continue to remain in the shadows, living in fear of detention and deportation. Without comprehensive and humane immigration reform, our broken system will remain broken. That must not be allowed to happen.

Pope Expresses Hope for East Timor

East Timorese Bishops Basilio do Nascimento of Baucau, left, and Alberto da Silva of Dili, center, talk with Stanislau da Silva, East Timor's new prime minister, after an inauguration ceremony in Dili May 19.

Congratulating Nobel Peace Prize-winner José Ramos-Horta on his inauguration as president of East Timor, Pope Benedict XVI expressed hope for strengthened democratic institutions and an end to outbreaks of violence in the country. Pope Benedict met May 21 with Justino Aparicio Guterres, East Timor's new ambassador to the Vatican. The ambassador presented his accreditation one day after Ramos-Horta was sworn in as the country's president. The pope offered his congratulations to Ramos-Horta and said the high voter turnout in early May "demonstrated a great civic maturity" but also reflected the people's hope for a strengthening of democracy five years after East Timor's independence. The people of East Timor are preparing for another election. On June 30 they will go to the polls to elect members of the legislature.

CAFOD Official Welcomes Wolfowitz Resignation

A British Catholic aid agency official has welcomed the resignation of World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz after a controversy over the promotion of his female companion. George Gelber, head of policy at the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, or Cafod, said Wolfowitz's departure presented an opportunity to change the way top appointments are made to the bank, which he described as a "creditors' cartel."

Cafod is the development and aid agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It works to end poverty and make a just world in over 60 countries. "Paul Wolfowitz's tenure at the World Bank and the recent scandal raise questions as to whether he was the right man for the job of fighting poverty in developing countries," Gelber said in a May 18 statement.

"It is remarkable that in the 21st century, these key appointments are made on the basis of nods and winks from the United States and Europe," he said, adding that the resignation is an opportunity for the position "to be replaced by a democratic and transparent leadership selection process based on merit."

Kidnapped Priest Returned Unharmed in Baghdad

After three days in the hands of kidnappers, an Iraqi Chaldean Catholic priest was released shaken but healthy, a Rome-based missionary news agency reported. The Rev. Nawzat Hanna, a pastor in Baghdad's Baladiyat neighborhood, was released late May 21. He had been visiting a sick parishioner May 19 when he was seized by a group of men, who apparently had been waiting for him.

Chaldean Auxiliary Bishop Shlemon Warduni of Baghdad told AsiaNews that he had been given the location of "a place in the city" where he would find the priest at about 9:30 p.m. May 21. "When he saw me, Father Nawzat embraced me tightly, cried and was very shaken; then he thanked everyone who had prayed for him," Bishop Warduni said.

Speaking May 22, the bishop added: "I hope he has the courage to continue serving the church in Iraq. His family already has moved abroad, but he had chosen to remain here, to remain at the side of his faithful." After the priest was kidnapped, Bishop Warduni had said the captors made immediate contact with Chaldean church leaders, demanding a "very high" ransom. The AsiaNews report did not say what finally led to the priest's release.

The Rev. Philip Najim, the Chaldean representative in Rome, told Vatican Radio May 21 that the kidnapping of the priest is part of a general climate of continuing violence and of a growing persecution of Iraq's Christian minority. "There is a persecution against all Christians in Iraq," Father Najim said. "There are thousands and thousands of Christian families fleeing. The churches have opened their doors, as have the schools so that these families would have refuge and a place to sleep.... It is a situation of suffering, of martyrdom and of witnessing to our Christian faith....This is our land. We were born there, we grew up there and we will die there."

Father Najim also said it is true that some radical Muslim groups are trying to force Christians either to convert to Islam or pay the *jizya*, a tax once levied on Christians and Jews living in officially Muslim countries. "Some fundamentalist groups have applied this norm to the Christians, and the Christians have been forced to leave the area and move elsewhere," he said. "This is the current situtation facing Christians in Iraq."

Muhammad's Role Deserves Appreciation

Christians must distance themselves from anyone or anything that insults Islam's Prophet Muhammad and should come to a greater appreciation of his role in bringing millions of people to recognize the one God, said a German Jesuit scholar. But Christians cannot share Muslims' recognition of Mohammed as the last and greatest prophet, said Christian Troll, S.J., a professor of Islam and of Muslim-Christian relations at the Sankt Georgen Graduate School of Philosophy and Theology in Frankfurt, Germany.

Writing in La Civiltà Cattolica, a Jesuit magazine reviewed by the Vatican prior to publication, Father Troll was responding to a question asked by many Muslims: "We Muslims recognize Jesus as a prophet and we venerate him. Why don't you Christians accept Mohammed as a prophet in the same way."

European Churches Should Defend Identity

Representatives of nearly 240 Christian movements have urged Europe's churches to be a cohesive force in defending the continent's Christian identity and pressing for greater solidarity with the poor and marginalized. "We see more clearly our responsibility in facing Europe's challenges today: to be a strong social, cohesive force in its cultural pluralism," the representatives said in a declaration to European politicians.

"Together we want to say to Europe and the world that our movements and communities are inspired by the Gospel of life and peace."

The declaration was published after a May 10-12 ecumenical gathering, "Together for Europe 2007," in Stuttgart, Germany. About 10,000 people—including members of Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Anglican groups—attended, as did Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi, European Commission Vice President Jacques Barrot and Cardinal Walter Kasper, chairman of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, a former bishop of Rottenburg-Stuttgart.

From CNS and other sources. CNS photos.

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, delivers a commencement address May 19 at St. Ignatius Church in San Francisco for the University of San Francisco's McClaren College of Business.

Academic Honors for 'America' Writers

At its May 20 commencement, Le Moyne College in Syracuse, N.Y., awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to William J. O'Malley, S.J., a teacher, preacher and writer well known to readers of **America**. Father O'Malley, 75, has been a long-time teacher of English, theology and drama at McQuaid Jesuit High School in Rochester, N.Y., and at Fordham Preparatory School in the Bronx. In addition he has written some 20 books and 50 articles for **America**, twice winning first prize from the Catholic Press Association. The LeMoyne citation noted his accomplishments during 56 years as a Jesuit, saying that perhaps his greatest was "helping others to keep their faith."

James Martin, S.J., an associate editor of **America,** was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree by Wagner College in New York City. Sharing the platform with Father Martin were former Governor Hugh L. Carey of New York and the editor in chief of Newsweek, Jon Meacham.

Among other **America** authors receiving honorary doctorates are Richard J. Curry, S.J., founder of the National Theatre Workshop of the Handicapped, by the College of New Rochelle in New York; and Gary N. Smith, S.J., a long-time minister to refugees in Eastern Africa, by Seattle University.

Media 'Nonsense' Reflects Ignorance

The media spread "all types of nonsense" about religion, sometimes out of malice but usually out of ignorance, said U.S. Archbishop John P. Foley. While all Catholics have an obligation to share the saving love of Christ with others, Catholic communicators have an obligation "to be accurate and to help others to be accurate," the president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications said May 17 in London. "This is not so much to evangelize or even to catechize, but—if I may invent a word—to 'accuratize,' to make sure that all who write or broadcast or blog have accurate information and do not, consciously or unconsciously, disseminate misinformation," he said. Archbishop Foley was in London for a Mass in anticipation of the May 20 celebration of World Communications Day. The archbishop asked everyone present at the Mass to communicate truth and to insist on accuracy in reporting on religion.

Amnesty's Stand on Abortion 'Outrageous'

Rep. Chris Smith speaks during a 2006 press conference on Capitol Hill in Washington. Smith has called Amnesty International's new position on abortion "outrageous" and said it creates a "major credibility gap" for the widely respected human rights organization.

A Different Sort of History

'The unthinkable has come to pass in Ireland—for once a good thing.'

NEARLY 30 YEARS have passed since I very innocently asked one of my parish priests, the Rev. Maurice Burke, why Northern Ireland was a killing zone. I was a young reporter at the time, assigned to write a story about this foreign place that, frankly, meant very little to me. I knew one of my grandparents had been born in Ireland, but beyond that, I knew nothing besides the story of St. Patrick and the snakes.

I called on Father Burke for a briefing because I knew he had been born in Ireland, in County Waterford to be exact, and he seemed to be a patient man. I figured he was the right person to deliver a primer to a journalist who knew nothing about Ireland and preferred to keep it that way but for this assignment.

I brought a tape recorder with me to the rectory of Our Lady Help of Christians Church on Staten Island, near my parents' house. I generally did not use tape recorders because I did not trust them. What if the batteries ran out? What if the recording itself was flawed? For a briefing on the history of Ireland, however, I broke down and brought along the recorder.

Father Burke considered my question for a moment—"So, why are people fighting in Northern Ireland?"—and then began his answer. I don't remember the entire first sentence, and I long ago lost the tape. But I'll never forget how he started.

"Well," he said, "you have to remember that in 1151…."

I looked forlornly at my little tape recorder, and realized that I didn't have a second tape. If we were starting this conversation in the 12th century, I'd be taking notes by the time we hit the 1700's. And I was.

Such was my introduction to Irish history, a field in which I have been toiling ever since. Father Burke, my first tutor, turned out to be the chaplain for the Irish Northern Aid Committee, which was regularly accused of being a front for the I.R.A. Some years later, a good friend of his was convicted of stealing millions of dollars from an armored car. The U.S. government said the money was intended for the I.R.A.; some of it was never recovered. (As an aside, the man vehemently protests his innocence, although the government surveillance tapes certainly suggest otherwise.)

Ah, the innocence of youth! I had no idea of the minefield I had stepped into with my innocent, and ignorant, question. Father Burke's version of events is not necessarily mine, but I would never deny his influence on my thinking about America as well as Ireland, and his passion for justice.

All of this comes to mind, of course, because history of a very different sort is being made in Northern Ireland this spring. As this publication and many others have observed, the unthinkable has come to pass in the northeast corner of Ireland; and, for once, it is a good thing. Ian Paisley, renowned for his anti-Catholic, anti-I.R.A. oratory beginning in the 1960's, has agreed to lead a new provincial government with Martin McGuinness, an ex-I.R.A. man, as his deputy.

The power-sharing government led by Paisley and McGuinness is the culmination of a peace process begun in the mid-1990's, a peace process that many observers point to as a possible template for conflict resolution around the world. There are many heroes in this story, and yes, Paisley is one of them. Bill Clinton, who made peace in Ireland a priority as no other president ever did, is another.

And so is the outgoing British prime minister, Tony Blair. It is one of those tragic ironies of life, of politics, that Blair has been hounded out of office in part because of his support for the United States war in Iraq. Meanwhile, across the Irish Sea, hundreds of thousands live in peace in part because Blair insisted that war was not the answer to the province's problems.

Irish-American Catholics who pressured politicians to take a greater interest in Northern Ireland have reason to believe they helped make a difference. Without the intervention of the United States during the Clinton years, it would be hard to picture Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness in the same room, never mind as partners in power.

The American component is important to remember, too, because we live in an age when people at home and abroad have concluded that our influence overseas can only be for the worse. As one of the nation's oldest graduate students, I can assure you that the mood on campus is decidedly hostile to any notion that Washington can make, or has made, a positive difference in world affairs.

Peace in Northern Ireland certainly does not bear a "Made in the U.S.A." label. Irish people themselves, Paisley and McGuinness among them, deserve credit for putting aside the animosities of the past for the sake of the future.

But there is a reason why the Irish built a statue of Bill Clinton (granted, it's on the premises of one of Ireland's finest golf courses). Clinton, mediator of the Irish peace process, was never cheered as he was during his trips to Ireland.

It is hard to remember in these difficult times, but American power does not have to come from the barrel of an M-16. The sight of Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness working together in Belfast ought to remind us of our better angels.

Terry Golway

TERRY GOLWAY is the curator of the John Kean Center for American History at Kean University in Union, N.J.

PHOTO: OLGA BONFIGLIO

El Salvador: still poorly governed and impoverished, but not without strength and faith.

Remembrance and Hope

– BY OLGA BONFIGLIO –

A SHOELESS BOY wearily weaves his way down the street, alone, in a limp pair of soiled shorts and a torn T-shirt. Heaps of trash pile up on vacant corners and in the grassy medians of the city's streets. Dogs of many breeds, some of them obviously sick with disease, listlessly amble around the neighborhood, avoiding strutting roosters and a mother hen with her perky, curious chicks. Near a busy community laundry, a shabby, dazed young man sits slumped over. As the women scrub clothes, he cuddles a greasy white plastic canister of glue, his nose stuck down as deep in it as his face will allow.

It is dark at 6 p.m. here in La Chacra, one of the poorest neighborhoods in San Salvador, capital city of El Salvador, and by 8 p.m. the streets are deserted. The com-

OLGA BONFIGLIO is a professor in the education dept. at Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Mich., and the author of *Heroes of a Different Stripe: How One Town Responded to the War in Iraq.*

munity's 30,000 residents close up their shops and lock the doors of their homes to secure themselves against the vagrancies of warring youth gangs.

Yet the darkness of the night and the situation here does not deter the ninth-grade graduation ceremony at Maria Madre de los Pobres (Mary, Mother of the Poor), the neighborhood parish. On a balmy Tuesday evening last November, 17 night school students proudly accepted their certificates of achievement at a ceremony held in their honor and then enjoyed a meal of chicken, rice, beans and salad, followed by a delicious banana and pineapple layer cake.

> Today it is evident that Archbishop Romero's hope for El Salvador does indeed reside in the people.

Gloria, age 26 and the mother of three children, has worked for this moment for the past six years. She plans to continue her education through to university. Chino, a former gang member and drug addict, grins modestly as he thanks classmates and teachers who cheer him on for his accomplishment. These students and their classmates are the future of El Salvador. On average, Salvadorans receive 5.5 years of education. An estimated 20 percent of the country is illiterate; functional illiteracy—the inability to understand and/or use written language in everyday life—stands much higher. Most of the elderly cannot read at all. High school graduates, on the other hand, have the skills to work in shops and offices. If they go on to the university, they can become teachers, translators, businesspeople, health care workers, doctors, lawyers, professors, priests and middle-class parents.

Looking for a Way Out

In a recent study by the University of Central America in San Salvador, 42 percent of Salvadorans said they would leave their country to go to the United States if they had the chance. In a country of 7 million, 40 percent to 50 percent are unemployed or underemployed; many earn only $1 to $3 a day, and estimates suggest that hundreds of Salvadorans struggle daily to cross into "El Norte" to join 2 million of their countrymen. Some pay $6,000 to $7,000 for a coyote's help (plus heavy interest), usually with a down payment of half that amount that guarantees them two or three attempts to cross the border. They put up their land, farms and houses as collateral, knowing that even if they make it to the United States, they face being separated from their families for an unforeseeable length of time.

Wanting their country to look good after getting such bad press during the civil war in the 1980's, Arena, the party that controls the current right-wing government of El Salvador, denies that the country has a poverty problem. It also promises to improve health and education but then fails to follow through. Consequently funds that poured in from abroad during and after those terrible war years are drying up as needs elsewhere in the world take priority. Before the war, 14 families of El Salvador owned most of the country's wealth. Today just eight families dominate the privatization of the country's resources and broker trade agreements like the Central American Free Trade Agreement (Cafta).

Living next to the polluted Rio Acelhuate, many of the 2.2 million residents of San Salvador suffer gastrointestinal problems from parasites, as well as the ailments caused by poverty: dermatitis and fungus caused by wet feet and close contact with garbage, diabetes, arthritis and hypertension. Upper respiratory diseases are also prevalent. A thick, black cloud constantly hovers over this capital city from diesel-powered emissions from cars and buses. At rush hour one can hardly breathe the air. Even the rain offers no relief.

Signs of Hope

Yet all is not lost. Twenty years ago, Maria Madre de los Pobres Parish built a clinic in La Chacra. Today it provides dental, eye and gynecological care for 1,200 people each month. It also has a laboratory, a pharmacy, a health promotion program and a kitchen that serves breakfast and lunch. And the parish has been blessed with outstanding leaders. Zoila, one of the founders of the parish, started an orphanage for eight children during the war. In 1989, when the parish found itself in the middle of a combat zone, she managed a refugee camp of 150 people. Today Zoila administers the parish's godparenting program for about 1,000 preschool and elementary school children, and she recently started a social program in which the elderly meet to sew quilts, make toys and converse over coffee and lunch.

Some Americans feel a special duty to help the Salvadorans because of the financial support (more than $6 billion dollars) the U.S. government gave to the right-wing Salvadoran government during the civil war. Sister Patty Rogucki, for example, is an American who has donated her time and talents here over the past 17 years. During the war, the five-foot, 90-pound nun served as a bodyguard for Father Daniel, the first parish priest at Madre. Today she conducts Bible study classes and makes paper clowns for preschool children. She also helps to support women's business start-ups by providing them with small loans, lit-

eracy and accounting skills and a new perspective that will help them build a sense of dignity against sexual harassment and abuse from men.

Today, however, Catholics comprise only 55 percent of the Salvadoran population. Many people avoid association with the church to protect themselves. Before and during the war, Catholic priests and *campesinos* preaching a theology of liberation and justice were frequent targets for disappearance and murder. In 1989 six Jesuit priests from the University of Central America in San Salvador, along with their cook and her daughter, were murdered execution-style by the government for teaching students about liberating themselves from the oppression of the rich. Others have left the church because they are discouraged by ultra-conservative Catholic bishops who continuously try to stifle activism.

This year on the night of the vigil remembering the Jesuits killed at the university, people marched double-file around the perimeter of the campus in candlelight, then gathered for an outdoor Mass in one of the grassy open areas of the campus. Spirits were so high that even torrential summer rains did not discourage people from staying for the two-hour liturgy or from receiving the slightly wet and stuck-together hosts distributed by 30 drenched concelebrating priests. The rain proved a blessing by bringing people even closer together under tarps and umbrellas. The celebration then continued for another seven hours with food tents, games and music.

On the actual date of the murders, Nov. 16, a smaller, more formal Mass was held. Again the rain ruined the outdoor setting, but organizers hustled everyone into the memorial chapel of the Romero Center, where the tombs of the martyrs were in full view, their execution site just outside. The Mass was a profound witness of remembrance and sacrifice, joined with hope in the future.

One source of hope in El Salvador continues to be Archbishop Oscar Romero, another martyr, who was killed on March 24, 1980, as the guns of civil war were gathering. He had just given his homily at a Mass for three murdered Salvadorans, having urged an end to the disappearances and killings of priests and poor peasant farmers. During Romero's last days he mused about the future of his country. "If they kill me, I will rise again in the Salvadoran people," he believed.

Today it is evident that Romero's hope for El Salvador does indeed reside in the people. Through their suffering and poverty, the Salvadorans exemplify the strength to be found in community, the faithful endurance of a people committed to a cause, the power of love and forgiveness, and the charge that Jesus gives to all of us: to make life in this world beautiful, bountiful and just for everyone, especially the least of our brothers and sisters. **A**

A worshipper lights a candle at the Virgin of Guadalupe shrine at St. Bernard's Church in Riverdale, Md., in 2006. More than 1,000 Mexicans live in this area just outside Washington, D.C.

PHOTO: CNS/JOSE LUIS MAGANA

Our Catholic Hemisphere

Can a shared faith help build a future for the Americas?

BY CARL A. ANDERSON

With a new president in Mexico and a more immigration-friendly majority in place in both houses of the U.S. Congress, our nation is positioned to take a fresh approach to relations with Mexico in particular and Latin America in general. Catholics on both sides of the border are particularly well situated to help bring about a new era of hemispheric relations, though at the moment one hears little to suggest that leaders are thinking seriously about what we might bring to the discussion table. I think it is time for Catholics to lead the way.

The relationship between the United States and Mexico, in particular, is pivotal to the future of the Americas. On our shared border the global north meets the global south and Latin America merges with its more Anglicized neighbor to the north.

The Americas, not unlike Africa, are key to the future of Christianity. In Europe Christianity has undergone a swift decline, but in the Americas, despite significant challenges, Christianity is still strong. Each country in the hemisphere has deep Catholic roots, planted primarily by the Spanish, French and Portugese. Like Latin America, the United States also has Catholic roots in its Southwest and in particular states like Florida, Maryland, Louisiana and Vermont. Canada has them especially in Quebec, giving each country a common spiritual bond with others in the hemisphere.

Sharing a Common Spiritual Heritage

Consider that in the United States Catholics form the largest single faith group in Congress, with 29 percent of

CARL A. ANDERSON is supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus.

the members of the House and Senate; that one in four persons in the population is Catholic; that every Sunday pews at Mass fill with a rapidly growing number of Hispanic Catholics. Hispanics are our fellow parishioners. In the Knights of Columbus, Hispanics are our brother knights. (As early as 1905 we established a council in Mexico City.)

In Mexico President Felipe Calderón, a Catholic daily communicant, leads a country of some 90 million Catholics (the second largest Catholic nation in the world, after Brazil; the U.S. ranks third). They, and we, share far more than we sometimes realize. In both countries, Catholics have had to struggle for their rightful place in society during the 20th century. Burning crosses greeted New York State's Governor Al Smith when his train rolled into Oklahoma City during the presidential campaign of 1928, and not until 1960 did the United States elect its first Catholic president. In Mexico, an anti-clerical government martyred priests and laymen throughout the 1920's and 1930's. It was not until the 1990's that laws were overturned that prohibited priests from wearing clerical garb in public. The acceptance and subsequent growth of Catholics in both countries shows that the Catholic laity has come into its own. It now has a unique chance to shape the future of the Americas unencumbered by past prejudices.

We also share a patroness, Our Lady of Guadalupe. Known since 1945 as Empress of the Americas, she is a special patron to all Catholics, especially those in Mexico. In his 1999 apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in America*, Pope John Paul II noted:

> The appearance of Mary to the native Juan Diego on the hill of Tepeyac in 1531 had a decisive effect on evangelization. Its influence greatly overflows the boundaries of Mexico, spreading to the whole continent. America, which historically has been, and still is, a melting-pot of peoples, has recognized in the mestiza face of the Virgin of Tepeyac, "in Blessed Mary of Guadalupe, an impressive example of a perfectly inculturated evangelization." Consequently, not only in Central and South America, but in North America as well, the Virgin of Guadalupe is venerated as Queen of all America.

Mary's patronage of churches and families throughout the hemisphere goes back hundreds of years, and today she affords us a new starting point. Although during these centuries she has come to symbolize many things, in the light of *Ecclesia in America*, hers is a message of unity. She is a spiritual mother we all share.

Sharing One Future

If our continental history is a shared one, so too is our future. David Rieff pointed out in The New York Times Magazine (December 2006) just how interwoven our collective future is, noting, "Nationally, Hispanics account for 39 percent of the Catholic population…since 1960 they have accounted for 71 percent of new Catholics in the United States." At a time when church attendance is faltering across Europe and in some U.S. cities, it thrives in places Hispanic immigrants call home. Cooperation between Catholics in the United States and Mexico will be crucial to the future of relations between these two countries, and by extension to all of the Americas. From the halls of government to the parish pews, the willingness and ability of Catholics to build bridges between people in the United States and those in Mexico will shape our future.

At the 1997 Assembly for America of the World Synod of Bishops, the bishops of the hemisphere invited Catholics to rethink who they are as Americans: "We believe that we are one community; and, although America comprises many nations, cultures and languages, there is so much that links us together and so many ways in which each of us affects the lives of our neighbors."

That meeting was an excellent model of cooperation among the bishops, but the challenge to the church includes all the baptized. As Pope John Paul II wrote in *Ecclesia in America*, "The renewal of the church in America will not be possible without the active presence of the laity. Therefore, they are largely responsible for the future of the church." That is no overstatement.

The question is, What can Catholics—lay and clergy alike—do to advance the promise of *Ecclesia in America*? That promise is based on the truth that our unity in the sacramental life of the church transcends every national border and joins us in a way that has both profound and practical consequences.

Promoting Catholic Initiatives

Perhaps the biggest hurdle to overcome is the view by many in the United States that Hispanic immigration is to be feared. Of all people, Catholics should have no trouble remembering that the same thing was said of the Irish and Italian immigrants of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Few today would contest the contributions made by those immigrants who not only became assimilated, but who also breathed dynamic life into the Catholic Church in the United States.

Those fearful of immigrants often think that immigration brings crime. Catholics ought to realize—and help spread the message—that a poor family seeking a better life is no threat. Furthermore, the lack of any rational immigration process and a system that criminalizes both the economic migrant and the narcotics trafficker are of little help. President Calderón has lost no time in dealing with the

drug cartels in Mexico. Whatever immigration policy we end up with in the United States must complement the work Mexico is undertaking in dealing with crime, while taking into consideration the economic motivation that drives Hispanic immigration.

For us Catholics in the United States, Hispanic immigration brings a unique benefit: the promise of parish revitalization. It is up to the Catholics already in the United States to provide a rich spiritual environment that will feed the new arrivals. As they breathe new life into parish communities, it is our job to help them to become assimilated into our parishes and communities, as our parents and grandparents did, and to help them to live out their faith with support from all Catholics.


Floral arrangements and sand paintings decorate the Church of St. Andrew in Cholula, Mexico.

It was not long ago that Catholics in the United States rallied to support their persecuted Mexican brothers and sisters and helped put an end to the terrifying persecution there. Voices such as the Knights of Columbus and **America** helped Catholics in the United States to influence their government to take an active interest in the persecution going on in Mexico 80 years ago. When the *Cristero* struggle against the Mexican government's repression of Catholic observances ended in 1929, it was the active involvement and cooperation of Catholics on both sides of the border that made peace possible.

Moreover, during the 1920's, when up to a million Mexican refugees fled north, American Catholics opened their arms to those displaced by the violence. They built seminaries so that young Mexicans could study for the priesthood in the safety of the United States. Mexican exiles, from archbishops to humble rancheros, received assistance here and in Mexico. It is again time for such leadership.

A Model of Cooperation

One model for cooperation between the Catholics of the United States and Mexico is that of the Knights of Columbus. Founded in 1882 in New Haven, Conn., the Knights rapidly expanded throughout the hemisphere. Canadian councils were founded in 1897, Mexican councils in 1905. The Knights are just one example of cooperation between Catholics on both sides of the border, one that has continued for more than a century. Cooperation has taken many different forms. In the 1920's it included bringing the story of the Mexican persecution to the people of the United States. More recently, it has taken the form of giving seminarians from the United States an opportunity to study in Mexico and to learn about Mexican culture. It has also meant supporting Mexican seminarians who serve the needs of Mexican immigrants in the United States and the support of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Today, local Knights of Columbus councils along the border actively work together in Mexico and the United States in social, spiritual and charitable projects. Increasing such cooperation is a high priority of the Knights of Columbus, as it should be for other Catholic organizations.

Catholics on both sides of the border must promote a Catholic solution to the problems of poverty and economic and educational opportunities for the poor of the region, especially in Mexico. This is a special responsibility of Catholics in the United States—especially leaders in business and finance. President Calderón's election provides an unprecedented opportunity in the history of Mexico for economic and social reform. He should receive the active support of Catholics in the United States as well as those in Mexico.

In his encyclical *God Is Love*, Pope Benedict wrote, "Within the community of believers there can never be room for a poverty that denies anyone what is needed for a dignified life." His words have special meaning for those who share the same continent. Our hemisphere is indeed a microcosm of the globalization process occurring worldwide. What happens in America will have a profound effect on the church and the world, and what happens between the United States and Mexico will shape the future of this hemisphere. Catholics in both countries have reason to work for a day when such close neighbors are even closer friends. Throughout America, each of us should answer the call of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and integrate persons of every race and culture into one spiritual family.

In most of the countries of our hemisphere, between 70 and 95 percent of the population is Catholic. In the United States, one in every four is Catholic. If we Catholics were to view Hispanic immigrants as brothers and sisters in faith, and if we were to share that vision with the rest of our country, we could significantly shape the future of the church, the country, the continent and the hemisphere. A

CNS PHOTO/GREG TARCZYNSKI

Salvation Among the Poor

An Interview With Martin Maier

BY GEORGE M. ANDERSON

Martin Maier at the church of the community of El Taquillo, in El Salvador

MARTIN MAIER, S.J., *a member of the German Province of the Society of Jesus with a doctoral degree in theology, is editor in chief of the monthly journal Stimmen der Zeit. In 1989, when six Jesuits and two laywomen were murdered in El Salvador, he was ministering at the parish where one of the slain Jesuits was pastor. Father Maier remained and served as pastor there for over a year. His close relationship with El Salvador continues; he has written a biography of Archbishop Oscar Romero, published in Germany. The following interview took place at America House. The interviewer is* **GEORGE M. ANDERSON, S.J.**, *an associate editor of* ***America***.

WHY DO YOU RETURN to your former parish in El Salvador every year or two?

When I go back, it is not only to teach a theology course at the Jesuit-sponsored university there, but to minister again on weekends at the parish of Jayaque in the countryside, whose pastor—Ignacio Martín Baró—was one of the six Jesuits and two laywomen murdered by the military in 1989, just as Archbishop Romero had been murdered by members of the military in 1980. In the parish, I continue to experience the mystery of salvation as arising from the poor, which was one of the truths that Archbishop Romero—referred to in El Salvador as Monseñor Romero—came to understand so deeply.

Despite the danger of the military offensive, the parishioners came to Father Martín Baró's funeral Mass. Afterward, they said to me, "You are now our pastor." I was nervous at the thought of taking on this responsibility, but the Central American provincial superior supported the idea, and I stayed until 1991. It was a difficult time, particularly during the first weeks after the murders, when the army arrested and tortured some of our parish leaders. I especially remember a parishioner named Teresa. She stood up one day and said, recalling Father Martín Baró, "If they kill us because of what we are doing, I say welcome to death." For the people of the parish, he was truly a martyr, just as Romero was.

How did you first hear of Archbishop Romero?

As a Jesuit scholastic, I worked for a time at the magazine Orientierung, which is published by the Swiss Jesuits. The editor in chief, Ludwig Kaufmann, had written about three people of outstanding faith. Romero was one of them. Reading about his life, I was deeply impressed not only by the fact that he was killed while celebrating the Eucharist, but also by the change that took place in him from being an anxious, conservative man to an outspoken advocate for the poor. The change began soon after he became archbishop, when his close friend, the Jesuit Rutilio Grande, was killed in 1977 by the military in the town of Aguilares because of his work with poor campesinos. After the death of Rutilio, Romero began to put into practice what is called the option for the poor—the thrust of the 1968 conference of Latin American bishops held in Medellín, Colombia. Eventually,

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTIN MAIER

Romero became an extraordinary prophet of the church of the poor, one who believed that his lived contact with them was the most important grace of his life.

When you finished your doctoral dissertation in 1992, did you return to El Salvador?

I wanted to, but it was the time of the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, and I was asked to be part of a team of Jesuits involved in a humanitarian mission there. In 1993, it became clear to me that if I were to take seriously the option for the poor, for the victims, I had to do something for the victims of that war in the Balkans. With money from German donors, we bought medicine and food for the people. We also began a scholarship program for students who, as refugees, had no means of continuing their studies. The only condition for receiving a scholarship was to try to show that the different ethnic groups—Serbs, Muslims and Croatians—could live together. The archbishop of Sarajevo, Croatia, at the time, Vinko Puljic, had tried to work for reconciliation, but he was criticized even by the Croatians who did not want to talk to the Serbs or the Muslims. I told him about Romero, who also had tried to work for justice and reconciliation. Later, when my book on Romero was translated into Croatian, I sent him a copy.

During a stay in Sarajevo, our team was living in the former seminary. The seminarians had all left. A whole collection of pianos had been stored there by people who hoped they would be safe. As a musician (I have a degree in music, and in Paris I studied organ with the organist of Notre Dame), I hesitated about playing on any of those pianos, given the terrible war situation that prevailed. But a Dutch Jesuit on our team reminded me of Dostoevsky's famous phrase, "The world will be saved by beauty," so I did play. It was a deeply moving experience.

Is the gap between rich and poor in El Salvador still as great as it was in the 1970's?

Historically, the oligarchy was made up primarily of big landowners, and that is still true, although now its members are also involved in trade and banking. But the gap between rich and poor is the same, perhaps even wider. If I ask people in my parish in El Salvador how they compare the situation now with what it was like during the civil war, they say not only that they see no improvement, but that living conditions are actually worse. One indicator is the violence—an average of almost a dozen people are killed daily. Another indicator is that out of a population of six million, over 400 people daily try to leave the country to go the United States. I have a deep conviction from my experience in El Salvador that salvation must come through the poor. This is also the belief of my friend there, the Jesuit theologian Jon Sobrino. My doctoral dissertation was on the theology of Sobrino and one of the slain Jesuits, Ignacio Ellacuría (Sobrino was out of the country at the time of the murders). The title of the dissertation is "A Theology of the Crucified People."

Part of your Jesuit training took you to India. What did you do there?

For six weeks I traveled around the country to speak with Dalit activists. The Dalits are a marginalized segment of the population who have long been denied their human rights.

I continue to experience the mystery of salvation as rising from the poor.

With 150 million people, they represent the world's largest minority. I could see a connection between liberation theology in Latin America and the oppression of the Dalits in India. The uniting principle involves taking the perspective of the poor, of the victims, to discover that theirs is the perspective of Jesus himself. It entails a movement from above to below, what St. Paul calls *kenosis* in Phil 2:6, where he says that "Jesus emptied himself and took upon himself the form of a slave."

The thrust of *kenosis* is to go from riches to poverty, from power to powerlessness. For me, any Christian theology has to give a central place to this truth. One of my main motives in entering the Jesuit order was a desire to work for justice for the poor. I am from a family that, though not rich, had everything in terms of material comforts. My grandfather had a dental clinic, which he wanted me to take over. But the story of Jesus' call to the rich young man pointed to what I was seeking, and that led to the roots of my vocation. So again, the story of Romero is also the story of Jesus. In Matthew 25 he speaks of the need to recognize in the faces of the hungry, the imprisoned, his own face. For me, that makes it clear that the option for the poor has its basis in Scripture.

Pope John Paul II changed his opinion of Romero. What caused it?

The change came when the pope heard that Romero had been killed while celebrating the Eucharist. As he put it later, he felt that he had been killed for being faithful to the Gospel, and not for the political reasons that some had tried to attribute to him, and still do. I got this information from Cardinal Walter Kasper, who was on the committee that was preparing the Jubilee 2000 celebration to remember the martyrs of the 20th century. Cardinal Kasper told me that

when the pope was presented with the list of the martyrs who were to be commemorated, he noticed that Romero's name was missing. The pope then insisted it be added, because Romero died for his faith. In the final text Romero's name was there.

Do the ordinary people in El Salvador regard Romero as a saint?

If you ask the ordinary people—as I did in preparing a German radio program—they always say yes, Romero was a saint. When you ask why, they say because he told the truth and spoke out in our defense. A saint is a person who thinks most of others, and least of him- or herself. Romero gave himself totally to his people, especially the poorest. The Arena party of Roberto D'Aubuisson—whom the U.N. Truth Commission showed to be the real person behind the assassination—this past February tried to have D'Aubuisson honored as a *hijo meritissimo de la patria*, "highly honored son of the nation." But the people demonstrated against this move in front of the National Assembly, so the idea was dropped. They wanted Romero to be given this title, but the Arena Party would not allow it.

Speaking at America House in March, you referred to the theology of friendship with the poor. Please expand on that.

In a special issue of Stimmen der Zeit for the 2006 Ignatian anniversaries of Ignatius Loyola, Peter Faber and Francis Xavier, I wrote an article on being friends in the Lord—an allusion to the term Ignatius used for the first group of Jesuits. My idea was to link this theme with the option for the poor. Ignatius himself did this in a famous letter to the Jesuits in Padua, who were experiencing economic hardship. He told them it is the poor who make us friends of the eternal king. Ignatius' idea was that if we make ourselves friends with the poor, we also make ourselves friends with Jesus. From a theological perspective, you can again base that on Matthew 25, in terms of those with whom Jesus especially identified. So the option for the poor, as expressed in the 1968 Medellín conference, is not new. Rather, it brings us back to the roots of the society that Ignatius founded.

> I had to do something for victims of war in the Balkans.

You also mentioned the German theologian Johann Baptist Metz's thoughts on poverty and injustice.

For the past few years, Metz has given a central place in his theology to compassion, as a form of sensitivity to the suffering of others. In that context, he refers to the claim, or authority, of those who suffer (the German term is *Autorität der Leidenden*). It is a claim closely related to the option for the poor, a claim that suffering demands for itself. You find the theme in the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:33—the story of the traveler who, though belonging to a marginalized group, feels compassion for another traveler who had been attacked by robbers on the road between Jericho and Jerusalem. Left lying on the side of the road, the wounded man is ignored by others passing by. And this attitude is similar to what Romero felt: that in focusing on the marginalized and oppressed people of El Salvador, he was in close touch with the Lord.

The same claim has parallels with people who suffer from AIDS. Such suffering represents a challenge for the church, a call to minister to them in their affliction. I was very impressed by a book called *The Body of Christ Has AIDS*. Again, the fundamental idea is to identify with the suffering of Christ through those with AIDS. This past January I was in Africa at the World Forum on Theology and Liberation in Nairobi, where there is a Jesuit-sponsored AIDS network. A first step [of their work] is to bring the

disease to a greater degree of consciousness and accept it as a reality. Jon Sobrino speaks in his writings of *la honradez de la realidad*, which means being truthful in the face of a painful reality.

I think there is a global tendency to close our eyes to the reality of suffering in this and in other areas, for instance, the inequality of the distribution of wealth. It is unconscionable that we live in a world order (in fact, a form of disorder) with two-thirds of the global population living in very poor conditions, while a fifth lives comfortably. A few months before he died, Ignacio Ellacuría called for what he termed "a civilization of shared austerity." I believe that is the way we must go. It is a lesson we can learn only from the poor, because they are closer to that concept of shared austerity than people with wealth.

What is happening to minorities in your native Germany?

The official German policy is to restrict their numbers and, even if they entered legally, to expel them. One of the gravest injustices occurs when the police arrest immigrants with no legal status. They are imprisoned, sometimes for many months even though they have committed no crime, and are eventually deported. One good initiative taken by the German churches has been to speak out in defense of immigrants' human rights, whether they are in Germany legally or not. Human rights are unconditional; every human being is a bearer of them. The German Catholic bishops now finance a special secretariat to help undocumented immigrants.

In Germany I stay in touch with the struggles of other marginalized groups too. Once or twice a month I celebrate Mass for the Brothers and Sisters of St. Benedict Joseph Labre, in a house somewhat similar to the Catholic Worker houses of hospitality, where poor people are welcomed. After the Mass I stay to play cards with them.

AFTER OUR CONVERSATION, I asked Father Maier if he would like to have supper the next evening with the poor residents of the St. Joseph Catholic Worker on the Lower East Side of Manhattan and celebrate Mass for them. "Yes," he said, "this is what I am looking for." A

Poetry

Letter to a Thousand Poets

BY JAMES S. TORRENS

I HAVE JUST FINISHED READING about 1,000 poems submitted for **America**'s annual Foley poetry contest. Garrison Keillor, of "Prairie Home Companion," says he read 2,000 poems on the topic of spring to pick 15 for his radio show on April Fool's weekend. Wearying as that is, we both seem to have enjoyed and been touched by the contact with so many lives and inner worlds and imaginations, to say nothing of personal losses and gains.

A poem can be quite idiosyncratic and surprising, yet I found the following categories recurrent: (1) admiration of natural beauty, (2) a memorial of someone dear, (3) a love lost or found, (4) a prayer, (5) an analysis of life, sensible or pained and (6) a scathing appraisal of society.

Poems came in from all over the world—England, Ireland, Africa, India, Australia and a few from Rome. A high school in Worcester, Mass., had three entrants, each of whom concluded with, "I hope you like this poem." Yes, I did. The youngest writer was 8, the oldest 89. A 10-year-old named Sullivan Brophy of Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif., sent in 10 haikus (admittedly 10 different poems!), such as the following:

The rare silversword
Blooms once in its long lifetime.
It is beautiful.

An African-American woman, Fabu Carter Mogaka, submitted "African American Life in Haiku: Worship," containing this sample:

Flamboyant colors
Vivid against bland pews
Churchwomen's hats.

Then there was the teacher (Paul Doherty) who for his fifth-grade class wrote in rhymed couplets about his cat, Pudens. (What did he tell them about the cat's name? I wondered.) As I read through the 1,000 poems, I sometimes jotted down a good phrase, like this one from James Streeto, M.D.: "to be still and pensive/ in the twilight of the rose-tinted snow." I especially liked these lines: "Could this be what a Savior's for, to stay/ the unintended chaos of events,/ to change what's come to be to what was meant?" (Yvonne Goulet). And how about this clipped message: "Open the door,/ Step outside./ God waits" (Sister Marilyn Lacey)?

Every judge has criteria, spoken or unspoken, so what are mine? When I pick up a poem, most of all I hope for an imaginative spark, some ingenious take on things. But as for more specific criteria, I guess I look for clarity, economy and musical pattern. If the poem is cloudy, or wordy, or formless, I lose interest right away. The most elusive of these considerations, and the one most pertinent to poetry, is the matter of form. Are the lines strong and without words dangling at the end? Is there some kind of musical pace? ("Where's the beef?" is the question for eateries. "Where's the music?" is the question of poetry readers.) Does the poem really read like a block of prose? (To me, many do.) Well then, let it be content with that distinction. (This is an antique attitude, but I hold out for it.)

Ruthann Williams, O.P., has perhaps a livelier perspective on poems and poetic form than I do:

never be deceived
what look like lines
are really chunks and slabs
and random shapes
constructed
not at all haphazardly

In *Alice and Wonderland*, in all the confusion after the Caucus-race, the contestants demand, "But who has won?" The dodo, who invented the race, declares, "Everybody has won, and all must have prizes." At the risk of comparison with such a bird, I wish its words to be mine.

ART BY STEFANIE AUGUSTINE

JAMES S. TORRENS, S.J., is poetry editor of **America** and director emeritus of the Cardinal Manning House of Prayer for Priests in Los Angeles, Calif.

THE EDITORS OF AMERICA ARE PLEASED TO PRESENT THE WINNER OF THE 2007 FOLEY POETRY AWARD, GIVEN IN HONOR OF WILLIAM T. FOLEY, M.D.

Lost and Found

That afternoon, a retarded boy wandered into the cloister.
I found him in the washroom. Short, awkward, incongruous,
he shuffled past the long line of urinals. I followed him
into the hall. I almost said *Can I help you?* like a salesman;
instead, *Who are you looking for?* He seemed to ignore or
not hear me at first, but when I touched him gently on the arm
he said, *My father*. He was unhurried, not upset that he was
lost, curious even. He gazed at me, looked down the hall,
then stared through the window to the autumn light,
the last few bees in the linden. No fear. As though the place
belonged to him. And it did; far more than to me or the other
scholars of the law who lived there, dozing over our
scriptures. We talked, walking slowly through the cloister.
I asked him questions, and some of his answers
astonished me. I steered him back to the porter's desk
out front. When I opened the door, his parents looked up
eagerly, relieved, but not altogether surprised—that he'd
wandered off, or found his way safely back to them.

John Slater

JOHN SLATER is a Cistercian monk (Brother Isaac) at the Abbey of Genesee in New York, where he works as baker, plumber, gardener and caregiver for the infirm. His love and study of poetry has been lifelong.

An interview with the poet can be found at America Connects, www.americamagazine.org.

He Who Is

Jesus of Nazareth

From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration

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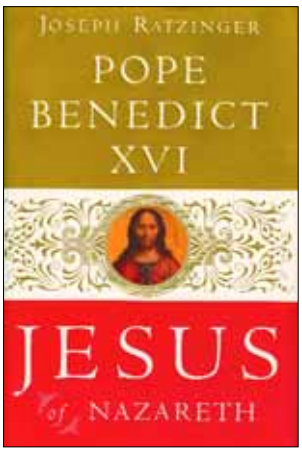
Now two years into his papacy, Pope Benedict XVI has published a work that is fast becoming a bestseller everywhere. "This book," he stipulates, "is in no way an exercise" of his official magisterium but "solely" a testimony to his "personal search for the face of the Lord." Through his position as head of the Catholic Church, the pope has seized a marvelous opportunity to spread around the world the good news that in Jesus of Nazareth the Son of God has come among us and shares with us abundant life here and hereafter.

Even though the pope began writing *Jesus of Nazareth* in 2003, some sections read like beautifully crafted biblical homilies that have been preached and polished over the years. This is the way his presentation of the Lord's Prayer, the parables of Jesus and the principal images in John's Gospel (water, vine and wine, bread and the Shepherd) strike me. They read like the products of long study, prayerful meditation and preaching. Whatever their precise origin, these three chapters will prompt a more profound preaching of several major elements in any portrait of Jesus, as well as a richer, personal reading of the Gospels.

After eloquent pages on the seven petitions of the Our Father, the pope highlights ways in which three parables—those of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son (which he more accurately calls the parable of the Two Brothers and the Good Father) and the Rich Man and Lazarus—show how "divine light shines through in the things of the world." They convey a knowledge of God "that makes demands on us." Over and over again the pope illustrates the "topical relevance" of the parables. He transposes, for instance, the parable of the Good Samaritan into "the dimensions of world society," recognizing how the peoples of Africa, in particular, have been "robbed and plundered" through "the cynicism of a world without God in which all that counts is power and profit."



Numerous contemporary, recent and ancient biblical scholars and other authors enter the bibliography and the text itself. The long chapter about the Sermon on the Mount moves through the Beatitudes to a beautiful discussion with Rabbi Jacob Neusner about the identity of Jesus as the new Torah. The Beatitudes, as Pope Benedict rightly insists, give us not only a synthesis of the program of the kingdom but also, implicitly, a self-portrait of Jesus. Behind the preaching of Jesus about being pure of heart, searching for justice and the rest, we find the uniquely authoritative claims of the preacher himself. Summarizing the Sermon on the Mount for his Jewish interlocutor, the pope concludes: Jesus "has brought the God of Israel to the nations, so that all the nations now pray to him and recognize Israel's Scriptures as...the word of the living God. He has brought the gift of universality which was the one great definitive promise to Israel and the world." This "faith in the one God of Abraham, Isaac and Jaocb," "extended now in Jesus' new family to all nations," is the great "fruit of Jesus' work."

The book is shaped by the conviction that we can truly know Jesus through the Gospels and that in him we see the human face of God. The pope argues convincingly that lesser portraits of Jesus—as, for instance, merely an outstanding prophet or reforming rabbi—fail to do justice to the historical evidence and do not explain why such a relatively "harmless" figure could be condemned to crucifixion and then go on to have an enormous and lasting impact on millions of people. *Jesus of Nazareth* has a sound, apologetic purpose alongside its pastoral and spiritual message. Only God can demand of us what Jesus asks. The divine identity of Jesus is no optional extra.

Benedict asks for "goodwill" from his readers, but adds: "everyone is free to contradict me." Contradicting him would be totally unjustified, but a few respectful quibbles may be in place. I thoroughly agree with the author that our historical knowledge of Jesus is indispensable, above all because God has persistently acted in history and in the person of Jesus has entered our history. Certainly some or even many biblical scholars have produced "the impression that we have very little certain knowledge of Jesus." But one should remember the work of such outstanding experts as Richard Bauckham, Raymond Brown, James Dunn, Joseph Fitzmyer, Daniel Harrington, Luke Timothy Johnson, John Meier and N. T. Wright (to name only a few), who certainly do not give that impression. They encourage us to join the pope in "trusting the Gospels," because we hear in and through the Gospel texts the credible and reliable testimony of eyewitnesses and their associates.

Apropos of liturgy, the pope expresses his deep concern that "modern liturgists want to dismiss" the "social function of Sunday as a Constantinian aberration." Evidently there are a few liturgical scholars who think that, but I have never heard or read a liturgist who defends this misguided view.

It is important to be reminded of the way in which the Eastern church has deepened an understanding of Jesus' baptism in "her liturgy and in her theology of icons." But I wonder what Eastern

The Reviewers

Gerald O'Collins, S.J., is a professor emeritus of the Gregorian University in Rome and currently a research professor of theology at St Mary's University College, Twickenham, England. The latest of his 47 books is *Jesus Our Redeemer* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2007).

George M. Anderson, S.J., is an associate editor of **America**.

Christians would think of this account of what happened at the Jordan: "Jesus loaded the burden of all mankind's guilt upon his shoulders and bore it down into the depths of the Jordan."

When describing how Jesus freely accepted death to expiate human sin and inaugurate a new family under God, the pope can appeal to reliable testimony from the accounts of the Last Supper. Jesus did interpret his imminent death in that way. But did he do so precisely in the light of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53? It is not clear that Jesus consciously identified himself "with the suffering and dying Servant of God."

All in all, *Jesus of Nazareth* excellently achieves its central purpose by showing how the unique filial existence of Jesus was "the source from which his action and teaching and suffering sprang." It is also a profoundly moving testimony to what Jesus means to Pope Benedict XVI. What more can Catholics (and other Christians) desire from the successor of St. Peter than an utterly sincere yes to the repeated question of Jesus: "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

Gerald O'Collins

Scientific Racism

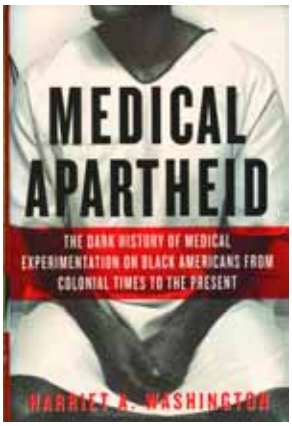
Medical Apartheid

The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans From Colonial Times to the Present

By Harriet Washington

Doubleday. 501p $27.95

ISBN 9780385509930



"A bright mulatto...is stripped to a nude condition...and a careful examination is made of all parts of the body by the Dr. and [she] is pronounced by him to be sound. The money is then paid and she is transferred to her new owner." With this mid-19th-century description of the sale of a human being in the nation's capital, Harriet A. Washington begins her important new work, *Medical Apartheid*. Ms. Washington wrote her book while a research fellow at Harvard Medical School. The project involved years of research, including not only a close study of antebellum physicians' memoirs and periodicals, but also a close examination of 20th-century government documents. The latter make clear the unethical practices of U.S. officials who condoned and even encouraged the kinds of medical experimentation on African-Americans—and poor people in general—that not only exploited them, but in many instances led to their disablement and even death. It is a long and sordid history. The author's earlier employment as an inner-city social worker and then a medical journalist prepared her well for this undertaking.

Especially in the 19th century, medical experimentation on powerless women

and men allowed physicians to advance their careers and even to become honored citizens esteemed as pioneers in their field. One such physician was the Southerner J. M. Simms, M.D., credited with being "the father of American gynecology." His statue stands in New York City's Central Park, facing Fifth Avenue and, ironically, directly across the street from the prestigious New York Academy of Medicine. He did indeed develop a surgical procedure for correcting a condition known as vesicovaginal fistula, but he did so by experimenting on slaves whom he did not consider it worth his while to provide with anesthesia–even though it was always provided when operating on white women once the procedure was perfected.

In the 20th century, the federal government itself became involved in exploitative medical experimentation. The most notorious of such government-sponsored experiments was the U.S. Public Health Service's "Study of Syphilis in the Untreated Male Negro." Begun in 1932 in Macon County, Ga., with uneducated sharecroppers as human guinea pigs, the study continued until 1972. It might have gone on longer had not a white Columbia University graduate student caught wind of it by accident and brought it to the attention of the media. Public Health Service personnel lied to the men under observation, telling them that they were receiving treatment when in fact they were not. After they died, they were autopsied in order to trace the ways the disease had destroyed their bodies, and often their minds as well. Without being told, unsuspecting wives and children were frequently infected too. So great was the ensuing scandal that then-president Bill Clinton issued a formal apology at a White House ceremony in 1997. Nevertheless, as Ms. Washington points out, the very length of the study (four decades) still "holds us in thrall" by the sheer horror at what was allowed to be inflicted upon unsuspecting people.

Prisons, too, have provided fertile ground for medical professionals in need of subjects for often dangerous experimentation. Generally poor and uneducated, inmates often welcomed the chance to earn small sums. Although the author points out that white prisoners also took part, the majority were black—again, sometimes with the blessing of a federal agency, the Food and Drug Administration. Some of the experimentation with various drugs took place at the Holmesburg prison complex in Pennsylvania. But even the F.D.A. became alarmed at the reckless procedures of one dermatologist there, Albert Kligman, who tested hundreds of experimental drugs during the 1950's and 1960's. Some prisoners were injected with herpes and wart viruses to test the efficacy of new drugs. The F.D.A. finally removed Dr. Kligman's name from its list of approved researchers.

During the cold war, another government agency, the Atomic Energy Commission, began experiments that included injecting plutonium into subjects who were not always informed beforehand of the risk. The goal was to determine at what dosage radioactive substances could cause illnesses like leukemia, with a view toward testing the effects on soldiers exposed to radiation. The A.E.C. (later absorbed by the Department of Energy) continued experiments of this kind for five decades, from 1954 to 1994. One notorious case cited in *Medical Apartheid* concerns a Pullman porter who, after a work-

related accident, developed cancer in one leg. During his stay in a California hospital, he was given an injection of plutonium with no therapeutic intent, only as an experiment. Many years later, to the federal government's credit, Hazel O'Leary—the first African-American to hold the position of secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy—acknowledged the agency's guilt and ordered that records dealing with human radiation experiments be opened.

The Central Intelligence Agency also comes in for sharp criticism for its experiments in bioterrorism. One involved the Army Chemical Corps's releasing swarms of yellow-fever-carrying mosquitoes in two primarily African-American Florida communities. Its residents, and those of a neighboring white area, were used as test subjects for the C.I.A.'s plan to study the usefulness infected mosquitoes might have as a biological weapon for possible use against Soviet forces. Despite an increase in illnesses and death rates where the experiments took place, the C.I.A. denied for years that biological agents had been used against U.S. citizens.

Has the situation changed for the better? Near the end of her book, Ms. Washington notes that because of media exposure that led to public condemnation, the worst kinds of abuses no longer occur—a development that has led to positive changes in research ethics. She warns, though, that the possibility of medical abuse remains, with medical experimentation having simply been exported to developing countries. Sub-Saharan African nations, in particular, have become what she calls "the laboratory of the West." There, medications considered too dangerous to test on human beings in the United States are used in clinical trials. Poverty-stricken men and women with no recourse to medical care of any kind in their own countries become in effect, like the prisoners at the Holmesburg prison complex, willing participants in risky experiments. Poor and vulnerable people of any country are always at risk of exploitation of one kind or another, but that flagrant injustices in the area of medical experimentation have taken place in the United States, right into the present time, makes the revelations of *Medical Apartheid* all the more disturbing.

George M. Anderson

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CAMPUS MINISTRY LITURGY position. DePaul University in Chicago is seeking a Campus Minister responsible for Catholic liturgical life. This is a full-time position. This Campus Minister will be responsible for coordinating all liturgical celebrations, the recruitment and formation of student ministers, and the development of a strong liturgical music program. Previous campus ministry experience is expected, along with a strong commitment to diversity of prayer/worship styles. Job description may be found at www.depaul.edu under Human Resources—Career Opportunities. You may also contact Father Chris at crobinso@depaul.edu; Web site: www.depaul.edu.

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Responsibilities include: Prepare for and preside over weekly liturgy as well as other important feasts; advise and counsel students on religious, academic and personal issues; provide religious instruction and prepare students for sacraments; advise the Catholic Student Organization and work with student leaders, staff and faculty to build community; work with the other staff in the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life to officiate at campus events and to facilitate programs that encourage exploration of faith and spirituality (lectures, discussions, study groups, etc.); collaborate with other offices and academic departments to coordinate educational programs on ethical, moral, religious, spiritual, theological, philosophical and other issues that are critical to students' attainment of cultural and religious competence and tolerance. This position is full time during the academic year and does not have a summer schedule.

Minimum qualifications: The Catholic Chaplain must be an ordained priest in good standing, have a demonstrated familiarity with a college/university environment and student developmental issues as well as a proven ability to work with college students, faculty, staff and colleagues of all backgrounds. Previous experience working with college students, faculty, staff and colleagues of all backgrounds preferred.

Qualified candidates should visit http://www.wesleyan.edu/hr/postings.html and select Staff Employment Opportunities to apply.

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DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY sought by the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. The director is responsible for coordinating the diocesan ministry to and with the young adults on the college and university campuses of the diocese and in the parishes. The director also oversees the Encounter with Christ program and the administration of the office. The position requires at minimum a master's degree in ministry or a closely related field and at least five years' professional experience in campus ministry. Closing date: June 15, 2007. Additional information is available on the diocesan Web site, www.richmonddiocese.org. Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest and diocesan application to: D.G. Mahanes, Director of Human Resources, Catholic Diocese of Richmond, 811 Cathedral Place, Richmond, VA 23220; e-mail: dmahanes@richmonddiocese.org .

DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS MINISTRY. Full academic year position beginning Aug. 15, 2007, for Regis High School, a Jesuit secondary school for 530 academically talented Catholic boys in New York City. Will encourage the religious life and activities of the students; plan weekly and special liturgies and Emmaus, Quest, leadership and silent retreats for students; recruit and train eucharistic ministers and lectors; perform other related duties. Practicing Catholic and familiarity with Catholic worship services and practice a must; bachelor's degree in religion/theology preferred. Competitive salary and benefits. Send cover letter, names of references and résumé to: Dr. Gary Tocchet, gtocchet@regis-nyc.org; or Fax: (212) 794-1221.

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT. The Catholic Diocese of Richmond seeks a Director of Development. The director will develop, implement and monitor a comprehensive diocesan development plan, consistent with the mission and vision of Catholic schools and will also plan, coordinate and implement the diocesan Annual Appeal. Qualifications include demonstrated successful experience in fund-raising and development (preferably in a nonprofit environment) and a bachelor's degree in business administration, marketing, communications or public relations or related study or experience; a master's degree and fund-raising certification are preferred. Additional information is available on the diocesan Web site, www.richmonddiocese.org. Closing date: June 15, 2007. Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest and diocesan application by e-mail to dmahanes@richmonddiocese.org, or postal mail to: D. G. Mahanes, Director of Human Resources, Catholic Diocese of Richmond, 811 Cathedral Place, Richmond, VA 23220.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, leader and creative program person. Management/finance/fund-raising experience. Bilingual. B.A./B.S. $60K. Hope Line, 832 E. 166th Street, Bronx, NY 10459; e-mail: stanthony832@aol.com.

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE seeks to identify qualified candidates for TWO CAMPUS MINISTRY POSITIONS. One Minister will focus on organizing and promoting student services and social justice ministries. The second Minister will promote student outreach/evangelization and the student retreat program. The successful candidate must be a practicing Roman Catholic with a graduate degree in theology, pastoral ministry or a related field. Please visit our Web site for complete job description: www.providence.edu, employment opportunities. Send cover letter and résumé by e-mail to hr@providence.edu, or by postal mail to: Human Resources, Harkins Hall 407, Providence College, 549 River Avenue, Providence, RI 02918. E-mail: hr@providence.edu; Web site: www.providence.edu.

REGIONAL MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION FOR SMALL PARISHES. The Catholic Diocese of Richmond seeks a Minister of Christian Formation for the Appalachian area of the diocese. The selected individual will support the local volunteer catechetical leaders in the 18 small parishes of Region 10 through consultation,

resourcing and implementing the diocesan catechetical norms and Pathways, the diocesan catechist certification process. The regional minister will also promote adult faith formation in the region and oversee the Region 10 resource library. The selected individual will have a master's degree in religious education, theology or pastoral ministry, and have at least three years' experience as a catechetical leader, preferably with small and/or rural parishes. For a position description and additional information regarding this position, contact: Dennis Beeman, (804) 359-5661, ext. 113; e-mail: dbeeman@richmonddiocese.org.

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Volunteers

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No One Now Believes

"Why We Must Withdraw From Iraq," by Msgr. Robert W. McElroy, (4/30) is an excellent argument against war in general; but before we carry out his suggested " prudently crafted American military withdrawal" from Iraq, we should make sure that Iran, Syria, Osama bin Laden, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah and so on read and concur with the article. Then we can all relax.

No one now believes that the preemptive attack against Iraq was a good move. Many at the time believed that Iraq posed a greater threat to us than Osama bin Laden did a few short years prior to the disasters of Sept. 11, 2001. So our leaders made the best decision based on what we thought we knew. Unfortunately we cannot take back our move; so now we must make the wisest choices possible to ameliorate the situation—not only in Iraq, but also in the entire Mideast—with the least harm to all concerned, especially those Iraqis who have been our allies. Before even contemplating our prudent withdrawal, we should examine all likely consequences, one of which is the likelihood that any potential future ally would hesitate to place confidence in our loyalty and commitment.

Martin Kinnavy
Warren, Ohio

Uncertain Success

Msgr. Robert W. McElroy begins his discussion as to why the war in Iraq is not justified by saying that the " just cause" argued by the administration is " transformational democratization" (4/30). Rather, I believe, it is the prevention of wholesale slaughter of Sunnis by Shiites and Shiites by Sunnis. This is certainly a just cause. Further, America's intention in this war is now exactly that, namely, the prevention of the slaughter of innocent human lives. I agree with Monsignor McElroy that we need to do everything to initiate dialogue and negotiation, and that the question regarding the "likelihood of success" is uncertain.

John McCarthy
Weston, Mass.

Justify a Withdrawal

Msgr. Robert W. McElroy's article on the Iraq war (April 30) is an excellent analysis of the four just-war principles that need to be applied to judge the validity of this controversial calamity. Sadly for all of us—Americans, Iraqis and world citizens—continuing the conflict cannot be morally justified on any basis. Nor, as Monsignor McElroy stated well, should opponents of the war be the ones required to justify a withdrawal. Unfortunately, when our country departs from its founding principles by pursuing an imperialistic foreign policy, the results prove to be costly, widespread and probably long-lasting. Pursuing Osama bin Laden in his hideout in Afghanistan can be defended. The same cannot be said for invading Iraq.

As a former member of St. Gregory's parish in San Mateo, a graduate of the Jesuit University of San Francisco and a Marine officer in the Korean War, I applaud Monsignor McElroy's analysis and conclusions.

Robert Hanson
Rancho Murieta, Calif.

Inflammatory Language

I read with pleasure your current comment " Unrepentant Media" (4/30), on the Duke lacrosse team incident and the " unaccountable journalism of personal destruction." I thought how good it is that we have insightful observers trying to improve public discussion.

Then I read the next editorial, " Corporate Hall of Shame" and you do exactly what you just criticized others in the press of doing. You give credence to a zealot group's undocumented allegations, in this case about corporations—but apparently without doing any fact-checking of your own.

First you scared me: my throat became parched at the image of Coca Cola Company " drying up sources of fresh water all over the world...." Then you provided the " facts": "Water bottling...is one of the least regulated industries in the United States" and is less safe than tap water.

As a former employee of a federal regulatory agency, I know that bottled water and tap water are in fact regulated, as much or more than other products, under the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act; and both are required under these laws to meet the same standards of safety for contaminants.

I think there are a lot of things wrong with bottled water—the price mark-up for the water is over 1,000 percent; the empty bottles are everywhere, are unsightly and environmentally polluting; but certainly two federal laws and several pages for bottled water in the Code of Federal Regulations (21 CFR 165.110) is proof enough that it is indeed regulated by the federal government, in addition to local health authorities.

You earned a place in the hall of shame for this performance. As a Jesuit magazine, you should try to raise the quality and accuracy of public discussion and not amplify the inflammatory language that characterizes so much of today's political and social debate.

Michael Eck
Washington, D.C.

Sacrament of Ongoing Christian Life

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (C), June 10, 2007

Readings: Gen 14:18-20; Ps 110:1-4; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Luke 9:11-17

"Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor 11:24)

ART BY TAD DUNNE

DURING THE EASTER season a major concern in the Sunday Scripture readings was how the movement begun by the earthly Jesus might continue after his death, resurrection and ascension. These readings showed that we can have a personal relationship with the glorious risen Christ. From that relationship flows the possibilities of knowing and loving God and one another in new and more profound ways, radiating the peace of Christ, working for unity with others and listening to and cooperating with the Holy Spirit. A major element in this process is the Eucharist, as the outward sign of the ongoing presence of God and the risen Christ among us.

The Scripture readings for Corpus Christi ("Body of Christ") remind us that what Jesus did at the Last Supper had a rich history that should shape our ongoing Christian life. The reading from Genesis 14 recalls the earliest days in the history of God's people. The mysterious Melchizedek, the priest-king of Jerusalem, provides for Abraham a meal of bread and wine. Some early Christian theologians found in this episode a prefigurement of the Eucharist.

The passage from Luke 9 recounts Jesus' multiplication of five loaves of bread and two fish in order to feed a large crowd. The way in which Luke tells this story links Jesus' action with the Last Supper and the early church's celebration of the Eucharist. In Luke's Gospel it is one in a series of meals that Jesus celebrates (often with unlikely persons) and serves as an enacted parable of his hopes for the eternal banquet to be celebrated in the kingdom of God.

The selection from 1 Corinthians 11 provides the earliest written description of Jesus' Last Supper and of the church's celebration of the Eucharist. This text brings together key biblical motifs and thus offers a synthesis of biblical theology. The Eucharist carries on the tradition of Passover, since the Last Supper took place in the context of Israel's liberation from slavery. The Eucharist is a sacrifice for sins, as the expression "This is my body that is for you" suggests. It is a memorial of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, as well as a remembrance of God's action in salvation history. It inaugurates a new covenant, not as an abrogation of the old covenant but as the fulfillment of the various covenants throughout Israel's history. It is a sign of hope for the fullness of the kingdom of God. And it is a thanksgiving in which we proclaim what God has done throughout salvation history.

It is not enough, however, to know and admire the rich historical and theological roots of the Eucharist. Rather, it must be an integral part of our ongoing Christian life. That life is rooted in our personal relationship with the glorious risen Christ, expresses itself in love of God and others, promotes peace and unity with others and is open to the Holy Spirit's guidance. By inspiring and nourishing these dispositions, the Eucharist enables us to carry on what Jesus began. Thus the Eucharist can and should be the sacrament of ongoing Christian life.

DANIEL J. HARRINGTON, S.J., is professor of New Testament at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, Mass.

Praying With Scripture

- How do the various meals described in Luke's Gospel contribute to your understanding of Jesus' Last Supper and the Eucharist?
- Which aspects of the Eucharist do you find most meaningful?
- What are the concrete ways in which the Eucharist shapes your life as a Christian?

Forgiven Sinners

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (C), June 17, 2007

Readings: 2 Sam 12:7-10, 13; Ps 32:1-2, 5, 7, 11; Gal 2:16, 19-21; Luke 7:36–8:3

"So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven because she has shown great love" (Luke 7:47)

ONE OF THE GREAT THEMES in Luke's Gospel is forgiveness of sins. As we return this Sunday to the Lectionary readings for Ordinary Time, today's texts place before us three forgiven sinners: David, Paul and a "sinful woman." These three figures remind us of the horror of sin and the miracle of divine forgiveness.

While in the Bible David is portrayed as the best of ancient Israel's kings, he is not perfect. Today's reading from 2 Samuel 12 describes the prophet Nathan's condemnation of David's sin with Bathsheba. David not only had commited adultery with Bathsheba but also successfully plotted to have her husband, Uriah, killed in battle. It is hard to imagine a more despicable sin. On hearing Nathan's accusation, David recognizes his guilt and says, "I have sinned against the Lord." Nathan accepts David's confession and affirms that the Lord has forgiven him. David the forgiven sinner goes on to be the shepherd of Israel, the symbol of his people's hopes for renewed greatness and the legal ancestor of Jesus.

Paul is one of the great forgiven sinners in the New Testament. Paul persecuted the early Christians and according to Acts 7 participated in Stephen's martyrdom. Through his encounter with the risen Jesus, Paul's life changed dramatically. He moved from being the enemy of early Christians to being the champion of their Gospel. In this turn-around Paul came to perceive himself as the forgiven sinner par excellence. He regarded himself as taken over totally by the risen Jesus in a kind of mysticism, "I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me."

Today's reading from Luke 7 contrasts Simon the Pharisee (Jesus' host) and the "sinful woman" (probably a prostitute). The way in which the story is told illustrates the biblical dynamic of the love of God and forgiveness of sins. Throughout the centuries interpreters have tried to discern whether she was forgiven because she loved Jesus, or did she love Jesus because he forgave her sins. Whether or not this question can ever be decided, the real point of the Lukan narrative seems to be that love of God and forgiveness of sins are inseparable. You cannot have one without the other. The excerpts from Psalm 30 underscore the idea that forgiveness is possible with the God who loves us and whom we love in return.

In the interpretive tradition, the "sinful woman" of Luke 7:36-50 has often been identified as Mary Magdalene, mainly out of the proximity of this episode to the list of women who followed Jesus in Luke 8:1-3. However, there Mary Magdalene is described as the recipient of healing actions presumably by Jesus, not as a reformed prostitute. The mention of the women followers of Jesus here indicates that they accompanied Jesus along the way, heard what he said as addressed to them too and saw what he did up to and including the passion. In the Gospels Mary Magdalene is primarily the most faithful follower of Jesus and even the "Apostle to the Apostles" at Easter.

Daniel J. Harrington

Praying with Scripture

- What reactions do you have to David and Paul as forgiven sinners?
- What role does the sacrament of reconciliation play in your life today?
- How would you explain the relation between love and forgiveness in your dealings with other persons?

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