America

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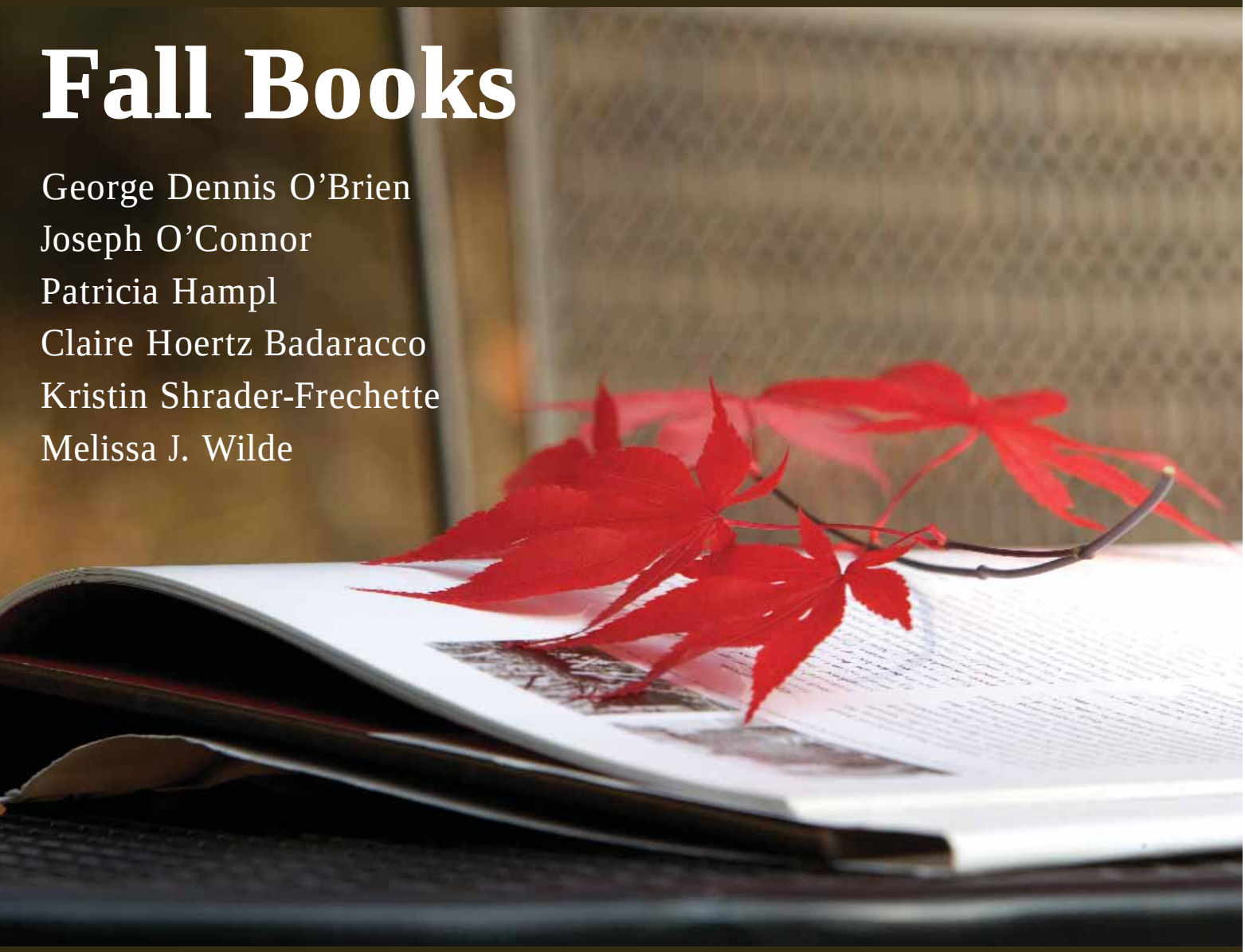

Fall Books

George Dennis O'Brien
Joseph O'Connor
Patricia Hampl
Claire Hoertz Badaracco
Kristin Shrader-Frechette
Melissa J. Wilde

Mary Ann Glendon
on Bernard Lonergan

Barbara Joe
on peace in Sudan

David Neuhaus
remembers Marcel Dubois

Of Many Things

'YOU BE GOOD; see you tomorrow. I love you"—the final utterances of Alex, a 31-year-old African Grey parrot, to his significant human, Irene Pepperberg. The story of Alex's life and death, his cognitive accomplishments and learned skills not only made headlines but "revolutionized the way we think of bird brains," noted Diana Reiss, a psychologist at Hunter College in New York City. As Verlyn Klinkenborg pointed out in The New York Times (9/12), the value of Pepperberg's and others' scientific research "lies in our surprise, our renewed awareness of how little we allow ourselves to expect from the animals around us."

As we approach the feast of St. Francis of Assisi (Oct. 4), we are reminded of the valued place of animals in God's creation—and in the human heart. According to the 2007 National Pet Owners Survey, 63 percent of American households (71.1 million homes) own a pet, mostly dogs and cats. And the numbers keep increasing. We have relationships with our pets and treat them as family members. We lavish love on them—and sometimes needed punishment (not harm)—and they return both with an equal measure of unconditional love. We recognize and accept our responsibility to our animal friends. Regrettably, though, such is not the case with every pet owner.

Whether from mental or emotional stress or a lapse in moral rectitude, some owners willfully inflict untold abuse on their pets. We read the stories and hear them on the radio over and over again. The population of stray animals is staggering. Many have simply been tossed out of a home and dumped miles away. The dire plight (and number) of unwanted or rescued animals has prompted more and more volunteer groups to spring into action.

Many of the dogs they have taken were from so-called "puppy mills." These factory farms breed helpless puppies, who are then kept in unacceptable conditions until the next "auction" or order from pet stores around the country.

The summer issue of Best Friends magazine reports that animal welfare organizations estimate "there are between 4,000 and 5,000 puppy mills in the U.S.," located primarily in Pennsylvania and the Midwest. They specialize in purebreds. The commercial pet trade is all about profit and loss. Though the breeders are regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, evidence suggests that there is a severe dearth of inspectors and investigators. Many breeders are not in step with the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act. Regulation needs to be strengthened—but how is that possible with fewer than 100 inspectors overseeing thousands of breeders?

If all who are interested in acquiring a pet (or at least a purebred) were fully aware of the situation, they might think twice about it. Puppy mills and pet stores go together like kibbles and bits. The troubling fact is that only half the puppies from these mills ever make it to a pet shop. "The other half die," reports Best Friends, from the mills' "squalid conditions, hypothermia, starvation or the horrors of transport." It is a contentious issue, to be sure, with legislators and special-interest groups not able to get into the same book, let alone on the same page.

We might, therefore, consider adopting our next best friend from a local shelter or rescue group. There are still a few "no kill" facilities, but most shelters lack sufficient space to accommodate the continuing influx and turnover of pets. Hence, many are euthanized. So by adopting from there, we not only save a life but offer a new and better one. Anyone who cares about what's really happening "down on the farm" should make their voices heard.

Religious services for blessing animals remind us of the worth of all God's creatures, how we connect and the glory they give God too.

This fall brings a new, large assortment of pet books. The Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Anna Quindlen offers *Good Dog: Stay* (HarperCollins/Nov.), an ode to her Lab named Beau. Also coming are *The Merck/Merial Manual for Pet Health—in Everyday Language* (Merck/Oct.) and *Good Catkeeping: A Comprehensive Guide to All Things Feline*, by Diane Morgan (T.F.H./Oct.).

May you and your own best friend know how lucky and special you are.

Patricia A. Kossmann

America

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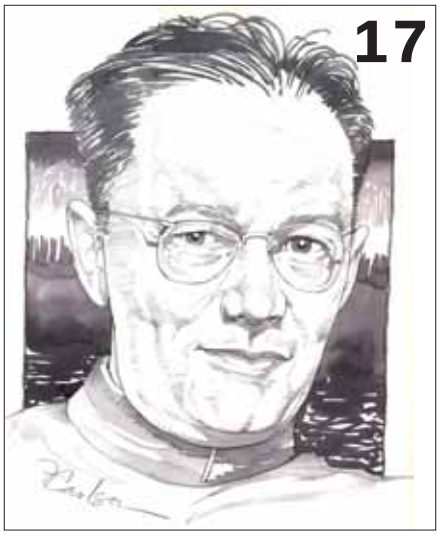
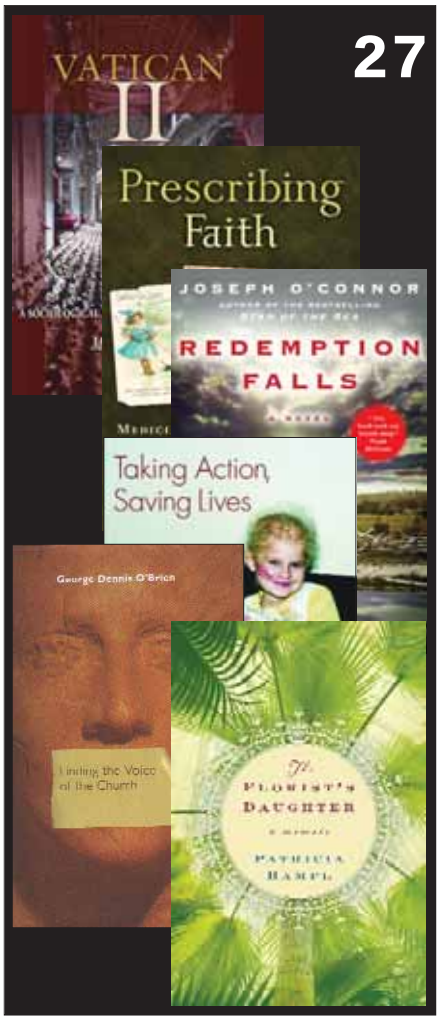
Articles





This week @ America Connects

Two doctors—Daniel Sulmasy, O.F.M, and Kristi L. Kirschner—debate the ethics of genetic engineering. Plus, an audio interview with Patricia A. Kossmann, and a 2004 profile of Bernard Lonergan. All at **www.americamagazine.org.**

Jailhouse Blues

Disturbing news from the vast American prison system suggests that a new kind of censorship is afoot, one far more draconian than anything even the most inventive of inquisitors might have dreamed up. The Federal Bureau of Prisons has used the excuse of potential terrorist agitation to purge prison libraries around the nation of questionable theological texts that might "discriminate, disparage, advocate violence or radicalize." The directive, known as the Standardized Chapel Library Project, also covers CDs, tapes and videos, and allows up to 150 book titles for each religious affiliation from a pre-approved list vetted by experts from various denominations. The list has drawn press attention for its curious omissions, including the writings of theologians such as Reinhold Niebuhr and Cardinal Avery Dulles. In some cases, prisons have thrown away thousands of books not on the approved lists.

The real target would appear to be radical Muslims who are seeking to convert other prisoners to violent jihad. But any prison chaplain will agree that the quickest way to create a radical in prison is to deny a prisoner access to books. A decent library is one of the few consolations of the incarcerated, an escape from the endless boredom and depression of prison life. When denied that outlet, a prisoner will be even more susceptible to the deformed rhetoric and writings of the most extreme prisoners on the cell block. Well-intentioned though this new policy may be, the result may be the creation of environments around the country where radicalization of prisoners is even more likely.

Above and beyond the implications for prisoner rehabilitation, the Standardized Chapel Library Project constitutes a grave violation of religious liberty. Both prisoners' rights and the scope of civil liberties in this time of terror are complicated issues. But it does not take a Supreme Court justice to see that broad exclusion of religious reading involves an excessive intrusion of government into the business of religion.

Investment, Not Subsidy

The Duchess of Cornwall and the Prince of Wales ride Amtrak. At least they did during a visit to the United States earlier this year. And while they did have a private, three car train, it was pulled by an Amtrak engine over Amtrak tracks from Philadelphia to New York. Lesser persons, like commuting senators and your editors, have reason to be grateful that Amtrak is there and that it works. Communities in the northwest and north central parts of the United States, where bus service has been cut back, share the feeling. But the Bush administration, in a woefully shortsighted move, is again threatening to cut funding for Amtrak. The mayor of Lancaster, Pa., Rick Gray, has complained: "When we spend money on roads we call it an investment, when we spend money on public transportation we call it a subsidy. Every other country in the world invests in mass transportation." While there are undoubtedly countless political and economic considerations involved, one wonders if our own leaders might learn from the experience of Valery Giscard d'Estaing. While president of France, he was asked by a pesky reporter the price of a ticket on the Paris metropolitan railway. He didn't know. Seven million or so Parisians were amused, appalled and outraged at how removed he seemed from their everyday lives.

Rights Activists Attacked

Risking their lives to protect the rights of marginalized people in Guatemala and Honduras, human rights activists have increasingly come under attack by powerful interests. In an August report called *Persecution and Resistance*, Amnesty International, whose credentials on such reporting are strong, notes that members of groups like the environmentally concerned group Tropico Verde and the Asociación Arcoiris—a gay rights organization—have been threatened and beaten in both countries.

Tropico Verde works to protect the Mayan Biosphere Reserve, the largest tropical rain forest in Central America. Two of its environmental activists were stopped as they were returning from Guatemala's main airport this past January. A car cut off their taxi and several men dressed as police officers got out and fired shots at the taxi as it sped away. No one has been brought to justice. The two activists have since left the country because of concerns about their safety.

Similarly, a staff member with the Asociación Arcoiris in Honduras was arrested in March as he left the organization's headquarters. The police beat him and forced him into a car. At the police station they put him in a cell with others. Responding to police instigation, other prisoners repeatedly raped him. The director of Amnesty's Americas program observes in the report that "those who protect others from suffering human rights violations end up suffering abuses themselves," especially when their work offends powerful economic, political and social interests.

Iraq's Abandoned Refugees

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT agreed in February to accept 7,000 Iraqi refugees for the fiscal year that ends on Sept. 30, but only 900 had arrived as of Sept. 19. To our nation's shame, even 7,000 represent a drop in the bucket, compared to the need. Thousands more whose lives are now in danger have worked with U.S. military personnel and private American contractors. The contrast with the number of refugees taken in after the Vietnam War is striking; over a million Vietnamese were resettled throughout the country and have entered America's mainstream. Human Rights Watch's refugee policy director, Bill Frelick, told **America**: "In the post 9/11 period, you're not going to see hundreds of thousands of refugees resettled in the U.S." But, he added, the United States could make a far more serious effort in this direction, and it could do more by helping to provide a decent standard of living in the Middle East and to prop up the governments of countries sagging under the weight of so many refugees.

The war in Iraq has led to the first jump in global refugee numbers in five years. An estimated two million refugees have sought safety in Jordan, Syria and other neighboring countries. Comparable numbers, unable to flee, eke out a precarious existence within Iraq's borders as internally displaced persons. Increasingly, moreover, Middle Eastern countries are closing their doors to Iraqis. Whole planeloads of fleeing Iraqis have been turned back from Jordan, even when they had proper documentation. Jordan now hosts the highest number of refugees per capita of any country in the world. Syria too, which previously had what amounted to an open door policy for Iraqi refugees, is now imposing visa requirements—a major stumbling block for those fleeing from the violence. Saudi Arabia has gone so far as to create a $7 billion, technically sophisticated physical barrier to keep Iraqis out.

In the early years of the conflict, Jordan generously allowed Iraqis to enter and remain. But after the bombing of three hotels in Amman in 2005 by Iraqi terrorists, which caused 60 deaths, the mood in Jordan changed. One result was that Iraqi males between the ages of 17 and 35 are completely banned. Three-fourths of Iraqi refugees in Jordan are consequently women and children. Those who entered with savings were initially able to find lodging and, with Arabic as a common language, could to some extent blend in with the local Jordanian population. Now, however, with resources like food, health care and education severely overburdened, the mood has soured, and Iraqi refugees are increasingly viewed as unwelcome illegal aliens. The impact on women and children has been especially harsh. When families' savings are gone, some women have fallen prey to sex traffickers, and girls and boys as young as 8 are drawn into prostitution in a desperate effort to help pay for basic necessities.

Internally displaced persons within Iraq have also fared poorly. Scorned in some quarters by those who say that if they had really been in danger, they would have found a way to escape Iraq, I.D.P.s often suffer not only the lack of shelter, but of food as well. Food insecurity is a daily reality. Iraq's public distribution system—the centralized mechanism that for decades has provided food to vulnerable citizens at subsidized prices—is now near collapse in a nation that was once considered the most developed in the Middle East. The same is true of the sewage system. Less than 20 percent of the population have access to appropriate sanitation. Unclean water is one of the biggest causes of death for children.

PALESTINIAN REFUGEES CONSTITUTE another overlooked group. Many Palestinians have lived in Iraq since 1948; some born there have never set foot outside Iraq. But hundreds now exist in deplorable conditions in camps on the border between Jordan and Syria, and additional thousands live in fear in Baghdad itself. Especially in Baghdad, they have been attacked and often killed as aliens. Over 600 have been murdered. Because of the ongoing violence, humanitarian aid organizations, moreover, have become increasingly limited in what aid they can offer in Iraq. Most have sent their non-Iraqi workers out of the country. And no wonder; since 2003, almost 100 aid workers have been killed. Even Iraq's own Red Crescent Society has suffered losses, though it continues to function in most of the country.

The challenge, refugee advocates emphasize, is to work toward a more equitable sharing of the burden of refugee care through a massive injection of per capita grant aid. Adequate assistance, either in resettlement initiatives or money, has not been forthcoming from most of the first-world nations, including the United Kingdom and the United States. It is time for them to step forward with deeds, not words only.

Salesian Tours U.S.

Pascual Chavez Villanueva, S.D.B., the rector major of the Salesians in Rome, smiles before celebrating Mass at a building near the Marian Shrine in Stony Point, N.Y., Sept. 15. Father Chavez spoke to various branches of the Salesian order at the shrine as part of his Sept. 7-26 tour around the United States.

Dutch Proposal for Priestless Masses

The general curia of the Dominicans expressed surprise over a booklet published by members of the order in the Netherlands recommending that laypeople be allowed to celebrate Mass when no ordained priests are available. In a written statement released by the Vatican Sept. 18, the Dominicans' Rome-based leaders said that while they "laud the concern of our brothers" over the shortage of priests, they did not believe "the solutions that they have proposed are beneficial to the church nor in harmony with its tradition." The statement, dated Sept. 4, acknowledged the concerns of some Dutch Dominicans about the shortage of vocations to the priesthood and the difficulty in offering the faithful in the Netherlands a wider celebration of the Eucharist. But while the statement said Dominican leaders shared those same concerns, it said they did "not believe that the method they [the Dutch Dominicans] have used in disseminating" a booklet to all 1,300 parishes in the Netherlands was an appropriate way to discuss the issue.

Vatican Clarifies Position on Artificial Nutrition

Catholic health care and ethics groups thanked the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for clarifying its stand on artificial nutrition and hydration for patients in a persistent vegetative state in a pair of Sept. 14 documents. "The Catholic health ministry is grateful for the clarification provided today," said Carol Keehan, a member of the Daughters of Charity who is president and C.E.O. of the Catholic Health Association.

"Patients in a persistent vegetative state, while making up a very small percent of all patients, pose some of the most challenging and heart-wrenching situations for families and caregivers," she added. "This clarification affirms the church's belief in the value of their lives in spite of the circumstances of their condition."

The congregation reasoned that "the artificial administration of water and food generally does not impose a heavy burden either on the patient or on his or her relatives. It does not involve excessive expense; it is within the capacity of an average health care system, does not of itself require hospitalization, and is proportionate to accomplishing its purpose, which is to keep the patient from dying of starvation and dehydration. It is not, nor is it meant to be, a treatment that cures the patient, but is rather ordinary care aimed at the preservation of life."

Exceptions may occur when patients are unable to assimilate food and water or in rare cases when nutrition and hydration become excessively burdensome for the patient, the Vatican document said.

U.N. Prize for Refugee Service Lawyer

Katrine Camilleri

A U.N. prize for outstanding service to refugees has been awarded to a Jesuit Refugee Services lawyer who aids boat people in Malta. Katrine Camilleri, who has helped detainees and asylum seekers in Malta since 1997, will receive this year's Nansen Refugee Award, the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees announced Sept. 18. The office said it chose Camilleri because of her "exceptional dedication to the refugee cause and her outstanding contribution through Jesuit Refugee Services in the protection and assistance to refugees." It said Camilleri has shown political courage in her tireless lobbying and advocacy for the growing number of refugees in Malta, even in the face of threats. Last April, arsonists set fire to Camilleri's car and front door.

U.S.C.C.B. Urges Resettlement of Iraqi Refugees

That the U.S. government should provide resettlement aid for 25,000 Iraqi refugees in the next fiscal year, 10 times the number expected to arrive by the end of the year, is one recommendation in a new report by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Iraqi refugee crisis in the Middle East. "Iraqi refugees with relatives in the United States should be considered for U.S. resettlement on the basis of family reunification, dropping the requirement that they enter as refugees or migrants," said the report, titled *Escaping Mayhem and Murder: Iraqi Refugees in the Middle East.* The report, issued Sept. 10 in Washington, D.C., was based on a seven-member U.S.C.C.B. fact-finding mission undertaken on July 2-13. Among the seven participants were Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, D.C., and Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio of Brooklyn, N.Y., chairman of the U.S. bishops' domestic policy committee. The delegation visited Istanbul, Turkey; Beirut, Lebanon; Amman, Jordan; and

Damascus, Syria. These countries currently host an estimated two million Iraqi refugees.

Bishops Dismayed at Amnesty Pro-Choice Stand

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference has expressed dismay at the failure of the human rights group Amnesty International to reverse its new pro-abortion policy, describing the move away from neutrality on abortion as "deeply regrettable." Archbishop Philip Wilson of Adelaide, president of the bishops' conference, said the new policy put at jeopardy Catholics' long association with Amnesty in "fighting injustice, ending human rights abuses and standing in solidarity with the imprisoned and the oppressed." The Amnesty policy was changed in mid-August by the group's International Council—made up of more than 400 delegates from 75 countries—which approved proposals to abandon the group's neutral policy on abortion as part of its Stop Violence Against Women campaign. The council voted to "support the decriminalization of abortion, to ensure women have access to health care when complications arise from abortion, and to defend women's access to abortion, within reasonable gestational limits, when their health or human rights are in danger."

Book by Theologian Peter Phan Examined

Church officials are examining a book written by the Rev. Peter Phan for possible ambiguities on the unique role of the Catholic Church in the framework of religious pluralism. "There has been correspondence and dialogue" between Father Phan and the U.S. bishops' Committee on Doctrine, according to Thomas Weinandy, a Capuchin Franciscan priest who is executive director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Doctrine and Pastoral Practices. Father Phan, a Vietnamese-American theologian, is a member of the theology department at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. Father Weinandy told Catholic News Service Sept. 13 he could not comment on the private dialogue, in order to "respect the privacy of Father Phan and the work of the committee." A story in The National Catholic Reporter of Sept. 12 said the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has voiced concerns about Father Phan's book, *Being Religious Interreligiously: Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue*, published in 2004 by Orbis.

From CNS and other sources. CNS photos.

Catholic Iraqi Refugees Eager to Work

Their family home in Fallujah, Iraq, was shelled, burned and looted. They languished for two years in Istanbul, Turkey, within the cultural and vocational limbo accorded refugees who are waiting to be permanently resettled somewhere, sometime. Now that Hana, Wafa and Sana Toma have found a permanent home in the Diocese of Oakland with the help of Catholic Charities, they speak with a single voice: "We want to work. Now."

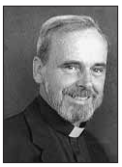
The three sisters arrived at the Oakland airport in late August with their 71-year-old mother, Samiya Bashir. Waiting to welcome them were their brother, Shamil Toma, his wife, Suha Yosif, and Elisabeth Lang, a Dominican sister who is director of Catholic Charities of the East Bay's refugee resettlement program, which is serving as the family's sponsor.

Volunteer Keeps Blog as Resource

Patrick Furlong, right, with children at the Working Boys Center in Quito, Ecuador on Sept. 10.

"You leave your family, you leave your friends, and you know that you're going to be gone for two years," said Patrick Furlong. "A lot changes. When I get back, I don't know what it's going to be like." Leaving the United States for two years, living on $60 a month and washing his laundry by hand was not where Furlong expected to find himself five years after graduating from high school in Albuquerque, N.M.

But Furlong's experiences at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles led him down a path of service that continues to inspire and amaze not just him, but anyone who reads the weblog, or blog, he writes as a witness to his life. Furlong had been serving with the Holy Cross Associates for the last 12 months in Santiago, Chile. He keeps his blog on the World Wide Web at http://pjfurlong.blogspot.com—with the hope that college students considering volunteer work after graduation might catch a glimpse of what it is like in the trenches.



Godforsakenness

'Finding one's heart's desire'

THERE HAS BEEN MUCH written about Mother Teresa of Calcutta these days. Not only has the 10th anniversary of her death been observed; depths of her interior life have been inspected as well. The publication of her letters to spiritual directors in *Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light*, edited by Brian Kolodiejchuk, M.C., has revealed that the founder of the Missionaries of Charity herself lived in profound spiritual darkness for nearly 50 years.

The public revelation of Mother Teresa's interior crisis (much of the documentation appeared on the Internet news site zenit.org in 2002, while the cause for her canonization was moving forward) has struck some as a cruel betrayal of her desire not to have her letters published. Others were shaken by what seemed to be her loss of faith or by God's harshness with her. Some have linked her experience with the harrowing purifications of high mystical prayer.

The most voluble response has likely been that of Christopher Hitchens. An often brilliant polemicist and eminently readable essayist, Hitchens is perhaps the most prominent of nonbelievers to have recently published an anti-theist manifesto. His best-seller is titled *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*. But over a decade ago he wrote *The Missionary Position*, a searing and often mean indictment of Mother Teresa, whom he dubbed the "Ghoul of Calcutta."

There is a puzzling zeal in Hitchens's fascination with Mother Teresa and his seizure of every media opportunity to disparage her. He opined in the Time magazine cover story (a remarkably balanced article) that she was like a die-hard, disillusioned Communist carrying on even though things were falling apart. On television news shows he attributed her perseverance to the fact that "advisors egged her on because she was a great marketing tool."

Apparently the only good thing he can see in her life is what he thinks was her loss of faith. Thus, from his two-page opinion piece in Newsweek one gets the sense that Hitchens has discovered a strange sympathy for "this troubled and miserable lady." But first he must convince himself that she has really lost her faith. Thus he moves from his first paragraph's guarded "all but lost her own faith" and "for all practical purposes ceased to believe," to his ringing conclusive indictment of "a blind faith in which she herself had long ceased to believe."

Hitchens gave a much more accurate description of Mother Teresa's crisis during a three-hour interview on C-Span's "Book TV." Correcting himself after asserting her loss of faith he said, "If not a loss of faith, a great loss of certainty." Precisely.

The problem (and Hitchens could not have suspected it) is that Mother Teresa never had certainty. At least that's what she told me.

In Calcutta during December 1975 and for a few days in the following March, I was doing the "long experiment of humble ministry" that Jesuits undertake during their last year of formation. On those days when I celebrated the Eucharist at the Missionaries of Charity motherhouse and worked at the House of the Dying, I had a number of conversations with Mother Teresa.

Two of them still inhabit my life. Our first talk concerned my worry that I should not go back to the comfort and riches of being a university professor in the United States. She told me to go back. "There is far greater poverty there. The greatest poverty is the absence of love."

Much more puzzling was a comment she made shortly before I left Calcutta. I had asked her to pray for me. She said "for what?" "For clarity," I pled. And she immediately said no, she would not pray for that. I complained that she seemed always to have clarity and certitude. "I've never had clarity and certitude," she said. "I only have trust. I'll pray that you trust."

So Hitchens is correct on at least one count. Mother Teresa was living with a "great loss of certainty"—about herself, about her relationship to Christ, about her fate, about her very God. The feeling of not having faith is quite different from not having faith. Otherwise it would not be so harrowing to the believer, who cries out with nothing but trust.

It would be good if all of us, believer and nonbeliever alike, could learn once and for all that whatever faith is, it is not a crutch. Sometimes in faith, you have nothing to lean on. Nor is the "feeling" or consolation of faith something we can conjure up on our own. If anyone had such powers of conjuring it would be Mother Teresa. So much for feel-good religion—that "opiate of the masses." Morphine is much more effective.

The real story, the deepest subtext, in Mother Teresa's "dark night" is not that God was purifying her. God was actually giving her her heart's desire.

Every Missionaries of Charity community I have visited has a large crucifix with the words "I thirst" over it. It is that broken man on the cross that Mother Teresa most wanted to identify with, the same Jesus she could see in the most bereft and seemingly unloved of her brothers and sisters on earth. In one of her desperate cries to Jesus she wrote, "Lord my God, who am I that you should forsake me?" Is it possible that she could not see that her very words were the same as those uttered by the man on the cross she so longed to be with? Could she not realize that she had finally found union with the man who cried, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Perhaps it is best that she did not appreciate the intensity with which her prayers were answered. Freed from her darkness, she would have left him to his cross. Such can be the paradox of finding one's heart's desire.

John F. Kavanaugh

JOHN F. KAVANAUGH, S.J., is a professor of philosophy at St. Louis University in St. Louis, Mo.

A woman prepares a meal in Rumbek, in Southern Sudan, September 2003, before the 2005 peace treaty

CNS PHOTO FROM REUTERS

Southern Sudan may show the way.

Template for a Post-Treaty Darfur?

– BY BARBARA E. JOE –

SOUTH-CENTRAL SUDAN is the last place on earth I would have envisioned spending an Easter Sunday. Skirting the equator, the region is accessible only by cargo flight under U.N. or other auspices and is closed to outsiders except as authorized by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and Sudan People's Liberation Army (rebels who are also fighting in Darfur, to the West). It lacks roads and is littered with landmines, sparsely populated, with scorching winds, no water for vast stretches and daytime temperatures exceeding 110 degrees. How could I have ever imagined celebrating Easter there?

Yet when asked by the nonprofit Bishop Gassis Sudan Relief Fund in March 2006 to undertake a fact-finding mission to southern Sudan, I barely hesitated. Only a year had

BARBARA E. JOE, a freelance writer and Spanish interpreter, lives in Washington, D.C.
More information about the Bishop Gassis Sudan Relief Fund is available at www.petersvoice.com.

passed since a peace treaty was concluded between the southern Sudanese rebels and the government in the north, and I was anxious to see what Darfur might look like if it eventually makes a similar treaty. A longtime human rights activist, I was also curious about the practice of Catholicism in a country rarely associated with my faith.

My monthlong journey began at the thatch-roofed airport in Lokichoggio at Kenya's northern border, where I stayed overnight at a fenced church. There, kerosene lamps provided illumination, while a soccer match flickered on a generator-powered television set. A Kenyan supper companion told me he would never consider bringing his family to join him in this primitive outpost. Still, this way station was luxurious compared with the bare landing strip in Kauda, Sudan, where the wreckage of a crashed plane remained in mute testimony to a failed landing. I traveled in a Soviet-era cargo plane with Bishop Macram Gassis himself, a near-legendary Sudanese Catholic prelate with a long record of humanitarian achievements, for whom the organization I represented was named.

Following the local custom, I wore ankle-length skirts despite the suffocating heat. Local people soon crowded around me, eager to see their images on my digital camera. They always asked my name—that much of the language I understood. At 68, the same age as the bishop, I had been chosen for this mission largely because of my recent Peace Corps experience in rural Honduras, which had inured me to physical hardship. But southern Sudan offered an even more challenging environment: no phones, no mail, no electricity, no clocks, few roads and no water in the dry season except for a brackish liquid seeping up from holes hand-dug in dry riverbeds.

There was almost no transportation. Scarce vehicles and fuel all had to be airlifted in; the few camels or donkeys were already heavily laden and not available for hire. Siliri, a demining organization, had designated safe areas with white stones; but such efforts had only just begun. I saw the skeleton of a car that had been blown up after hitting a mine.

A Bishop's Good Works

Bishop Gassis had stepped into this waterless breach and arranged for a Thai-manufactured rig to drill 150 boreholes up to 80 meters deep through layers of sand and rock, holes named for such distant benefactors as Senator Sam Brownback and Congressman Frank Wolf.

As the bishop approached one well, children took turns pumping furiously, filling gourds and jugs while goats and feral-looking pigs drank the overflow and women washed clothes nearby. Crowds usually followed the bishop, but here the women scrambled shyly away. "Stop, don't run away," the bishop called out in colloquial Arabic. "Who do you think provided you with all this good water? I, your bishop, did." The bishop was the final arbiter on the location of wells and structures.

Mass was usually celebrated under the trees as worshippers knelt on the bare ground. The image of Sister Bakhita, a 19th-century Sudanese saint and former slave, was often propped up nearby. Women wearing colorful headscarves and long flowered dresses, with plastic rosaries around their necks, chanted the Kyrie Eleison while beating drums and shaking homemade rattles. They also sang native songs punctuated by high-pitched ululations; men sitting apart provided low-note harmony. Boy and girl Mass servers deposited corn, papayas and pomegranates into an altar basket; a boy even handed the bishop a live chicken.

At one Mass, the bishop, preaching in both Arabic and English, appealed for dedicated catechists to assist his few priests and nuns. "If you are a single woman, very good, if married, even better; if a single man, good, married, better still, but please, only one wife," he said. He asked the congregation to bring in an animal to sacrifice at Easter, a calf or goat, but "no mere chicken." At another Mass he confirmed more than 100 people of all ages, including two blind men.

The bishop's sermons warned of returning refugees bearing the scourge of AIDS, from which Sudan until then had largely been exempt. A nurse nun confided that girls who

had escaped from Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army were arriving pregnant or infected with H.I.V. after being raped.

Since the peace accords were signed in 2005 between Khartoum and southern rebels, the bishop had been working relentlessly to bring the area, he said, "if not into the 21st century, at least into the 20th." While still unable to serve the Darfur portion of his diocese, in the rest of his territory he had begun building, rebuilding and operating schools, orphanages, chapels and hospitals. Water was key.

Muslim pupils as well as Catholics and other Christians attended the bishop's schools. The U.N. World Food Program provided daily meals. A special effort was made to enroll girls, though boys predominated. Some teachers were nuns, others English-speaking locals or Kenyans and Ugandans hired on yearly contracts. During the civil war, schools were targeted by government bombers reportedly trying to wipe out "rebel spawn." One of the bishop's schools was destroyed by shelling; another was bombed, killing 18 children and maiming several others. Unlike the situation in the north, Sharia law does not prevail in the south. When Muslim-Christian intermarriage occurs, the children become Muslims.

A sewing workshop, run by a Portuguese nun who has spent 20 years in Sudan and is fluent in Arabic, began with a lesson on the equality of husband and wife in marriage. All the women had arrived promptly, using the sun as their only timepiece, eager to take turns using three treadle sewing machines. Women also worked alongside men at the bishop's construction sites while their small daughters cared for younger siblings, carrying around babies almost as big as themselves.

Safety a Relative Term

Lured by the availability of water and promise of peace, semi-nomadic Nuba and Dinka herders were moving back, often settling in the hills for safety should government bombers ever return. There I saw them constructing new huts and livestock fences from dry bramble bushes and preparing the terraced hillsides for planting. Several teenage boys told me they had returned on foot all the way from exile in Uganda, considering southern Sudan now to be safe. Yet fighting could still break out anew if the south eventually decides to secede from the north, as permitted by the north-south peace agreement. Oil reserves are located in the south, a serious complicating factor.

Southern rebel forces manned frequent checkpoints, giving us the feeling we were under siege. Our party breezed past, though, thanks to the bishop's armed rebel bodyguards. Most men carried AK-47 rifles, knives or machetes; shootings and stabbings were not uncommon. Nongovernmental organizations, as well as the bishop him-

self, operated from within walled compounds where all staff members slept at night and vehicles and diesel fuel were kept under guard. One evening I accompanied a deacon as he drove a woman with a bullet wound to a clinic run by Save the Children. We never found out who had shot her or why. Another woman told us her teenage son had disappeared en route to relatives in Khartoum. She feared that the boy, if still alive, might have been kidnapped into slavery, a practice not yet eliminated in Sudan.

Some of the tall, slender southern Sudanese bore horizontal scars on their foreheads or were missing two lower front teeth, pulled in a rite of passage. Both men and women made a point of vigorously shaking my hand; one man had only finger nubs, probably from leprosy.

Because I sometimes stayed overnight at a nuns' compound, locals called me "Sister Barbara." My special friend was Soraya, a widow with two children who tended the nuns' garden. Though I had to strain to decipher Arabic and suppress my urge to speak Spanish, language differences proved relatively unimportant. Women often walked alongside me, holding my hand or fingering my gold earrings. My belongings, left unguarded in an open hut, were never touched. When I dropped a paper clip in the sand, a woman hastened to return it.

I was once startled to see several Dinkas emerging from the woods bearing spears, but was assured that spears are now used only for hunting. On another occasion I was briefly caught outdoors alone in a blinding sandstorm that stung my skin and left me temporarily disoriented. In the evenings I saw miniature deer and flocks of wild guinea hens. Poisonous snakes sliding down from trees at night left telltale trails in the sand.

I often drank well water or drank from the common cup passed around to guests in a spirit of hospitality. I was offered strong sweetened tea in a tiny glass and once a goat was slaughtered in our party's honor, the chunks of meat served on spongy pancakes.

I learned nothing about the practice by Muslims and Christians alike of a severe form of clitorectomy. The practice is associated with a doubling of maternal and infant mortality, yet outsiders working in Sudan told me it was not considered a priority issue, given other urgent needs.

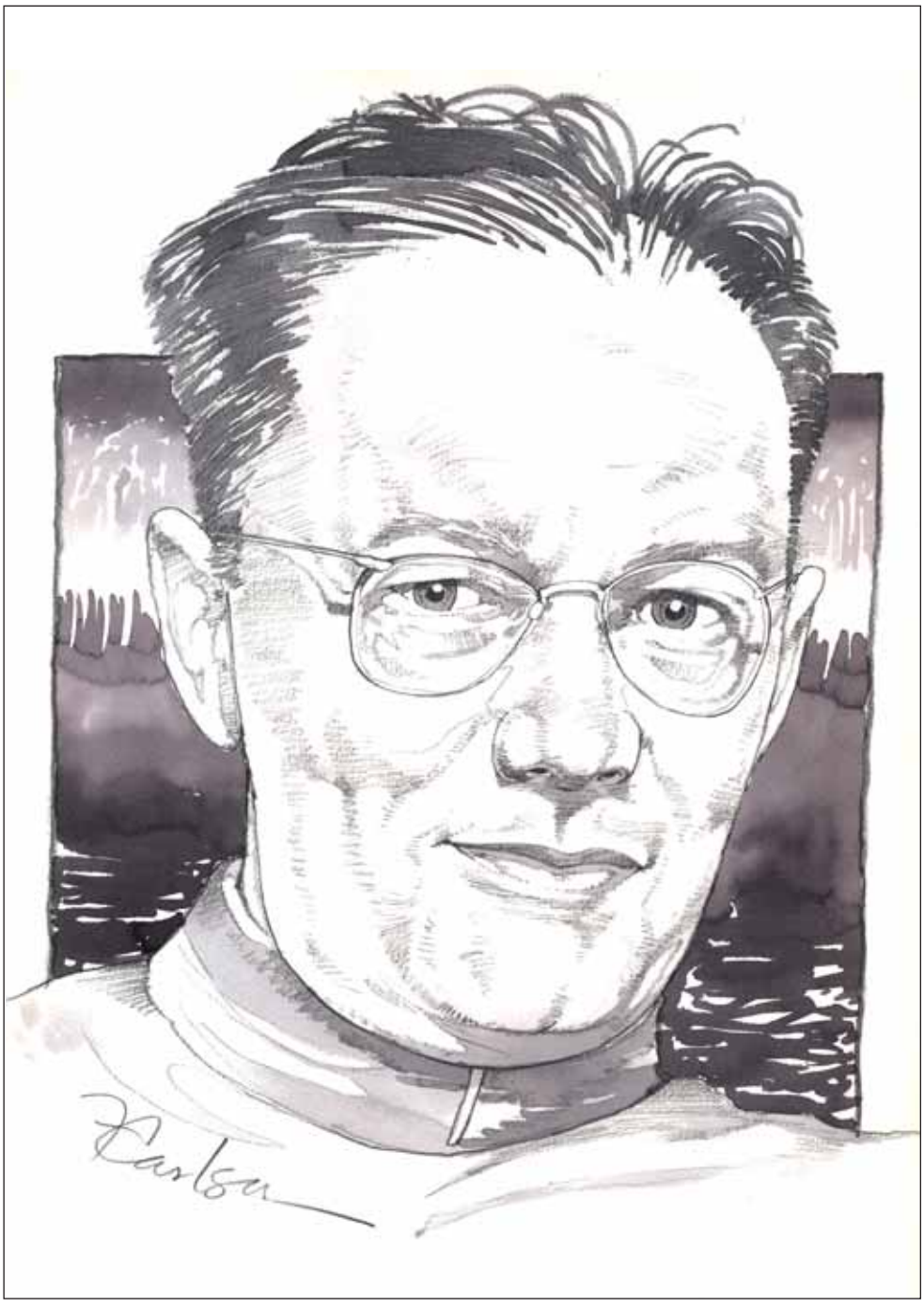
Outdoors at Easter Sunday Mass, amid pink desert flowers and stately baobab trees, congregants joined the bishop in expressing thanksgiving and hopes for a permanent end to the hostilities that had killed, starved and injured so many among them. A goat was duly sacrificed. They also prayed aloud that their brothers and sisters in Darfur would join them on the path to peace—a peace that despite international pressure still remains elusive. From their own experience, they knew well that any peace treaty in Darfur would be only the first step on a long road to recovery. A

Searching for Bernard Lonergan

The man behind *Insight*

BY MARY ANN GLENDON

AT THE 34TH ANNUAL Lonergan Workshop (June 17-22), philosophers, theologians and social scientists gathered at Boston College to discuss the legacy of a man who is regarded by many as the most important Catholic thinker of the 20th century. In his recent book on what he calls the heroic generation of post-Vatican II theologians, *Twentieth Century Catholic Theologians: From Chenu to Ratzinger*, Fergus Kerr described Bernard Lonergan, S.J., as the most serious and disciplined philosophical thinker among a group that includes Karl Rahner, S.J., Hans Urs Von Balthasar, Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II) and the present pope. Time magazine once compared Lonergan's significance to that of Thomas Aquinas. Yet the question that hovered over the weeklong workshop at Boston College was: "Why is Lonergan's work so little taught in philosophy and theology faculties of universities or, for that matter, in their social science faculties?"



ART BY FREDERICK H. CARLSON

MARY ANN GLENDON is the Learned Hand Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Mass., and president of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences.

Part of the answer is that Lonergan is just plain hard; he ambitiously sought to bring theology into conversation with modern physics, mathematics, economics and cognitive theory. Another problem is that although Lonergan placed great store by communication, he himself did not excel in that area. An equally serious impediment has been that philosophers treat Lonergan as a theologian, and theologians treat him as a philosopher. Social scientists by and large have recognized him as neither, for his work does not fall into any well-defined school.

Thus Lonergan, who modestly described himself as a methodologist, falls between the cracks of artificially fragmented disciplines. As a result, with Lonergan's magnum opus, *Insight*, reaching its 50th anniversary this year, the question that will be increasingly posed when his name is mentioned is: "Why is (or was) Lonergan considered a great Catholic thinker; and what, if anything, does he have to say to the times we live in now?"

As the workshop ended, I sat down with another participant, Gerard Whelan, S.J., who teaches theology at the Gregorian University in Rome. We tried to figure out why it was so difficult to answer that question, even for those of us who have benefited greatly from his work. We began searching for Bernard Lonergan.

The Invisible Man

Were there clues, perhaps, in the workshop presentations? A professor of English literature had given a spellbinding analysis of themes of human authenticity and religious experience in T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. A philosopher engaged in debates about the ethics of stem cell research spoke of the fact that many scientists and moral philosophers uncritically accept the argument that a fetus cannot be a human person until it "looks like one," even though the tiniest embryo already contains all the elements of a unique individual. Another presenter discussed how Edith Stein had studied the thought of Charles Darwin and sought, in Germany during the 1930s, to update Catholic teaching on the natural sciences. A business school professor spoke of the blind spots (Lonergan called them scotomas) that get in the way of understanding what is actually happening in an ongoing business organization. One evening was devoted to hearing about the work of the

> Insights, far from being rare occurrences, are as natural to human beings as breathing.

Sant'Egidio community, a relatively new movement of Catholic lay people that has achieved notable success in mediating peace agreements in troubled developing countries. Father Whelan spoke of how he came, during six years as a missionary priest in Africa, to discern defects in certain tendencies within liberation theology.

All of these speakers credited Lonergan for helping them to make breakthroughs of various sorts in their own fields, but Bernard Lonergan himself remained nearly invisible as they discussed the discoveries they had made. Why was this? The answer lies in Lonergan's daunting book, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*. There he describes what we experience as a breakthrough or insight as situated within the dynamic structure of human cognition: the recurring and cumulative processes of experiencing, understanding and judging. That process of knowing is the same whether the knower is a scientist, an artist, a theologian, a political theorist, a lawyer or a child learning how to walk and speak. The process regularly generates "aha" moments, not only on rare occasions in the minds of great geniuses, but in the minds of all men and women every day in the course of our ongoing mental operations. As we go about our daily business, we attend to the data of sense and experience. Our intelligence leads us to wonder and to formulate questions. (At least that is the way it is supposed to work. Lonergan once remarked to some lethargic students: "If you don't wonder, you won't try to understand; you'll just gawk!") Once we begin to wonder, though, we're off to the races, for insights, far from being rare occurrences, are as natural to human beings as breathing.

Good Insights and Bad

The quality of any given insight, Lonergan taught, depends on the quality of mind and material involved in this process. Not everyone's mental equipment is as powerful as Lonergan's, and not every bright idea that pops into one's head in the shower is worth proclaiming to the world. Insights, Lonergan said, are a dime a dozen. Some are duds. So we reflect on our insights. We sort them out. We marshal the evidence; we talk it over; we test the new idea against what we know; we investigate its presuppositions and implications; we give further questions a chance to arise; and eventually we make a judgment whether to affirm or doubt it. Insights accumulate into viewpoints, patterned contexts for experiencing, understanding and judging.

Over time, the recurrent, cumulative and potentially self-correcting processes of experiencing, wondering, understanding, critically evaluating, judging and choosing may enable us to overcome some of our own errors and biases, the errors and biases of our culture, and the errors and biases embedded in the data we received from those who have gone before us. "The seed of intellectual curiosi-

Who Was Bernard Lonergan?

Bernard Lonergan was born in Buckingham, Ontario, on Dec. 17, 1904, and entered the Society of Jesus at Guelph, Ontario, on July 22, 1922. He studied philosophy at Heythrop College in England, where according to Msgr. Richard M. Liddy ("The Mystery of Lonergan," **America**, 10/11/04), he took refuge in the work of John Henry Newman, especially his *Grammar of Assent*. "Newman's remark that ten thousand difficulties do not make a doubt has served me in good stead," Lonergan once wrote. "It encouraged me to look difficulties squarely in the eye, while not letting them interfere with my vocation or my faith."

In 1933 Lonergan traveled to Rome to study at the Pontifical Gregorian University, where he wrote his doctoral dissertation on Thomas Aquinas's teachings on grace. One of his teachers was Bernard Leeming, S.J.

It was in one of Leeming's classes that Lonergan experienced the "intellectual conversion" that would shape the rest of his career. Liddy described Lonergan's fundamental insight as "a clarity and distinctness of apprehension of the human act of understanding as the door to reality."

Lonergan explored these themes in his two major works, *Insight* (1957) and *Method in Theology* (1972). After leaving Rome Lonergan went on to teach at Loyola College Montreal, the University of Toronto and Boston College. He died on Nov. 26, 1984.

Since his death, a "Lonergan network" has blossomed around the world. His work is studied at centers in Boston, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Ottawa, Sydney, Dublin and Naples.

Every year there are conferences devoted to the exploration of his thought, and the papers and dissertations on his work continue to multiply. The University of Toronto Press has teamed up with the Lonergan Research Institute in Toronto to publish the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, a 25-volume set, of which 13 volumes have appeared to date.

Msgr. Liddy's article on Lonergan is available at www.americamagazine.org. Click on In These Pages.

ty has to grow into a rugged tree to hold its own against the desires and fears, conations and appetites, drives and interests, that inhabit the heart of man," Lonergan wrote in *Insight*. As our insights accumulate and form patterns permitting a better integration of what we have learned, our horizon shifts. When we move to a higher viewpoint, we become aware of a certain rearrangement of all that we have ever known, a certain transformation of our very selves. Parts of the past assume a new relation to one another; feelings change; doors open in the mind and heart. Sometimes the change is so great that when we try to express what has occurred, we use words like conversion and redemption.

The speakers in the Lonergan workshop were, in their different ways, describing how their personal appropriation of these processes enabled them to make certain advances. Father Whelan and I concluded that the reason Lonergan's influence on them was hard to discern was that what they had learned from him was how to make better use of their own minds, to become conscious of what they were doing when they were knowing, to think in terms of development and schemes of recurrence, to notice what is going forward in their various disciplines and to become more aware of the biases that can distort one's perceptions and analyses. As one Lonergan expert put it, "He introduces people to themselves in a unique way."

A Bloody Entrance

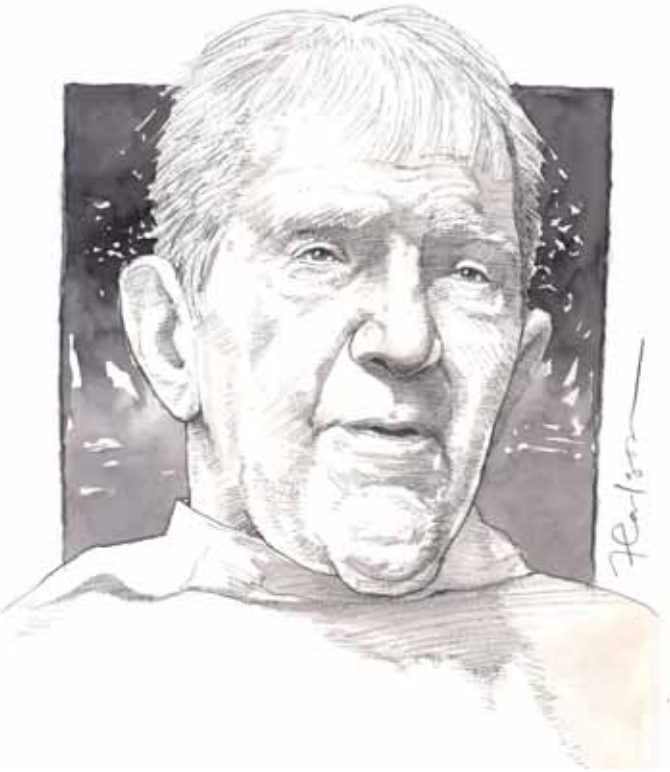
In other words, searching for Bernard Lonergan leads one down an endless path of attending to experience, reflecting on it and coming to judgments, which again must be tested by reason and experience. The path is a rocky one, a struggle all the way. As Lonergan has written in *Insight:* "Even with talent, knowledge makes a slow, if not a bloody entrance. To learn thoroughly is a vast undertaking that calls for relentless perseverance. To strike out on a new line and become more than a weekend celebrity calls for years in which one's living is more or less constantly absorbed in the effort to understand, in which one's understanding gradually works round and up a spiral of viewpoints...."

What message then, does Lonergan have for the times we live in now? Father Whelan and I do not consider ourselves experts on the man's vast body of work, so we hope the ideas that came out of our conversation will stimulate other reflections on why Lonergan's thought continues to be compelling. But for us the message is something like what Socrates said to his grieving friends when they asked what they were to do when he left them: "Greece is a vast land, Cebes. I suppose there are good people in it—and there are many races of barbarians too…. You must search in company with one another, too, for perhaps you wouldn't find anyone more able to do this than yourselves." A

A Righteous Gentile

Marcel Dubois (1920-2007)

BY DAVID MARK NEUHAUS



PHILOSOPHER, THEOLOGIAN, teacher, spiritual director, custodian of souls, man of God—Marcel Dubois, O.P., was all of these. Of the Christians living in the State of Israel, he was one of those best known to Jews. By the time of his death last June, Father Dubois had taught philosophy to generations of Israeli students at Jerusalem's Hebrew University. In a country where Christians make up only 2 percent of the population, this Dominican priest and professor of Thomas Aquinas's thought gave a contemporary face to the post-Vatican II church, a church engaged in serious, respectful and loving dialogue with the Jewish people.

Born in northern France in 1920, Father Dubois arrived in Israel in 1962 to join Isaiah House, a small community of Dominicans committed to understanding the reality of the Jewish people in a Jewish state with a Jewish majority. Father Dubois was the first Catholic priest many of his students had ever encountered, and his attentiveness broke many of the stereotypes they had inherited from the Holocaust generation. Hundreds flocked to his classes, which included an introduction to Christianity, delivered in Hebrew with a French accent. Later Father Dubois was naturalized as an Israeli citizen, became a well-known public figure and in 1996 received the Israel Prize for his contribution to Israeli society. Especially popular among intellectuals in Jerusalem were his regular public conversations with a Jewish Orthodox philosopher, Yeshayahu Leibovitz, a strong critic of Christianity.

In the Catholic community, Father Dubois was recognized as a noted theoretician, theologian and activist in the growing dialogue with the Jewish people initiated by the Second Vatican Council. Isaiah House attracted a steady flow of visitors seeking guidance from the man who had found a place in the hearts of the Jewish people. The Dominican community, with its small number of brothers (some of Jewish origin), became a center of reflection on "the mystery of Israel" within the State of Israel, a Christian reflection on the role of Judaism that had been initiated in the 1930s by such French Catholics as Jacques Maritain. Father Dubois and his brothers also gave spiritual guidance and theological formation to the small community of Hebrew-speaking Catholics that had sprung up in Israel in the 1950s.

In his later years, especially in the late 1980s after the first Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation, Father Dubois distanced himself from unquestioning support for the Israeli state, while remaining true to his love for the people. "During our first years we were carried along by the joy of seeing the People of Israel reunited with the Land of Israel, the Land of the Bible. And that caused us to neglect the ambiguous aspects of Zionism," Father Dubois said in an interview soon to be published as *The Israel We Longed For: Reflections of Marcel Dubois O.P.* (edited by Olivier-Thomas Venard, Fordham Univ. Press). His involvement with both the Israeli left and the Palestinians led him to ask questions: "The return of a people to its land is legitimate, but must it be done through the dispossession and violent occupation of another people?" Father Dubois tried to convince Israelis that their nationalist choices conflicted with the Jewish tradition and vocation as understood by a sympathetic Catholic. To Christians, he explained, "The mystery of Israel and the State of Israel are two realities that depend on each other, but…if the mystery of Israel is part of my faith, the national, nationalist or political situation of the 'state' of Israel is something else altogether."

Three days after his death on June 15, the Hebrew-language Israeli daily Haaretz called Father Dubois "one of the enchanted human stones of Jerusalem." Marcel Dubois remains a witness to the church's untiring work for reconciliation, dialogue, justice and peace. Now many Israelis repeat after his name: *Zikhrono livrakha*, "May his memory be blessed." A

ART BY FREDERICK H. CARLSON

DAVID MARK NEUHAUS, S.J., an Israeli member of the Jesuits' Near East Province, teaches Scripture at the Holy Land Seminary and at Bethlehem University.

Left, Right or Rome?

Finding the Voice of the Church

By George Dennis O'Brien
Univ. of Notre Dame Press 256p $25
ISBN 9780268037277

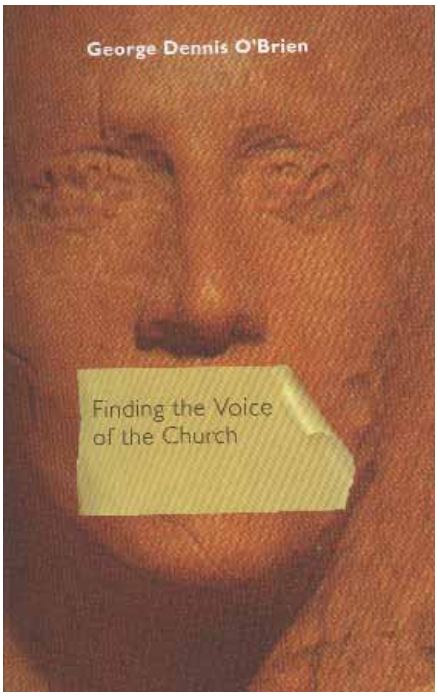
The aim of this book is to "rephrase Christian doctrine in nonstandard ways with the hope that these variants will either hit the target or, if wayward, illuminate how traditional language really works and why it is most appropriate."

The author is George Dennis O'Brien, emeritus president of the University of Rochester. A philosopher by training and a cradle Catholic, O'Brien has a deep commitment to his religious tradition and strong opinions about how it is being handed on. Reading this in the preface, I was buoyed by the hope that *Finding the Voice of the Church* would be a book nurtured by a mature faith sufficiently critical to cut deep and sufficiently grace-filled to offer healing—minus academic jargon. I think the author succeeds.

Musing about the possibility that what he proposes may be heretical, O'Brien says that he is willing to risk it—since the sermons he has heard in his lifetime often offer either "sheer banality" or "formal heresy" or both. He cites this example from an Ash Wednesday sermon.

> Being as it was the spring of the year, we were told that we should all look to our spiritual garden and pluck out the weeds (sins). Would that sin could be dug out like dandelions. Sin is not the dandelion in the garden of our goodness, it is a blight on the whole field. It is a bland form of Pelagian heresy to think that with a bit of effort and holy Weed-B-Gon we can clear up our blighted soul.

The title of O'Brien's book is not accidental. He believes that what is being said theologically should determine how it is said. He cites Wittgenstein's comment about a street evangelist: "If he really meant what he was shouting, he wouldn't be speaking in that tone of voice." O'Brien's Christology—the what—establishes the divinity and humanity of Jesus by looking at the worshipping voice of the liturgy—baptism, Gospel and Eucharist. These three activities demonstrate what Christians believe: *lex orandi*, *lex credendi*. In doing this, he reworks salvation history, with God not as a "first cause" but as divine author of the World-Play. Jesus' role makes history *la divina commedia*. Again he quotes Wittgenstein: "Within



Christianity it's as though God says to men: 'Don't act a tragedy.'"

Part 1 is far more creative than my brief description conveys. In hunting for the proper voice of the church, O'Brien takes on both the conservative organization Faithful Voice and the liberal Voice of the Faithful (with whom he has more sympathy). He rejects the didactic voice, as well as the voice of condemnation or the pitting of the theological voice against the missionary voice. The voice for which the church must strive is the listening and forgiving voice. He uses the word forgiving in two senses: certainly it means the forgiving of sin; but it also refers to the sense in which wood is "forgiving," as opposed to tile. O'Brien speaks of this sense as "the ability to maintain integrity while open to stress."

He ties "listening" to "forgiving" through faith:

> A person who is convinced can afford to be forgiving. She is not afraid to listen to criticism and contradiction; she believes that her views are wide, deep, and capacious enough to understand and encompass critical questions. Speaking from conviction, the speaker continually seeks new modes of expression, a different formula for a truth that she knows is deeper than any formula can quite capture. One must be suspicious when religious discourse simply repeats stock phrases from some catechism. The more one falls back on pat phrases, the more one falls into religious chatter.

Between Part 1 and Part 2 is a 20-page "Philosophical Intermission." It is well-named, since it is a tightly reasoned exposition of subjectivity, objectivity, sanity and the religious persona in the service of explicating Iris Murdoch's "Religion is having an intense attitude and no time off." O'Brien shows us—with rigor and humor—that it is the work of the church to form us in sanity/saintliness by contact

The Reviewers

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with Christ, the Word of God. This interlude lays out the skills that we need if we are to succeed as Christians.

It also sets us up to understand Part 2, wherein the author argues for the pope as a "symbol of the sacramental family" and for the interpretation of patriarchy and hierarchy using the analogy of family "that can be close and intimate [as] the relation of grandparent to grandchild." O'Brien adds parenthetically, "Maybe what the Church needs is a Holy Grandfather." At the risk of oversimplifying, I hear O'Brien saying that the church as a "sacramental family" must be both hierarchic (implying greater and lesser experience, for example) and infallible (faith forging unbreakable family bonds), since its role is "to send all peoples to the school of Jesus, because he is the truth in person and, thereby, the way to be human (Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, *Truth and Tolerance*)." In essence, the what (teaching Jesus) determines the how (the "voice" found within the family).

Before closing his book with some specific suggestions, O'Brien takes on the possibility of "infallible morality." Chapter 8, "Saving Morality," stresses that Catholic moral teaching offers much that O'Brien thinks is good and useful; it cannot, however, offer infallible moral teaching. Historically, moral teachings change (as, for example, on slavery and usury). Logically, moral judgments are synthetic, dependent on practical judgment and ethical discernment. Most impressive of all is O'Brien's Christological critique. Faith tells us that a) original sin compromises all positions and all peoples; b) Christ's salvific love and forgiveness make morality possible; and, c) living *imitatio Christi* (requiring discipline and self-reflection) frees us for "comedic morality."

If the church believes this, then it must speak with the voice of deep and forgiving listening. The church is not known as a good listener—perhaps this is why even papal statements that are intended as prophetic are heard as moralistic nagging. To tune the papal ear, O'Brien would have more frequent councils and synods structured by three practices: wide participation (of women, theologians and especially "contrary voices"), public information (both agendas and results) and patience (manifested in a willingness to take the time needed to clarify policies and procedures).

Finding the Voice of the Church is not theology-lite; neither are its rewards. For careful readers, it can nourish hope, strengthen faith and maybe complicate the intent of Matt 23:9.

Denise Lardner Carmody

Of War and Forgiveness

Redemption Falls

A Novel

By Joseph O'Connor

Free Press. 464p $25 (hardcover)
ISBN 9781416553168

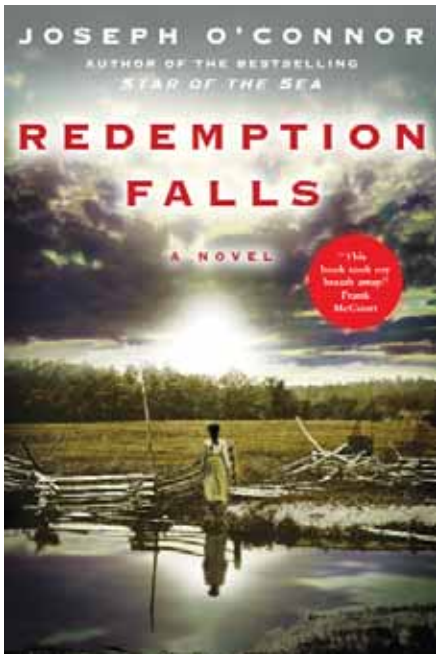
Late in Joseph O'Connor's sprawling, dazzling new novel, *Redemption Falls*, an elderly Columbia University professor watches a procession of aged Civil War veterans march down New York's Fifth Avenue seven decades after the War Between the States. For all the rich histo-

ry gathered down on the streets of Manhattan, one of the impressions O'Connor leaves us with is that this seemingly anonymous witness can be as rich a historical figure as the battle-scarred veterans.

Redemption Falls is set mainly in the years following the U.S. Civil War, in a western territory presided over by an Irish-born Union general with a troubled past. But more important than O'Connor's characters, plot or setting is his form. *Redemption Falls* is a dizzying collage of dialogue, posters, lyrics, dialects, court transcripts, footnotes, even photographs. O'Connor is making an ambitious bid here to explore not just American history but the nature of history and narrative itself.

Once we piece together the tragic lives of O'Connor's characters, we get the distinct sense that any recollection of war, of history in general, can certainly inform, and perhaps illuminate key facts. Anything more authoritative, however, is impossible. After all, as one character puts it, "The past is not over and the future has happened many times." Does all this theory and experimentation make for compelling fiction?

Absolutely. It takes some time for O'Connor's narrative to gather steam, and the chorus of his voices can occasionally seem repetitive or cacophonous. Yes, some readers will be exhausted by the narrative trickery first perfected by O'Connor's fellow Irishman Laurence Sterne in *Tristam Shandy*. Nevertheless, there is a gripping yarn here. The final 100 pages of *Redemption Falls* read like a perfectly executed murder mystery, which in fact it is.



Readers of O'Connor's last novel, *Star of the Sea*, should not be surprised by the scope and ambition of his latest work. *Star of the Sea* was an epic of the Irish famine that incorporated diverse voices and texts, took readers all over the British Isles and spanned the better part of the 19th century. With these two hefty novels, O'Connor has produced a magisterial portrait of 19th-century Irish America, reimagining both the harrowing journey to the New World as well as the war, bigotry and opportunity that greeted the victims of Ireland's Great Hunger.

At the center of *Redemption Falls* is Union hero James O'Keeffe (aka the Blade), Erin's own Robinson Crusoe. O'Keeffe is an Irish revolutionary, exile

and ex-con who is appointed acting governor of the titular territory. His once passionate marriage to the exotic Lucia is failing, partly because many of the townsfolk have Confederate leanings and wish to hang O'Keeffe.

This brings us to Cole McLaurenson, leader of a bloodthirsty band of Irish Yankee-haters. McLaurenson's dialogue occasionally lapses into a hard-boiled parody of Scripture-quoting killers out of a Quentin Tarantino movie. Yet Cole is also so noble he agrees to marry a girl his brother raped. That marriage, along with a mysterious urchin who has wandered into O'Keeffe's life, set in motion the events that lead to the bloody conclusion of *Redemption Falls*.

O'Connor has written over a dozen books, and one of them (1997's mostly lighthearted travelogue, *Sweet Liberty*) did set out to explore the Irish legacy in America. But little of his previous output suggests novels on the scale of *Star of the Sea* and *Redemption Falls*. The latter is particularly interesting because of the precision and complexity with which the Dublin-born O'Connor (who is the singer Sinead's brother) explores deeply American notions like the frontier, regional identity and the virtues and vices of mass immigration.

The haunted history of the Civil War and the lush descriptions of harsh terrain clearly recall William Faulkner. But *Redemption Falls* is far from the insular Yoknapatawpha County, because so many of O'Connor's characters know of vast worlds beyond its borders, be they bourgeois Manhattan, starving Ireland or Tasmania. Like it or not, they lug all of this baggage around with them, in a nation that has just ended slavery and lost 600,000 souls on what one character calls the "slaughterfields."

O'Connor's Civil War does seem inordinately Irish, yet the story of the 30,000 or so immigrants (many Presbyterian) who fought for the Confederacy (and the reasons why they did) remains a fascinating, largely unexplored one. *Redemption Falls* certainly complements great 19th-century urban Irish Catholic novels like Peter Quinn's *Banished Children of Eve* and Kevin Baker's *Paradise Alley*, and might even be seen as an exploration of how Ireland's ancient divisions were refracted and manifested in the New World.

Again, *Redemption Falls* is not without flaws. The role of a cartographer is important, but protracted, while the role of a former slave, whose dialogue is exquisite, nevertheless seems slight. Still, the novel should undoubtedly be seen as one of the most impressive and important novels of the year. At one point, describing a home populated by diverse relatives, a character says: "A genealogist visiting the house would have been perplexed." This house divided but still standing is America. O'Connor, the novelist as genealogist, makes great fiction out of what has left so many of us merely perplexed.

Tom Deignan

Going Home Again

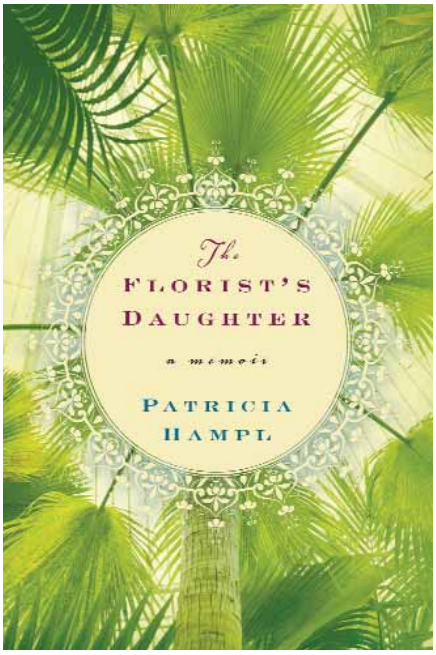
The Florist's Daughter

A Memoir

By Patricia Hampl

Harcourt. 240p $24

ISBN 9780151012572



As its title suggests, *The Florist's Daughter*, the fifth memoir by Patricia Hampl, centers on her own life. In her earlier books, personal revelations were filtered through experiences of Prague, Assisi and the paintings of Matisse. But this is hardly a tell-all autobiography. Hampl is seeking to understand the forces behind her own life's trajectory, in particular her decision to stay a dutiful daughter in her native St. Paul, Minn., despite her early impulse to head out for the excitements of New York or Paris. She chooses to seek the answer by revisiting significant scenes from her family life, influenced by two remarkable and very different parents.

Holding her dying mother's hand, a yellow pad on her lap for the obituary she is composing, she recalls how desperately she used to want to get away from her native city of hardworking immigrants. Her mind keeps returning not to her own feelings but to memories of her parents' lives. Even in dying, this mother is unusual; she *wants* Patricia to be writing her obituary. She is such a fan of her daughter's writing that she saves even her refrigerator Post-its.

The daughter's mind travels in circles of memory that start with remembrances of her mother's own way with words. There were often sharp ones to doctors and those of whom she disapproved. Patricia took pride in her mother's "essential unfairness, throwing guilt like a girl, underhand."

But Mrs. Hampl was also a spellbinding storyteller who gave her daughter a peephole into the homes of the wealthy neighbors whose parties on Summit Avenue her husband decorated lavishly, providing flowers from the greenhouse he managed and later owned.

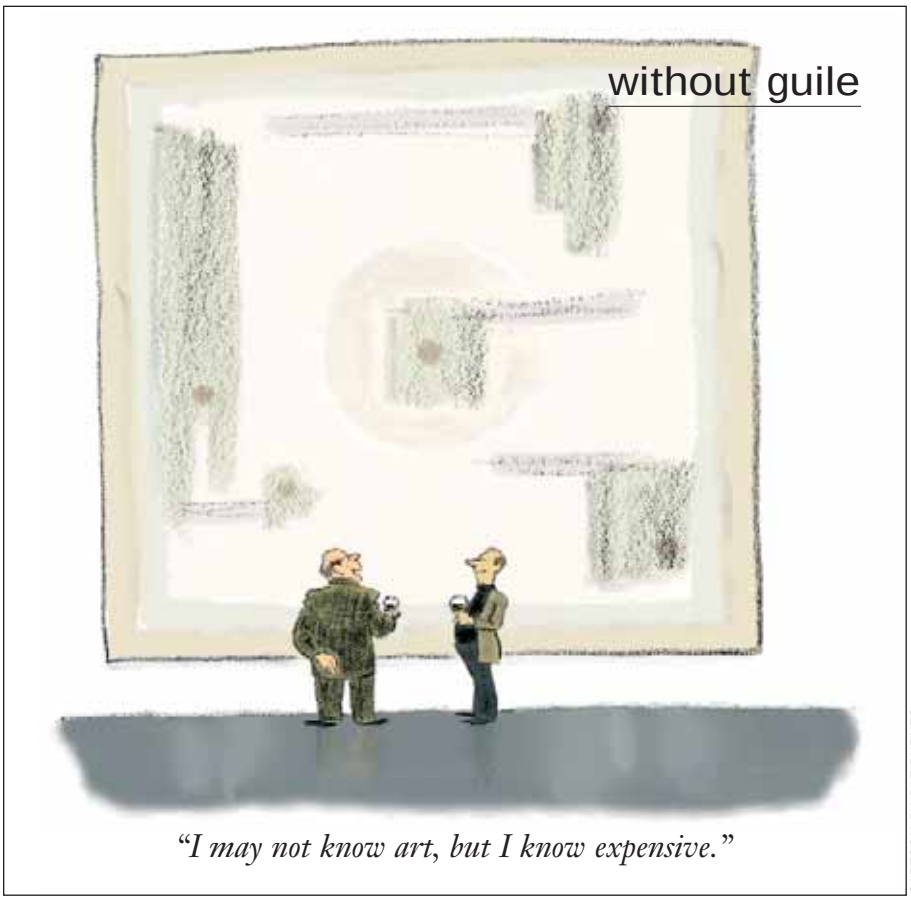
Her mother was always confident as she explained their secure middle-class status, and equally so when she implored St. Anthony to find anything, or counseled her son and daughter to "offer it up," whatever it was, because everything had a purpose. She was a woman of the world, both in her knowledge of it and in her smoking and drinking, the source of problems in later years.

Her silent father, a worker, not a talker, posed a striking contrast. Hampl admired his skill and high standards as a florist, one who wanted people to see the difference between hand-carved and mass-produced crèches. An instinctive flower arranger, he was a true artist. Tall and handsome, he was greatly admired by the women whose celebrations he beautified with floral settings, and he in turn approved of their grandeur and taste for decoration. Her mother had her own opinions and thought him naïve.

Her father's greenhouse in the flatland near the river where the Italians and Czechs lived was clearly an important place in Patricia's young life. Later she worked in his florist shop in the upscale shopping district. Her Czech aunts would swap recipes while her Irish-American mother was reading, creating a certain mutual mistrust, especially when the family moved higher up the hill, nearer Summit Avenue.

The city itself was as much an influence on Hampl's life as the two sides of her family, and they merge. We learn how different Catholic-immigrant St. Paul was from Lutheran-Scandinavian Minneapolis. When a flood destroys the Italian section of the flatlands, father and daughter take a dangerous car ride through the muddy area, one of many such trips the two take to small decaying villages north of the city. Studying her father, she realizes that he is taking mental photographs of his world even as it is disappearing. He is a silent artist, his own audience.

One of his few inner revelations is made much later as she drives him, a sick man, to his regular sessions at the heart doctor. Almost accidentally he confesses



"I may not know art, but I know expensive."

CARTOON BY PAT BYRNES

that he had looked forward to the peace of being alone. Her mother had become too much to handle after numerous diseases, accidents and operations, which finally affected her mind and left her blind. When on this visit the doctor says he can get him into a hospice, Stan Hampl replies that he would rather buy a Buick. He and Patricia buy a gold one that day. Six months later he dies.

Hampl is never sentimental; she spares neither negatives nor painful self-revelations, speaking to us as if in intimate conversation. It is amazing how absorbing and amusing she makes this memoir, when so much of it deals with her care for her declining parents. Only at the end of her mother's life does her daughter discover that her mother had always wanted to be a writer herself. And she is now aware that the urge to go to where things are happening, to New York and Paris, was a youthful illusion. Everything one seeks will find you out—"danger, beauty, trouble enough, will come of its own accord…. Elsewhere, it turns out, is right here."

It takes a wise woman to see her own shaping in the closely observed details of her "ordinary" parents' lives. It takes a writer who can produce vivid metaphors, lively dialogue and sharp visual descriptions to make such material not only absorbing but entertaining.

Sally Cunneen

Body and Soul

Prescribing Faith

Medicine, Media and Religion in American Culture

By Claire Hoertz Badaracco
Baylor Univ.Press. 238p $29.25
ISBN 9781932792898

A media professor at Marquette University, Claire Hoertz Badaracco has already provided a valuable study of the interaction of media and religion in the collection of essays she edited in 2005, *Quoting God: How Media Shape Ideas About Religion and Culture*. She now adds the medical profession to the mix in her latest book, *Prescribing Faith: Medicine, Media and Religion in American Culture*. Each of the book's five chapters takes a different approach in observing the interaction among these three major elements of American society; the very diversity of the approaches, however, makes it difficult for Badaracco to arrive at any comprehensive theme. Meanwhile, the brevity of each chapter prevents the sort of detailed documentation or analysis that each topic deserves.

Chapter 1 offers some historical perspective in its account of the pattern of "heroic cures" and the exhortations toward religious acceptance of one's illnesses and their accompanying pain (especially in women's cases) in mid-19th-century America. ("Heroic cures" included massive doses of mercury and/or arsenic.) At the same time, homeopathic medicine, with its faith in herbs and folk medicine, experimental use of hydrotherapy, hypnotism, mesmerism and other medical advice that could only be called quackery, offered alternatives to the mainstream medical treatments of the time.

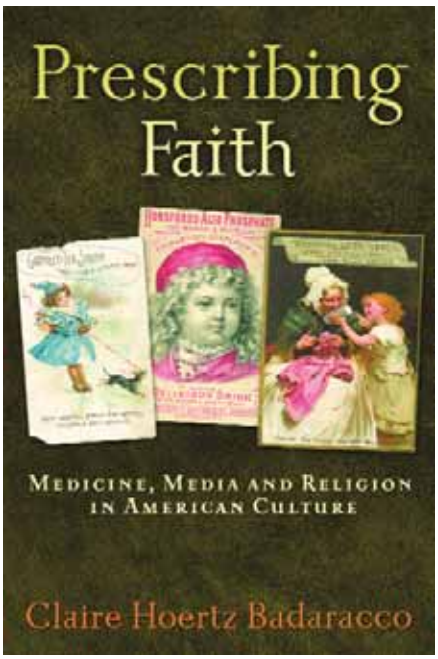
Chapter 2 chronicles the career of Mary Baker Eddy and the rise of the religion of Christian Science. Badaracco's account places Dr. Eddy firmly within the current of 19th-century alternative approaches to healing, describing her pop-

ularity and the controversies that surrounded her. For the larger purposes of the book, one wishes that the author had provided a fuller explanation of Eddy's specific theories about the healing power of faith.

Chapter 3 investigates various instances of research on the effectiveness of prayer in the healing of patients suffering from cancer, heart disease and other serious illnesses, concluding that there has not been any firm evidence of healing through prayer.

Chapter 4 concentrates on the influence of religion on the reduction of the stress that leads to severe medical conditions. Badaracco's survey of many alternative medical practitioners provides much more evidence of the healthful influence of spirituality but offers little insight beyond what has already been given in Herbert Benson and Miriam Klipper's *The Relaxation Response*, whose research is often mentioned in the chapter.

Chapter 5 attempts to expose the phenomenon of "disease mongering" practiced by the pharmaceutical industry in collusion with media advertising and the medical profession. Religion receives little attention in this chapter, however, and Badaracco's analysis wavers from blaming media advertising for encouraging fear and anxiety over imaginary medical conditions to asserting that such media claims have created an atmosphere of distrust of medical science, driving the public further to seek healing from alternative (and even religious) medicines and therapies.



Prescribing Faith suffers from the author's tendency to generalize on many issues while providing little supporting evidence. Badaracco refers, for instance, to "a raft of best-selling self-help advice books by physicians" and the "abundance of medical advice books" that "have reached global audiences from best seller lists," but she never offers specific examples of such current literature or a summary of their messages. Likewise, when she states that "today, the issue of guilt and blame in medicine, and the industry in popular books about self-help and self-care that equate virtuous living with good health, is as robust as it was" in the 19th century, a footnote or two would help substantiate such a strong claim. Some documentation would also enhance her example of the "hysteria induced by widespread press coverage...during the 1990s" of news about the use of mercury in dental fillings or reports of "the recalls of toxic pharmaceutical prescriptions that routinely fill the headlines." What hysteria? What widespread press coverage? What routine headlines? No citations are provided.

More precise documentation is need-

ed particularly to support Badaracco's references to "the abundance of research data that correlates [sic] religious habits and health" or her statement that "more scientists today agree that healing can indeed be achieved through belief." These particular claims seem especially shaky coming at the end of a chapter that described, in admirable detail, the diverse and even opposing conclusions derived from experiments on the curative effect of prayer on hospital patients.

The pursuit of such a broad topic is bound to wander off in various directions, and one is left wondering whether this book is an attempt at historic contextualization, a report on current experimentation or an exposé of the conflicts of interest in the medical profession and the media. One almost wishes for three distinct books. In the meantime, Badaracco's eclectic study provides a good assortment of anecdotal information on the myriad connections between faith and medicine. This reader, for one, is grateful for Badaracco's account of the 19th-century best selling author Dr. James Ewell and his praise of the medical effects of the "heart-gladdening religion of Christ." What a healthy religion he seems to have practiced.

Michael Tueth

Become the Change We Seek!

Taking Action, Saving Lives

Our Duties to Protect Environmental and Public Health

By Kristin Shrader-Frechette
Oxford Univ. Press. 320p $29.95
ISBN 9780195325461

With books and documentary films on environmental degradation appearing at a fast pace, what particular niche does *Taking Action, Saving Lives*, designed to reach a broad audience, fill? Shrader-Frechette, O'Neill Family Professor of Philosophy and professor of biological sciences at the University of Notre Dame and member of the E.P.A. Science Advisory Board, has written extensively on public health and environmental ethics. As the title of her new book makes clear, *Taking Action* is a call for all citizens to take part in reducing the harms from pollution-related causes—harms that are far more dangerous and deadly than most citizens realize.

While not slipping in absolute terms, life expectancy in the U.S. relative to other countries—according to a recent study published in The Washington Post—has declined from 11th to 42nd in the past two decades. Shrader-Frechette insists that public health in the U.S. can improve if ordinary people recognize the serious and increasing risks that they and their children face from pollution. Any pollution-related deaths, she argues, are too many in our rich nation, "if they are easily preventable, deliberate or criminal, occurring because of violations of human rights to know and to consent, or imposed inequitably on vulnerable groups like children."

The author is influenced by the late political theorist Iris Marion Young, who

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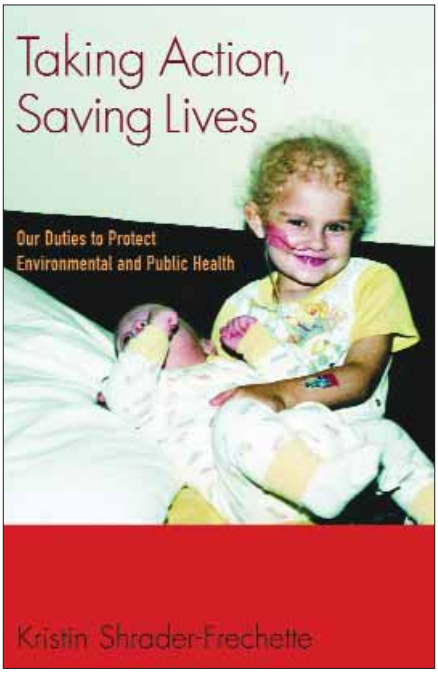
argued (in *Justice and the Politics of Difference*) that it was inappropriate to reduce social justice to issues of allocation and distribution of goods (or harms). To eliminate institutional domination and oppression, he wrote, justice must also include "action, decisions about action, and provision of the means to develop and exercise capacities."

Each chapter begins with a story of an ordinary citizen without unusual resources who nevertheless manages to make a difference. As Shrader-Frechette intends, these stories draw readers into her project and serve as inspiring examples of responsible citizenship. She urges readers to become the change they seek.

Although trained as a political theorist, I was not certain that lay readers outside an academic setting would read patiently through the arguments and counter-arguments that follow as Shrader-Frechette tries to reason through her case: citizens participate in environmental injustice and receive benefits from government and corporate actions that cause harm, and they therefore have obligations to understand their complicity,



inform themselves about the facts and try to end the harms. If an academic found some parts of these chapters, however important, tedious to read (e.g., "Human Rights and Duties Not to Harm"), will Shrader-Frechette's intended audience stay with her?

Also, since the author herself has recourse to Plato's *Republic*, I ask one of the central questions it poses: can most people be persuaded through reasoned argument that justice is in their self-interest?

Shrader-Frechette understands that reason alone will not inspire most people to action, though she relies heavily upon it. In addition to the inspiring stories of activists and action that mattered, she also repeatedly emphasizes small gains and incremental change, alongside many examples of actions that can contribute constructively. These certainly help readers grapple with ways in which they might fulfill their duties and obligations. Parts of the book, including proposals for reform, read like an apologia for the American Public Health Association. In the final chapter, "Where We Go From Here," there are no fewer than 50 references to A.P.H.A. recommendations. A reader might be excused for thinking A.P.H.A. subsidized the project. But focusing on these concrete reform proposals already before the public does help create a sense of the possible.

John Stuart Mill believed that citizens in a democracy would increasingly come to associate their own happiness with the happiness of others. One way this would happen is through vigorous interplay of ideas and opinions in a liberal society. Shrader-Frechette is a believer, arguing that citizens must expose themselves continually to ideas and opinions contrary to their own and avoid ideological ruts (thus she champions activists who are sometimes pilloried for not being readily classifiable as left or right). But she also takes a page from Jane Addams and the pragmatists who argued that citizens come to identify with the problems and perspectives of others only through interaction with them. The responsibility argument, she contends, "requires empathy, education, interaction, and sustained, self-critical reflection." Volunteer work and a proposed period of national service are means to such identification.

Despite the work by Robert Putnam and others exploring and analyzing causes of the decline in civic engagement in America, Shrader-Frechette is committed to the citizen activist who gathers information; who works to cut through corporate, media and government disinformation efforts; and who keeps an open mind even while acting. Since time, knowledge and other resources are not evenly distributed, citizens with more resources have a duty to try to persuade others in their communities to avoid harm (and it is easier, the author argues, to find agreement on reducing the harm we cause than it is on doing good). Shrader-Frechette seems to believe a little too readily that information-gathering provides clear answers about harm and risk.

It would have been interesting to have some engagement with Jason Corburn's *Street Science*, a book that specifically looks at the roles community members can play in environmental health justice issues, and with Sheila Jasanoff's work on the limited role that science can reasonably play in public policy decisions as Shrader-Frechette works to strengthen the case for citizens as vital players in public health and environmental decision-making and accountability.

Taking Action, Saving Lives also includes 70 pages of rich endnotes and an index. Shrader-Frechette's work is both important and ambitious, and it deserves to be read and implemented.

Carol Nackenoff

'Dramatic Confrontations' Unveiled

Vatican II

A Sociological Analysis of Religious Change

By Melissa J. Wilde

Princeton Univ. Press. 224p $35
ISBN 9780691118291

This book is sure to garner much attention from professional sociologists of religion and, probably, historians of the Second Vatican Council as well. In fact, a blue-ribbon panel already responded and critiqued Melissa Wilde's volume at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion in 2007. *Vatican II* is

a historical treasure trove. It breaks new ground in dealing with theories of religious change in institutions, and it answers some key questions about the dynamics of the council.

Wilde, an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, deftly draws on pre-existing interviews with more than 80 of the most important bishops and theological experts who were advisers at the council. She independently mined six important archives and delved into the Vatican's secret archive to retrieve every vote of the bishops at the council. She has read extensively the secondary historical literature on the council. From this material, Wilde focuses primarily on three test cases for the strength of the progressives versus the conservatives at the council: the document on religious liberty, the decision not to have a special schema devoted to Mary but to enfold it in the document on the church and the failure of the council to say anything about birth control.

The dominant, so-called "new paradigm" in sociology of religion (associated strongly with the sociologists Rodney Stark, Roger Finke and Stephen Warner) stresses a "supply side" theory of religion. It argues that religious diversity increases religious participation and innovation and draws almost exclusively on three key factors: religious regulation by the state, the extent of religious pluralism and a denomination's market share.

Wilde's study pokes serious holes in this regnant paradigm by insisting that sometimes, even in competitive religious markets, stable religious organizations do not so much compete with alternative religious groups as seek to stabilize the market, control competition and ensure "legitimacy." Wilde wants us to see that internal organization counts. She attacks the crassness of the supply-siders' metaphor of "religious markets" by insisting that we look more generally at organizational fields. She also argues, against the supply-siders, that culture matters. Wilde uses the literature from social mobilization theory to cast an illuminating sociological light on Vatican Council II.

Wilde's key questions are the following: 1) How was it possible, given the conservatives' initial legitimacy, resources and control over the council's agenda, that the progressives eventually won? Clearly, resources matter but are not entirely determinative. And 2) How did an internally diverse and conflicting group of episcopal interests allow the progressives to build a winning coalition on the key ecumenical questions? Wilde assesses four different groups of bishops, each reflecting its national or regional location.

One group of bishops, from countries where Catholic market share was stable and the church enjoyed a near monopoly (e.g., Italy, Spain, Portugal, Ireland), steadfastly resisted the conciliar changes in the direction of collegiality and ecumenism.

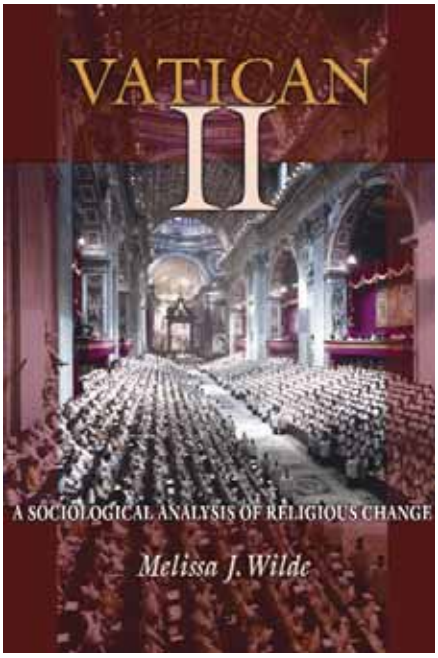
A second group, again where Catholic market share was stable but where the church existed in a pluralist religious market (e.g., France, England, Germany, the United States, Canada and elsewhere), put strong priority on ecumenism to anchor legitimacy for Catholicism in a pluralist society.

A third important group, from Latin America, historically had near monopoly of market share but was experiencing slippage, which it perceived as a threat and crisis. Its priority at the council lay with issues of economic justice and finding

ways to reach the poor and unchurched. Latin Americans were quite mixed on their votes on issues of ecumenism but ultimately became a crucial factor in the progressive coalition.

A final group, from missionary countries, shared the North Atlantic bishops' concern for ecumenism and religious liberty and the Latin American bishops' stress on justice for the poor.

Key to the book is a careful reconstruction of two protagonist groups' strategies. The progressive coalition, spearheaded by a "ginger group" that met weekly for strategy sessions at the Domus Mariae, served as a conduit for information across the emerging episcopal conferences and proposed ways to reach compromise on documents. A conservative, even reactionary group, Coetus Internationalis Patrum, mobilized only after the second session, displayed weaknesses on the conservative flank and proved ineffective in organizing and coalescing even its own potential "sentiment pool." Because it rejected collegiality, it could not use the effective strategy of working through episcopal conferences at



the council.

Most sociological studies of Vatican II focus more on its reception; few have tackled explanations of its inner dynamics. Historians might find fault with some of the details in Wilde's overemphasis on bishops as the agents of change (to the neglect of some key actions by theological advisers—one thinks of the crucial role of John Courtney Murray, S.J., and Pietro Pavan in overcoming French episcopal objections to what became the "Declaration on Religious Liberty"); about neglect of attention to the action during inter-sessions when the bishops went back home and reacted with—at least in some settings—a mobilized Catholic public; and about the rhythm of the organizational strategies of the progressives (who tended to let down their guard at the end of the council in focusing on any concerted postconciliar process of organizing against the conservative rebirth.

Very few sociological studies rival Wilde's big-picture analysis of huge institutional religious change. Though *Vatican II* is theory-laden, Wilde writes in an accessible and jargon-free fashion to help us see what was at stake and how good organization makes a difference. If I were preparing for an eventual Vatican III, I would find this book an indispensable strategy manual for operations.

John A. Coleman

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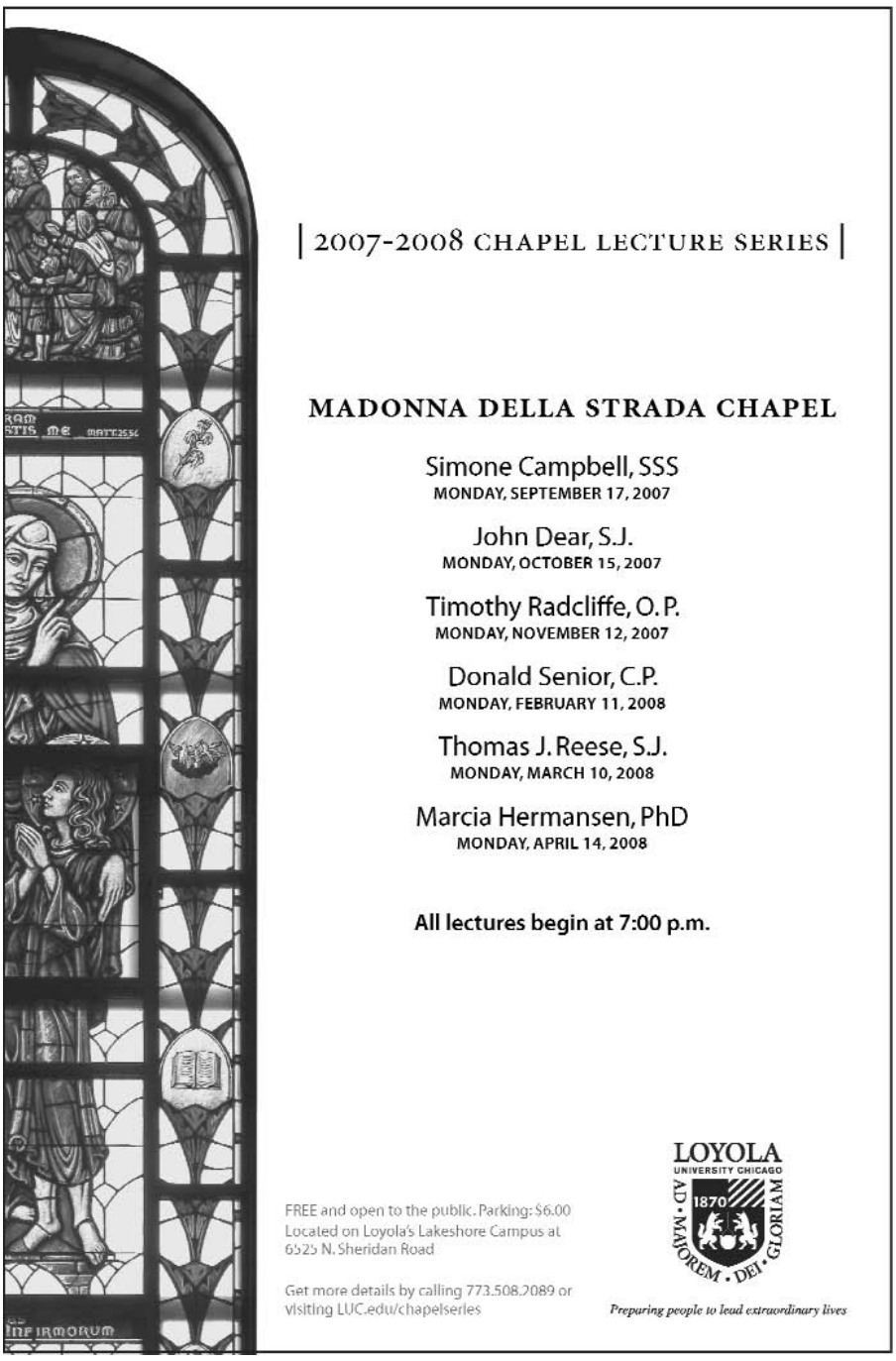

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Letters

Clarifying the Council

In "The Church of Christ and the Churches" (8/27), Richard Gaillardetz correctly summarizes the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as teaching that the church of Christ continues to exist fully in the Catholic Church, and only incompletely in other churches and ecclesial communities. But he seems not to agree that "there is only one subsistence of the church of Christ—the Catholic Church." His article gives the impression that *subsistit in* was introduced to weaken the statement in a previous draft that the Catholic Church is the church of Christ.

But he omits a crucial intermediate draft, which stated simply that the church of Christ is present (*adest*) in the Catholic Church.

The doctrinal commission, rejecting *adest*, wanted to safeguard the doctrine that Christ's church is completely present in the Catholic Church and nowhere else. Such was the well-known position of Sebastian Tromp, S.J., who proposed the term *subsistit in*. He and the members of the doctrinal Commission were well aware that the verb *subsist* in classical metaphysics meant full and substantial existence. The C.D.F. is therefore correct in its interpretation of the term.

Mr. Gaillardetz also assures his readers that "the council was content to confine its reflections to the objective 'institutional integrity' of the church." I do not know the basis for that interpretation. Far from being concerned only with "means of sanctification," the council insisted that the church is a spiritual community vivified by the Holy Spirit, and that only the Catholic Church is in full communion with the body of Christ. To be out of communion, even partially, is no small matter.

(Cardinal) Avery Dulles, S.J.
Bronx, N.Y.

Fraternal Dialogue

My gratitude to **America** and to Richard Gaillardetz for the article "The Church of Christ and the Churches" (8/27). Right on the mark is his distinction between "institutional integrity" and "ecclesial vitality" and his suggestion that such a distinction is an antidote for "Catholic triumphalism" and a vehicle for more fruitful fraternal dialogue among those whose different Christian communities want to continue to work for that Christian unity for which Jesus prayed.

Lucien Longtin, S.J.
Wernersville, Pa.

Sufficient Qualification

"A Partner for the Pastor," by Thomas P. Sweetser, S.J., (7/30) presented a pastor-administrator model of parish leadership. Father Sweetster described the effective administrator as one equipped with pastoral as well as administrative skills. Could I suggest that such an administrator should be certifiable as a lay ecclesial minister as envisaged in the U.S. bishops' document *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*? They should have appropriate theological, pastoral, human and spiritual formation. It is unfair to ask parish ministers to report to someone who lacks this formation. As a catechetical leader, I have experienced situations—I fear they are not uncommon—in which parishes operated according to a dualistic "brick and holy" distinction, where an administrator dealt with the "brick" and the pastor dealt with the "holy." Professional issues were invariably deemed to fall under "brick" rather than "holy"—as though ministry and all that we do is not "holy." Theological, ecclesiological, pastoral and ethical issues permeate all aspects of parish life. For example, a staff member who makes a prophetic but unpopular stance based on Catholic social teaching may be the subject of complaints that raise issues outside the scope of a knowledge of human resources. Indeed, an appreciation of Catholic social teaching on labor would seem essential to the role of parish administrator. Likewise, the parish budget is a moral document. Force of personality, friendship with the pastor and a corporate background are not sufficient qualification. I respectfully submit that a parish administrator should be experienced in parish ministry and formally trained as a lay ecclesial minister or else we sell parish ministry short. I am grateful that my parish currently has such an administrator. After all, the business of the parish is ministry.

Alan MacGiola
Atlanta, Ga.

Carry a Dictionary

I have been following with interest the responses to Bishop Donald W. Trautman's earlier comments on the latest attempts at translations from the New Roman missal (5/21). The letter from Msgr. Bruce Edward Harbert (7/16) seems to miss the point totally. The prayers used at our Masses in the United States should mean something to those in our congregations listening to them. Msgr. Harbert's work at ICEL seems to revolve around the translations of modern prayers written in Latin. He is not translating Scripture—so why all the effort to fuss over remote language, theological questions, difficult texts? If the translation cannot be made comprehensible to the average American in the pew, forget work on translation and write new prayers in contemporary American English.

People in the congregation are not theologians and do not use language of this sophistication in daily life. Trust me, no one in the parishes upon whom this work will be foisted will carry a dictionary to decipher the differences between "prefiguring," "indescribable," "ineffable" and "inviolate." Language is for communication. If English is used that cannot be understood, you may just as well use the original Latin.

What we hear in this translation will simply be inexplicable and incomprehensible. Jesus taught in simple-to-understand parables and used simple language for prayer ("Our Father in heaven..."). The ICEL members are engaging in language Pharisaism and sophistry. Eucharistic celebrations around the Lord's table are not the opportunity to provide deep theological commentary on topics such as the implications of a virgin birth.

Joan R. Koechler
Brewster, Mass.

Pastoral Process

Regarding "A Great Mystery" (Current Comment, 7/16), I offer the following.

Although now retired, I have had the opportunity in two dioceses to work with marriage tribunals, and from that experience I can truthfully say that not only "many Catholics" but many priests find the annulment process not only difficult

to understand but a travesty of ordinary justice. I cite the convolutions of the Petrine and Pauline privileges as examples of this claim. Moreover, the *sensus fidelium* about this juridical process is probably right on the money and should gain a greater hearing in revisiting procedural norms for an updated and less harmful process.

If we truly believe what we teach about sacramental marriage—namely, that the man and woman contracting a sacramental marriage are the ministers of that sacrament—then perhaps we should allow the ministers themselves to take responsibility for the sacramentality of their Christian marriage and determine before God the validity, or better yet the authenticity, of the sacrament they have "confected" together.

Such a process would simply substitute the human judgment of the couple for that of the supposed "objective" human judgment of the priest, who more than likely is devoid of any experience about the intimacy of a marriage relationship or its attending difficulties.

Explanation of today's process is not needed, but rather another more pastoral process that does not alienate the faith of our people. We made up the current process; surely we can invent another.

(Rev.) Joseph Sanches
Nashville, Tenn.

The Ursuline Tradition

As a longtime subscriber to **America**—one sometimes not so thrilled with some of its articles—I was delighted to read "Giving Back" (9/10), the interview by Jim McDermott, S.J., with Jane Martinez Dowling regarding her plans and hopes for the Academy of Mt. St. Ursula in the Bronx, N.Y. If she is going to try to create a "Regis for Girls" up there on Bedford Park Blvd., then I say (as a graduate of M.S.U. elementary and high schools), hooray for her! The education I received at that wonderful school has stood me in great stead throughout my life, and my oldest and truest friends are from that school. Ms. Dowling is continuing the wonderful work of the Ursulines since the day they were founded by St. Angela Merici—the education of young girls and women. The hand that rocks the cradle does indeed rock the world, and the "educated" hand rocks it that much better. Thank you, Father McDermott, for this interview and **America** for publishing it.

Patricia S. Paone
Manhasset, N.Y.

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Two Dimensions of Faith

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (C), Oct. 7, 2007

Readings: Hab 1:2-3 and 2:2-4; Ps 95:1-2, 6-9; 2 Tim 1:6-8, 13-14; Lk 17:5-10

"And the apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith'" (Lk 17:5)

ART BY TAD DUNNE

PERHAPS THE MOST OBVIOUS component of Christian spirituality is faith. In general, the virtue of faith refers to considering something to be true and therefore worthy of trust. In the Christian tradition faith is a theological virtue because it has its origin and object in God. We believe and trust in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Christian virtue of faith has both subjective and objective dimensions.

When the apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith, they were most likely asking not for a primitive version of the Apostles' Creed but rather for deeper trust in God and in Jesus their teacher. The kind of faith they (and we) needed most was faith like that of Abraham, who according to Genesis 12 set out on his journey to the promised land with little knowledge of what lay ahead of him. He did so with trust and fidelity that somehow God would be faithful to him and show him the way in accord with God's own promise.

The Old Testament readings can help us grasp the subjective dimension of biblical faith. The prophet Habakkuk, on the eve of the Babylonian invasion and the eventual destruction of Jerusalem, is reassured that "the just man, because of his faith, shall live." While Paul takes this reference to faith objectively (see Rom 1:16-17), the prophet and his audience surely took it subjectively, as a promise that those who remained faithful to Yahweh would survive the coming onslaught. Psalm 95 traces the exodus generation's failure to enter God's "rest" (for them the promised land) to their lack of trust in God. The author of Hebrews (see 3:19) also characterizes it as "lack of faith."

In the context of Luke's Gospel, the apostles' request (for an increase of faith) and Jesus' response come toward the end of the long journey narrative. Along the way Jesus has been instructing them (and us) about the kingdom of God and about himself and what it means to follow him. The demands on the disciples (and us) are building up. In the immediate context (17:1-4) the disciples are warned against giving scandal and causing others to stumble spiritually, and are urged to correct those who sin and to be willing to forgive them repeatedly. To carry out all these demands they (and we) recognize the need for even greater faith than that which first led them to follow Jesus. In reply Jesus offers a short parable about the extraordinary power of even a little genuine faith (like a mustard seed).

Praying With Scripture

- Can you recall moments in your life when faith meant trusting God?
- How would you summarize the basic content of Christian faith?
- What lessons do you draw from the master-servant parable?

The line between the subjective and objective dimensions of faith is admittedly fuzzy. But the pastoral epistles (of which 2 Timothy is one) tend to stress the objective aspect, that is, the content of faith. To them we owe the image of the "deposit of faith" and many brief summary statements describing what Christ has done for us, especially in his death and resurrection.

In the narrative framework of 2 Timothy, Paul as the wise and experienced apostle now in prison for his service to the Gospel, instructs his younger friend and co-worker about how to carry on their work. He gives particular attention to the deposit of faith ("this rich trust"), that is, the Gospel that Paul had received and preached. The basic content of this Gospel is that in Jesus, God was present in a special and definitive way; that through his life, death and resurrection God has made available to all humans the possibility of right relationship with God (justification); and that through the Holy Spirit we live in the hope of fullness of life in God's kingdom. The church's task is to guard and hand on this deposit of faith with the help of the Holy Spirit. But the Gospel also demands a positive response from us (the subjective dimension of faith) and needs human beings who embody and exemplify it. We bear witness to the objective dimension of faith every time we recite together our traditional profession of faith as an accurate representation of what Christians have believed and still do many centuries later.

In case the apostles (and we) might imagine that they were doing something heroic, Jesus tells a parable about a master and a servant. There are many such parables in Luke's Gospel, and it is obvious that God is the master and we are the servants. In this parable, however, we are invited to identify with the master. Suppose you hired someone to paint your house or mow your lawn. Would you be expected to serve them dinner or be effusive in your thanks? No, because they were doing only what they had agreed to do and for which they were being rewarded. From this parable Jesus draws the conclusion, "When you have done all you have been commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obliged to do.'" The parable is a lesson in theological humility. As followers of Jesus, we are God's servants.

Daniel J. Harrington

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