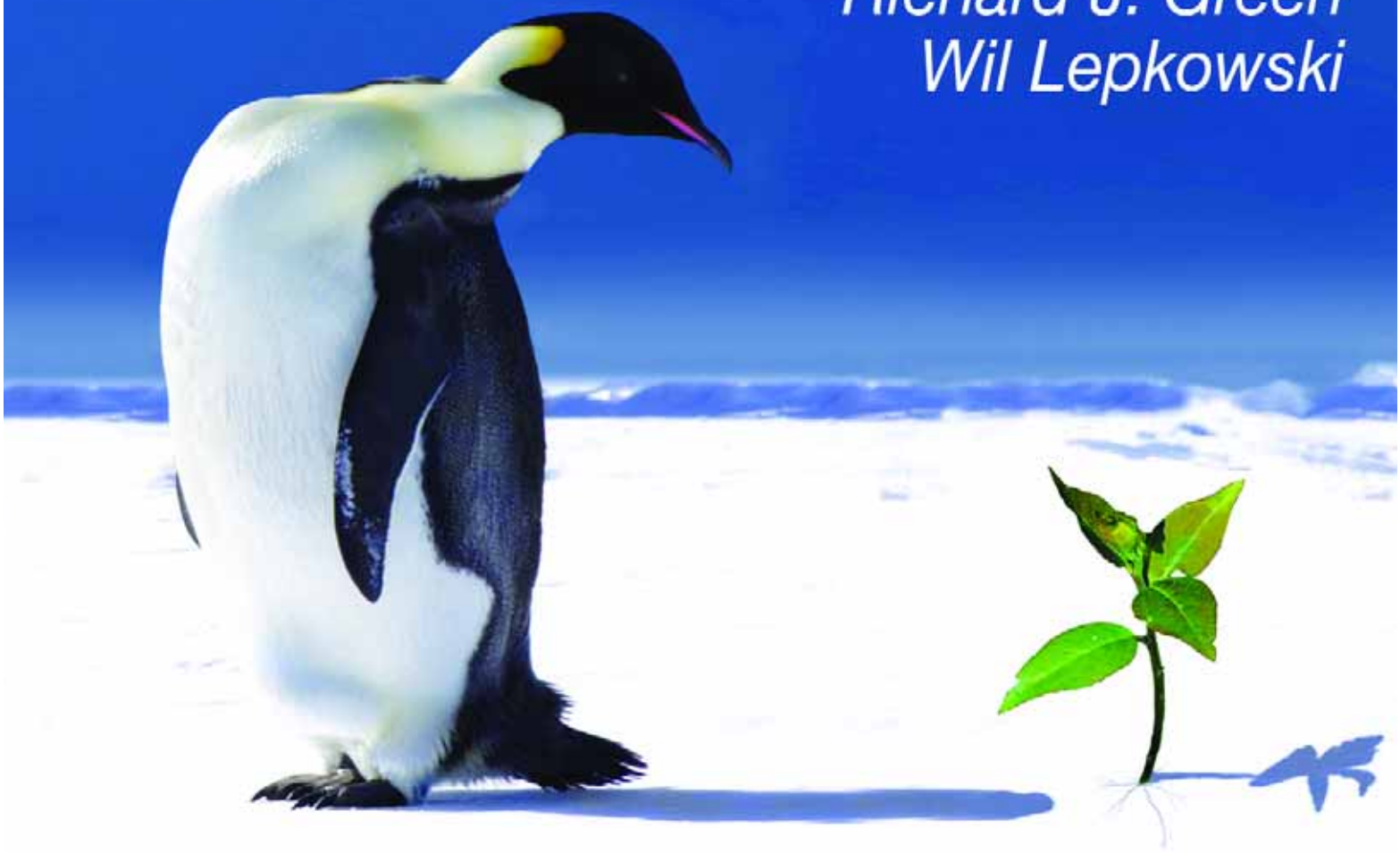
America

March 31 - April 7, 2008 THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY $2.75

Global Warming and Energy Policy

Richard J. Green
Wil Lepkowski



Modernism and the Death of a Magazine

Thomas J. Shelley

Books on the Bible

Daniel J. Harrington

Of Many Things

WHILE WANDERING around the Roman Colosseum many years ago as a college student, I happened across an unexpected sight among the tourists and the cats: a plaque bearing the name of Pope Benedict XIV. My Latin wasn't the best, but I was eventually able to muddle through a thicket of abbreviations and ablative absolutes to determine that Benedict had dedicated the Colosseum in the middle of the 18th century to the early Christian martyrs. A monument most of us would associate with the glory days of the Roman Empire (and some of its worst excesses) was also officially recognized by Christians as a hallowed shrine.

Though historians have found no conclusive evidence that any Christians actually faced martyrdom in the Colosseum itself as part of the cruel amusements of ancient Rome, Benedict's dedication was certainly part of a long Catholic tradition of sanctifying public and pagan structures for the edification and service of the faithful. I found an even more striking example of the phenomenon a few days later in Assisi, where I walked into an ancient Roman temple to Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom, that had been rededicated to Our Lady and was still in use as a Catholic church: Santa Maria sopra Minerva.

When another Pope Benedict steps onto American shores in mid-April, thousands of the American Catholic faithful will also pour into ostensibly secular structures that they will then use for religious purposes. Benedict XVI's visit will include huge outdoor Masses at Nationals Park, the new stadium of the Washington Nationals baseball team in Washington, D.C., and at Yankee Stadium in New York City a few days later.

Ever since Paul VI said Mass in Yankee Stadium in 1965, papal visits to the United States have featured these huge outdoor celebrations. One such Mass during a visit by John Paul II in 1987 was held at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, Ariz., presenting event organizers with a terrible conundrum: should images of Sparky, the smirking, pitchfork-wielding red devil of a mascot whose visage could be found everywhere in the stadium, be covered up out of respect for the pope? They decided in the affirmative, leading one to think that for at least a day the structure became Giovanni Paolo sopra Scintilla.

Washington's Nationals Park is barely out of the wrapping paper, it's so new—the first baseball game played there was on March 30, 2008—and the papal Mass will be one of the first memorable events held in the new stadium (unless there is anyone misguided enough to think the current Nationals lineup will ever be worth remembering). Like the Roman Colosseum 19 centuries ago, Nationals Park rises out of the dense urban neighborhoods of a capital city, and was built at enormous expense. It will hold fewer spectators (41,000 total capacity) than the Colosseum, though for the papal Mass additional seating will be put up on the playing field.

Yankee Stadium shares similar environs but has a far more venerable pedigree: it opened in 1923 and has been hosting baseball games (as well as football games, rock concerts and all the other entertainments of American culture) ever since. It has also hosted popes before, including Paul VI in 1965 and John Paul II in 1979. This year, however, is the final year for the House That Ruth Built. Attendees at the papal Mass on April 20 will see its mammoth successor rising literally across the street. The new Yankee Stadium is scheduled to open its doors in April 2009. It too is a project of enormous expense and will make the current stadium obsolete, despite its status as a temple to baseball history. Pope Benedict XVI's visit will be followed less than a year later by a visit from the wrecking ball. Romans may have tried to preserve their monuments over the centuries as a reminder of an empire's past glory, but here in the Empire State, property values trump historical ones.

Historical trivia will mean little, of course, to those who scored precious tickets to either the Washington or New York celebrations. Both Masses will demonstrate the power of the sacred to transform the mundane and the ability of faith to imbue even the most secular arena with holy meaning. At a newly born stadium in our nation's capital and a dying one in the world's capital, we welcome a visitor from the Eternal City.

James T. Keane, S.J.

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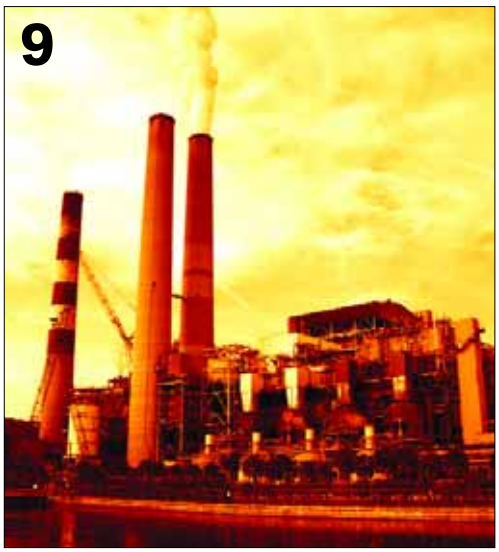
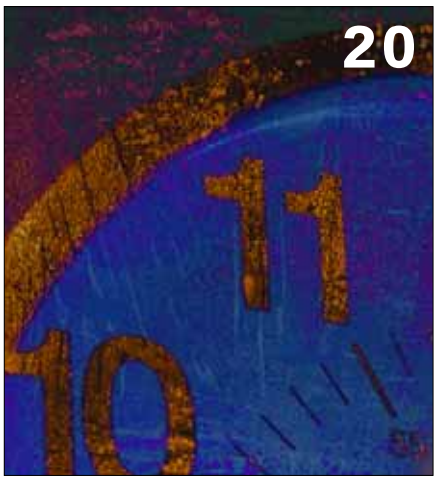


Articles



This week @ America Connects

Martin Doblmeier discusses his new film, "The Power of Forgiveness," and Matt Malone, S.J., reviews HBO's "John Adams." Plus, from the archives, Thomas J. Shelley on John Tracy Ellis. All at americamagazine.org.

The Trillion-Dollar War

From the beginning, the Bush administration has refused to give an accurate and responsible reckoning of the costs of the Iraq war. From underestimating budgets to requesting funding through special supplemental appropriations, to cutting taxes for the wealthy that resulted in financing the war through international borrowing, financial management of the war has been a case study in fiscal irresponsibility. With the cost of the war now close to a trillion dollars, the Nobel Prize-winner Joseph E. Stiglitz and Linda J. Bilmes of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government have written an eye-opening study on the deeply flawed economy of the war. *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict* (Norton) surveys the financial mismanagement and the various costs of the war (in budgetary choices, veterans' care and undermining of the economy) and recommends reforms for the future.

What would one trillion dollars buy? According to the authors, "A trillion dollars could have built 8 million additional housing units; could have hired some 15 million public school teachers for one year; could have paid for 120 million children to attend a year of Head Start; or insured 520 million children for healthcare for one year; or provided 45 million students with four-year scholarships to public universities."

The $3 trillion figure is an estimate of the full cost of the war, including the years after withdrawal, with support for veterans, rebuilding of the military and payment of the debt. To the authors' credit, most of the reforms they propose have to do with the compensation and care of Iraq war veterans. They propose, for example, doubling and tripling payments to National Guard and Reserve troops forced to do repeated combat tours and shifting the burden of proof from veterans to the government regarding eligibility for health care benefits.

Fallon's Vision

The unexpected resignation March 11 of Adm. William J. Fallon, commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East, after only a year in office raises renewed questions about the administration's intentions in the region. The admiral, reputed to be one of the military's outstanding strategic thinkers, is believed to have pressed for a more rapid transfer of troops from Iraq to Afghanistan and to have encouraged diplomacy over military threats in dealing with Iran. In a part of the world with "five or six pots boiling over," Admiral Fallon is reported to have said in a recent Esquire profile, "our nation can't afford to be mesmerized by one problem." That problem, of course, is Iraq. The White House has linked the president's legacy to at least the short-term success of the military surge there, even as conditions worsen in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The admiral also appears to have encountered an obstacle in the White House's special attachment to General David H. Petraeus, the commander in Iraq and technically the admiral's subordinate, who favors extending a sizable U.S. presence in Iraq, preventing a timely transfer of troops to the Afghan front. The Esquire writer Thomas P. M. Barnett did Admiral Fallon no favors by describing him as the one person whose opposition stood athwart the administration's march to war with Iran. As the admiral begins his retirement, responsible officers and military officials need to keep their eyes focused on his strategic vision: success in Afghanistan and the avoidance of war with Iran.

Funds for AIDS Relief

The U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have approved a bill that authorizes up to $50 billion for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, known as Pepfar, over the next five years. The reauthorization provides assistance to Africa and to additional countries in the Caribbean, South and Southeast Asia, and Central and Eastern Europe. The bill provides funds to combat tuberculosis and malaria in addition to AIDS. Money will also be used to train some 144,000 new health care workers to care for people infected with H.I.V.

Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, commented that "the new bill reflects a commitment to saving human lives as well as our solidarity with those suffering overseas. It is vital to preserve and expand proven life-saving programs, especially abstinence and fidelity education, while refusing to dilute and distort a successful AIDS relief program with family planning and 'reproductive health' activities."

Praise also came from Unaids in Geneva, which commended the United States for sending a strong signal that it is committed to maintaining its leadership role in the global response to AIDS. The House version of the bill is expected to reach the floor in early April. The Senate should also pass this bill in time for President Bush to point to this sign of the generous and compassionate nature of the American people at the Group of Eight industrialized nations summit meeting in Japan on July 7.

Medicaid Under Assault

MEDICAID, THE HEALTH INSURANCE program for poor people, is again under assault. Created in 1965 through Title XIX of the Social Security Act, it has been instrumental in providing low-income Americans with needed medical care for more than four decades, serving as a crucial component of the nation's safety net and sustaining some of the nation's most vulnerable citizens. Unlike Medicare, an entitlement program for people 65 and over which is funded entirely at the federal level, Medicaid is something of a stepchild in the federal budget. Although it too is an entitlement program, its cost is divided between the states and the federal government. The administration is now trying to shift more of the costs to the states, which are already struggling with a deeply weakened economy.

Over the past year, the Medicaid safety net has been fraying because of a series of federal regulations whose purpose is to reduce federal Medicaid spending by $15 billion over the next five years. As a consequence, important services for both adults and children are in jeopardy. Children with special needs would be especially affected. The regulations would, for example, eliminate therapeutic foster care. Through this valuable program, children with severe emotional problems are placed in private homes with specially trained foster parents. Judith Solomon, a senior fellow at the nonprofit and officially nonpartisan Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, has pointed out that therapeutic foster care has proven its worth in keeping youngsters with disorders out of psychiatric hospitals—an option that would involve far greater cost and would also jeopardize a child's chances for later being able to reside in the community. Ms. Solomon noted that the U.S. surgeon general, in a 1999 report, cited this type of now-threatened program as an example of a best practice.

Other regulations would remove Medicaid coverage for day habilitation. This type of program makes it possible for people with developmental disabilities, like retardation, to live in community-based settings rather than institutions. In the former they receive the kind of personalized assistance that maximizes their potential. Cuts in case management funds represent yet another area that the regulations would adversely affect—reducing the amount of time case managers can spend assisting people in need of housing and specialized services in preparation for semi-independent living in the community. The current policy allows 180 days for a caseworker to make the necessary arrangements, but under the new rules, the time frame would be reduced to 60 days. "By limiting the amount of time caseworkers can work with the individual," Ms. Solomon noted, "the outcome may be less successful." A similar rule would deny federal reimbursement for case management carried out by child welfare workers acting on behalf of children in foster care.

Further shortsightedness can be seen in the elimination of federal matching funds for programs aimed at parents who may be unaware of benefits for which their children could be eligible. The regulations would mandate that funds for these purposes be restricted if the assistance would be provided by school personnel. And yet the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has itself pointed out that school settings offer the best link for enrolling low-income youngsters in coverage for which they are eligible.

Another area affected would be Medicaid funds to cover some of the costs of graduate medical education for physicians, interns and residents in public hospitals. The administration claims that such uses lie outside the scope of Medicaid's purpose. In fact, payments for medical education have been authorized since the very inception of Medicaid, with both Democratic and Republican administrations supportive of this use of funds.

NOT ONLY HEALTH CARE ADVOCATES, but also the nation's governors of both parties deplored the proposed regulations at their February meeting in Washington, D.C. They predicted that shifting billions in costs to the states could force many states to cut back services to some of their poorest residents, thereby leaving still more low-income women, men and children without needed medical insurance at a time when a recession seems all but inevitable. Congress has at least imposed a moratorium on the implementation of some of the regulations until late spring. Instead of moratoriums, the better action would be to eliminate these regulations entirely. Ironically, they come at a time when the president is trying to make permanent his tax cuts for the richest Americans—a sad contrast between what the poor and the rich can expect from the present administration, expecially as an ill-advised war continues to cost the nation an estimated $10 billion a month. Congress should act while there is still time.

Founder of Focolare Movement Dies at 88

Chiara Lubich, the 88-year-old founder and perpetually smiling symbol of the Focolare movement, died early March 14 after what Pope Benedict XVI said was "a long and fruitful life" marked by her love for Jesus. Lubich died in her room near the Focolare headquarters in Rocca di Papa, south of Rome. In a telegram, Pope Benedict offered his condolences to her family, members of the Focolare movement and all those "who appreciated her constant commitment for communion in the church, for ecumenical dialogue and for brotherhood among all peoples." The pope also expressed his thanks to God "for the witness of her life spent in listening to the needs of contemporary people in full fidelity to the church and to the pope." Pope Benedict asked that all those who admired "the marvels that God worked through her" would follow in her footsteps, keeping her vision alive. Lubich's funeral was scheduled for March 18 at Rome's Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls with Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, S.D.B., the Vatican secretary of state, presiding.

Knights of Malta Elect New Grand Master

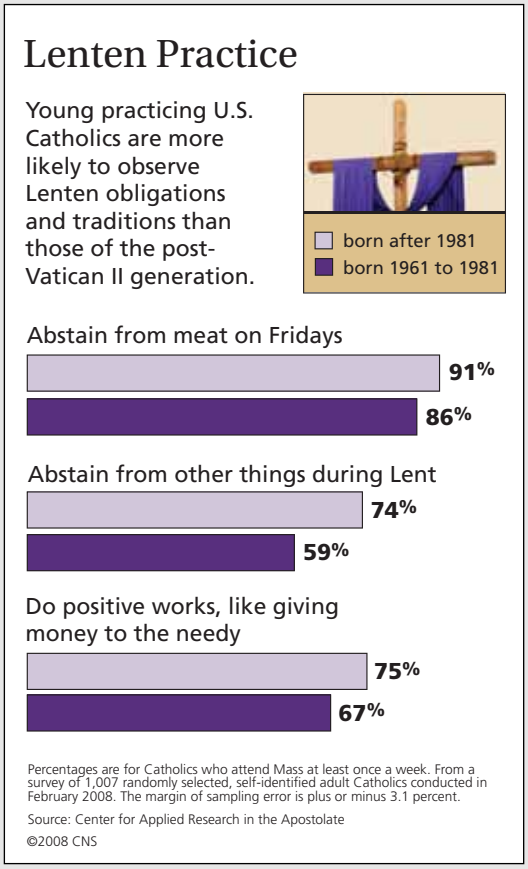
In a secret and swift election, the Knights of Malta elected an Englishman as their 79th grand master. Matthew Festing, who had been the Knights' grand prior of England, was chosen March 11 to replace Andrew W. N. Bertie, who died in February. Festing, 59, will head the world's oldest chivalric order, founded in the 11th century. Known officially as the Sovereign Military Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta, the organization was established to care for pilgrims during the Crusades. It lives on today as a lay Catholic religious order and a worldwide humanitarian network. The order is also a sovereign state, holding observer status at the United Nations and maintaining diplomatic relations with 100 countries. Festing, an expert in art and history, joined the Knights in 1977 and in 1991 became a "professed" knight, taking religious vows. He is a descendent of Blessed Adrian Fortescue, a Knight of Malta who was martyred in the 16th century.

Chaldean Bishop Decries Murder in Mosul

A Chaldean bishop said the United States must be held accountable for the death of Chaldean Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho of Mosul, Iraq. Bishop Ibrahim N. Ibrahim of the Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle, based in Southfield, Mich., said that the administration of U.S. President George W. Bush in particular is responsible for the terrorism and killing of Christians in Iraq. He said the administration is ignoring the problem. "No one is defending us," he said March 13, the day the archbishop's body was

CARA Surveys Catholic Lenten Practices

While a majority of U.S. Catholics say they abstain from meat on Fridays during Lent, slightly less than half follow other customary Lenten practices. Sixty percent said they do not eat meat on Fridays during Lent, but only 45 percent said they typically receive ashes on Ash Wednesday. A slightly smaller percentage, 44 percent, said that besides giving up something, they do something positive during Lent, like giving money to the needy or trying to be a better person. Only 38 percent said that besides meat on Fridays, they give up or abstain from something else during Lent. Stronger adherence to those Lenten practices was seen in 9 out of 10 Catholic adults who said they attend Mass at least weekly.



The findings, released March 11, come from a survey of 1,007 randomly selected, self-identified Catholics ages 18 or older conducted between Feb. 1-20 by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate in Washington, D.C. The survey had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

recovered after kidnappers revealed where they had buried him. "They are killing Christians because they are Christians." Bishop Ibrahim said the kidnapping on Feb. 29 and the subsequent death of the archbishop threw into question the destiny of Christians in Iraq. Three of the archbishop's companions were also killed.

First Catholic Church Opens in Qatar

The March 14 inauguration of the first Catholic church built in predominantly Muslim Qatar "is a sign of great hope for the church" in the region, said the new church's pastor, Tomasito Veneracion, a Filipino Capuchin priest who is the new pastor of Our Lady of the Rosary Church. He told Aid to the Church in Need that the construction and opening of the new church was a "historic event."

For decades, Christians in Qatar had to practice their faith in cramped garages, private homes and, most recently, in foreign schools and prefabricated halls. In April 2003 the government of this tiny Persian Gulf nation overwhelmingly approved a new constitution that guarantees freedom of expression, religion, assembly and association; and the status of local mission parishes went from being underground but tolerated to being legally recognized. Aid to the Church in Need is a Catholic organization that funds religious projects worldwide, including the construction of the church in Qatar.

Rabbi Expects Statement on Good Friday Prayer

Jewish leaders have been assured that the Vatican secretary of state will issue a statement in March saying that the pope's revised prayer for Good Friday for the Tridentine rite is not a call for Catholics to try to convert Jews. Rabbi David Rosen, chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, said March 13 that the statement would "allow the vast majority of Jews involved in dialogues with Catholics to re-engage as before." Representatives of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel had been scheduled to be in Rome March 9-12 for their regular dialogue with the Vatican. However, the rabbis asked for a clarification from the Vatican about the prayer and postponed their trip. Pope Benedict XVI's revision of the Good Friday prayer applies only to the liturgy celebrated according to the 1962 Roman Missal, the so-called Tridentine rite. The new prayer removed 1962 language referring to the "blindness" of the Jews, but it prays that Jews will recognize Jesus, the savior, and that "all Israel may be saved."

From CNS and other sources. CNS photos.

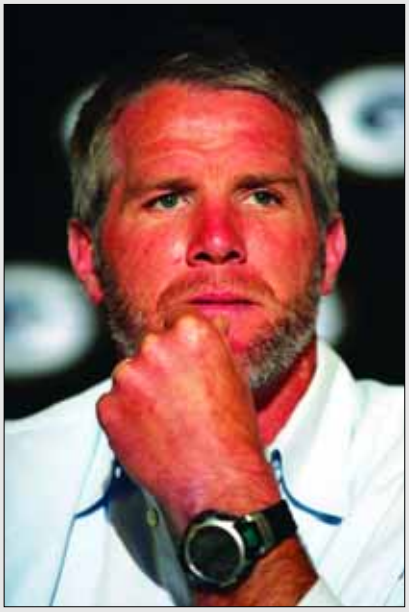
Sainthood Cause for McGivney Progresses

The sainthood cause of the founder of the Knights of Columbus has taken a major step forward. On March 15 Pope Benedict XVI approved a decree of "heroic virtues" for the Rev. Michael McGivney, a U.S. priest who, after establishing the Knights of Columbus, worked as a pastor until his death at age 38. Father McGivney can be beatified if a miracle is attributed to his intercession. Canonization, the declaration of sainthood, requires an additional miracle. Supporters of Father McGivney's cause are hoping he will be the first U.S.-born priest to be canonized. Father McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn., in 1882. The fraternal order of Catholic men has become the largest lay Catholic organization in the world, with more than 1.7 million members. It sponsors a wide range of educational, charitable and religious activities.

Retiring Patriarch Affirms Holy Land's Vocation

Michel Sabbah, the retiring Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, in a farewell pastoral letter March 1, declared that God "wanted to manifest himself [in the Holy Land] not just to one people, but to the whole of humanity." Though small in number, he said, Christians are not condemned to "a diminished life on the margins." They share in the mystery of Christ and "remain with him on Calvary;" yet they are called to take an active part in the troubled life of their society and "bring a vision of faith to all events." Along with the unrelenting Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories and East Jerusalem, Patriarch Sabbah cited several challenges facing the Holy Land's Christians: the temptation to emigrate, failure to update the Status Quo (the agreement governing use of the Holy Places), extremist religious movements (Jewish, Christian and Muslim) and the promotion of interfaith dialogue.

Catholic Leaders Reflect on Favre Retirement



Catholic leaders paused to reflect on the life and career of Green Bay Packers Quarterback Brett Favre, who announced his retirement March 4 after 17 seasons with the team. Green Bay's Bishop Robert J. Banks said the player's popularity goes beyond his success on the football field.

People relate not only to his wife's battle with cancer, but to the quarterback's own struggles with addiction to painkillers. "He's faced some tough challenges and he's handled them so well," Bishop Banks said. One way the Favres live out their Catholic faith is through their numerous charitable efforts. The Favres have received a special invitation to attend the papal Mass April 17 in Washington, D.C.

Building Peace

'The good news is that peacebuilding is a growth industry.'

'PEACEMAKING IS NOT an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus. The content and context of our peacemaking is set not by some political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church." Twenty-five years ago, the U.S. Catholic bishops wrote *The Challenge of Peace*, their historic pastoral letter on war and peace. Most remembered for their reflections on nuclear war, the bishops also spoke eloquently about our moral obligations to build peace. They argued that we must work to develop a theology of peace. They charged universities, particularly Catholic universities in the United States, to conduct "rigorous, interdisciplinary research, education, and training" in peacebuilding. They urged "all citizens to support training in conflict resolution, nonviolent resistance and programs devoted to service to peace and education for peace," including spending a portion of the military budget instead for peacebuilding purposes.

The Catholic Peacebuilding Network was created to pursue our call to build peace. On April 7 at The Catholic University of America and Georgetown University, and later from April 13 to 15 at the University of Notre Dame, scholars and practitioners will consider "The Future of Catholic Peacebuilding" on this anniversary of *The Challenge of Peace* (see http://cpn.nd.edu).

"Peace must become a verb," notes David O'Brien, of the College of the Holy Cross. Reports from Catholic peacebuilders around the world tell stories of how peace is becoming a verb in Burundi, Colombia, the Philippines, places where the body of Christ is both suffering and working toward healing and reconciliation. Academics explore the intersections between these experiences and the church's theology and Catholic social teaching. These papers will be chapters in a forthcoming book on the ethics and theology of Catholic peacebuilding, but the stories they draw from are still being written in the experiences of the church around the world.

It is an important time for these conversations. The good news is that peacebuilding is a growth industry. The world is witnessing an explosion in new peacebuilding institutions, because of the failures of governments and international institutions to sustain peace. For the U.S. Departments of Defense and State, the failures of post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan led to the creation of new units responsible for reconstruction and stabilization operations. Dozens of other countries and international organizations, like the United Nations, have determined they need to create new and more robust institutional capacities to build peace, and have created similar new units. Just as Catholic teaching on the just war became institutionalized around the world, from the Geneva Conventions to the U.S. military code, Catholic teachings on just peace may also be able to influence these emerging institutions.

The bad news is that so far all of these institutions have severe capacity gaps. None of them have adequate personnel or resources to pursue effectively their missions and mandates. Additionally, there are huge normative gaps. The institutions vary widely in the kinds of peace they seek. U.S. government efforts focus on short-term material repair projects (roads, bridges, oil infrastructure) that may advance U.S. national interests and the reputation of the national government and security forces. But these efforts often undermine rather than advance peace, stability and reconstruction. In attempting to complete projects quickly during a commander's short time in an area, the trust and input of the local populations are not sought. Projects benefit corrupt individuals or warring groups (Iraq is now rated the second most corrupt country in the world), escalating conflict rather than quieting it. Profits from post-conflict reconstruction do not go to the people in country, but to U.S. private companies. Employees of private contractors in Iraq outnumber the 160,000 U.S. troops currently serving there.

Building effective civilian institutions is key to peacebuilding and human development. But the institutions being developed with funding from the Department of Defense for war on terrorism are military, not civilian institutions. Military spending in unstable countries without effective other government institutions exacerbates the conflict trap. Where civilian authority and human rights protections are weak, stronger security institutions may not serve the common good, but may abuse human rights and worsen conflict.

The U.S. military trains the military of Chad, for example, the world's fifth-poorest and fifth-most corrupt country. Specifically, the United States trains the battalion of Chad's military that protects the increasingly unpopular president and a government that commits serious human rights abuses in its efforts to stay in power. The Catholic Church and the people of Chad suffer from short-sighted and clumsy U.S. security efforts. These efforts are being touted as "successes" to be replicated elsewhere. The president's 2009 budget requests more military monies for such efforts, with less oversight, transparency and attention to human rights. This is not the kind of peace we seek. Greater attention to peacebuilding is welcome. The military can play a positive role, as it did after the 2004 tsunami. But as the bishops said 25 years ago, "Reason and experience tell us that a continuing upward spiral, even in conventional arms, coupled with an unbridled increase in armed forces, instead of securing true peace will almost certainly be provocative of war."

Maryann Cusimano Love

MARYANN CUSIMANO LOVE serves on the advisory board of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network.

PHOTO: KYLE SMITH

Energy policy for an uncertain age

Forestalling Disaster

– BY RICHARD J. GREEN AND WIL LEPKOWSKI –

TALES OF ULTIMATE DISASTER caused by global warming fill today's media, alongside accounts of impressive new technologies for clean, green, carbon-free, earth-saving energy. New energy corporations are drawing investment capital in steady streams, hoping for a portion of the financial bonanza to come from new energy ideas: better cars, more efficient boilers, vegetation that converts to oil, cleaner power plants; windmills sweeping across prairies, hilltops and seacoasts; and solar cells arrayed from horizon to horizon, powering entire communities. Most reporters tend to cover technology news by relying on the public relations machinery of government and corporate research laboratories. Still, their reporting on such trends has made energy a much discussed public issue. But is the public receiving an accurate picture of what we are facing as our oil and gas

RICHARD J. GREEN was a senior research and development manager for NASA in the Apollo program and the National Science Foundation in developing and executing the nation's first renewable energy program. **WIL LEPKOWSKI** is a journalist who has covered science, technology and energy policy for Business Week and Chemical and Engineering News.

resources run out and the glaciers and ice caps melt? Or is something critical missing? Is a meaningful discourse actually taking place?

Clearly, there will not be enough oil to meet demand in coming years. Coupled with reports about atmospheric warming, that news ought by now to have incited a level of public outrage that so little is being done to create a future where the world's countries collaborate on energy policy, making something positive out of what are now insufficiently connected approaches by individual states or small groups.

Yet the overall picture being presented to the public goes something like this: We'll just proceed here and there with portions of this technology, portions of that, and somehow, in time, with everyone working in his or her niche, the future will solve itself through an automatically arranged pattern. Keep at it with capital market and government funding, and eventually a new age of energy will slip into history at just the right time. The picture assumes a future of carbon-free energy for the whole world, an inevitable slowdown in the rate of global warming and the mitigation of any permanent damage from use of fossil fuels. It also assumes that life will proceed largely unchanged, and that a system of global capitalism dependent on continuous, lavish spending will be confirmed. Poorer countries, as usual, will be left out.

Rising global temperatures, however, seem certain to produce destabilizing weather patterns, disruptions in agriculture and bizarre disease patterns. Some economies anticipate boom times from warming—such as those of northern nations, which foresee lucrative oil and mineral sources under a warmed and navigable Arctic ocean. On the whole, though, global warming will lead to massive disruptions across the planet, from more violent storm systems to diseases previously unknown in temperate regions to chaos in foreign affairs. No one will be unaffected. This underlines the need for a new sense of community among countries caught in the web of effects from warming.

However dire the global consequences of warming, that is only half the picture. What about the simple matter of producing energy for the relentless economic demand? The geopolitical issues connected with immense competition for oil in the future will be as threatening as the environmental issues related to global warming. Both threats make energy policy a huge and pressing issue for the United States, and we must begin planning and acting on our energy future immediately.

The "green" momentum visible everywhere, from neighborhoods to boardrooms, is exciting, genuinely encouraging, politically needed and technologically necessary. It is serious and should not be ridiculed. But neither should "going green" be perceived as a policy that will correct today's critically dangerous course, one of slowness and disorganization. Something much more is needed: a big, thoughtful and vigorous examination of all the existing and impending resources and technologies, how they relate to one another and how near to an interconnected independence we and other countries can come.

Current and Future Energy Sources

No perspective on energy policy is possible without data on the use of and the prospects for each major energy source. The following energy assessments are based on many sources representing various energy interests.

Petroleum. The world has an assured supply of petroleum for 80 to 100 years. The United States presently accounts for 40 percent of petroleum consumption, mainly for transportation and source material for a huge variety of chemicals. Competing and increasing demands from China and India because of their own needs could drain much of that away. In the past, oil consumed was replaced by new exploratory finds. Since reserves can no longer be so easily retrieved, the United States cannot continue its profligate use of oil. Added sources of petroleum are tar sands and oil shale, but their conversion to petroleum is an energy-draining process that emits carbon dioxide, the notorious greenhouse gas. Our citizens must know that the oil supply could be exhausted in less than a century. We must move smartly to conserve what we have left and develop new and petroleum-free alternative systems and transportation modes for the future.

Natural gas. Global supplies are reckoned to be enough for about 70 to 90 years. The United States currently consumes 23 percent of the world's supply, mainly for heating, electric utility power generation and production of industrial chemicals. The rationale for petroleum also holds for natural gas. This fuel is precious and should be reserved for only the most needed uses.

Coal. Our reserves are enormous: the United States has a 250-year supply of high-quality, low-sulfur coal. Today the United States uses 23 percent of the coal consumed worldwide, and coal-fired plants provide close to 50 percent of our electric power needs. But at what cost? Coal is dirty. It is an enormous challenge to figure out how to treat and burn coal so that it does not add to greenhouse gases, in particular carbon dioxide. So far, research efforts have failed to produce low-cost technologies to convert carbon dioxide to harmless carbon products and water. The alternative is to

"Forestalling Disaster" is the first in America's new series, "A Closer Look," offering in-depth perspectives on important issues during the 2008 presidential campaign.

store carbon dioxide underground in storage containers now used for oil and natural gas. However, many experts doubt such a plan will work because of the potential for leaks back into the atmosphere. Few believe that these and other approaches toward reducing the impact of coal combustion can save the planet from warming. But without coal, big changes in energy-generation technology will have to be made.

Nuclear energy. This is essentially in inexhaustible supply. Currently, 110 nuclear power plants meet 8 percent of the U.S. electrical power demand. Increased use is anticipated, and the percentage could rise as fossil fuel use declines. The major issues, however, are safe, permanent disposal of spent fuel and the reprocessing and safe recovery of fissionable materials. Some experts believe that such problems are near solution. Nuclear energy stirs up intense emotions, both for and against, so the issues need to be addressed and resolved in a thoughtful, considered way. Abroad, nuclear power provides 79 percent of France's electricity, 28 percent of Germany's, 28 percent of Japan's and 20 percent of the United Kingdom's. France and Japan in particular are committed to a nuclear future. Given the provisions of the 2005 Energy Act, nuclear energy is experiencing a modest revival in the United States; almost 30 new plants or additions to existing ones are being considered for construction here. The Department of Energy is also sponsoring research into new reactor systems.

Renewables. These offer an endless supply, and are therefore the great hope of sustainable energy advocates. Renewable sources of energy include photovoltaics or solar cells for generating electricity, heat-based energy systems for large central power plants, systems for heating houses, wind-powered electric generation, geothermal steam, biomass (high-caloric plants of many kinds, like mill grass, corn, switch grass and sugar cane), hydroelectric dams and wave action. Renewables currently supply 8 percent of U.S. energy needs. That must rise considerably to at least 25 percent to 35 percent of the entire energy mix. The major problem with most renewables is that they are not available at all times to meet demand. Since the sun is not always out and the wind does not always blow, research must continue on devising batteries to store the energy generated by these systems for use at any time.

High-tech energy. Hydrogen-generated power and fuel cells are intriguing possibilities, but years will pass before mass production and other efficiencies are developed that would bring down costs. The experts, however, assure supporters that the promise of high-tech energy is enormous. Nuclear fusion is another long-researched area, in which a major breakthrough could be a panacea for all the world's energy problems.

What Is at Stake

How should such assessments be regarded or interpreted? Not rigidly, for they are mainly benchmarks, and different estimates emerge daily. The most important figures are the estimates of when oil will start to run out, because the price of oil determines the cost of everything else. This gives us less than a century to develop an enduring energy infrastructure. Time is not on our side.

A consensus among energy experts today is that national energy independence is an unattainable goal and, in any case, a foolish idea, because the world is too economically interconnected through trade in resources.

Energy shortages and environmental disasters will be defining characteristics of the future unless the world, led by the United States, establishes an extensive but flexible plan for energy. No matter what is done or not done, stunning lifestyle changes are in the offing, and they could begin by 2020. (Eskimos and other groups living within the Arctic Circle are already experiencing them.) If not enough is accomplished, economies and urban systems could approach collapse. If something wise, intelligent and generous takes place, however, the planet could experience a new era of human creativity.

Without cutting down on oil and natural gas use at some point within the next 75 years, the competition for those fuels will reach ferocious proportions, with the United States likely exerting less control over their supply. The American Petroleum Institute dismisses the idea of serious shortages any time soon, but petroleum use is already outpacing the rate of new discoveries. Because of America's own gluttonous habits, other nations will be likely to cause us serious trouble as competition intensifies. Preparation for that time should not center on virtually claiming oil-rich foreign lands as our own in the name of democracy, but on developing and exploiting new, independent sources of

energy. Such new sources could fill both our needs and those of other countries.

Further, it is morally imperative that we ask serious questions that the public can understand and that make demands on our politicians. Our national political discussion must include serious talk about changing the mix of our energy needs, reducing them by conservation and more efficient technologies, producing emissions free of carbon dioxide as an urgent national priority and producing both a plan and a program so that equitable amounts of energy are generated to meet the human needs of all countries.

A consensus among energy experts today is that national energy independence is an unattainable goal and, in any case, a foolish idea, because the world is too economically interconnected through trade in resources. No country can operate without various economic and strategic relations with another, but countries can cut down on excessive dependence on foreign-owned resources through creative, independent approaches that are appropriate to their energy needs.

Bold but Necessary Actions

Work must begin now on a crash basis to fulfill humankind's obligation to the future through stewardship of the planet. The question is how. This country, in cooperation with other nations that have a similar sense of urgency, needs to mount something on the scale and intensity of an Apollo or Manhattan Project. Such a venture would be worthy of a great society. The United States, with its immense technological skills and resources, must set the tone and determine the pace.

The kind of wide-ranging debate occurring today, while only partial, is important. But people—the right people—have to meet and begin hammering out a serious plan. Judging by its record, the Bush administration is hardly the base from which to start; and the current Congress, despite the energy bill it recently passed with an emphasis on renewable sources, is still divided as to the intensity required for a new policy. Nevertheless, we need a forum to develop a plan. Initial steps could be taken by a foundation or other public group to help further define the problems and issues. This could then serve as a blueprint for an aggressive program of action by a new administration.

One hopes that the next president will be aware of these serious problems and will recruit experts to brief him or her frequently on critical issues and the pace of progress. The White House's science advisers during the critical days of the cold war frequently served that function and were an essential adjunct to the presidency. Our next president must rouse the citizenry about these critical issues threatening our children and then take action. It will not be easy, but it will be necessary. A

A Somber Anniversary

A century ago, a promising American theological journal fell victim to the modernist crisis.

BY THOMAS J. SHELLEY

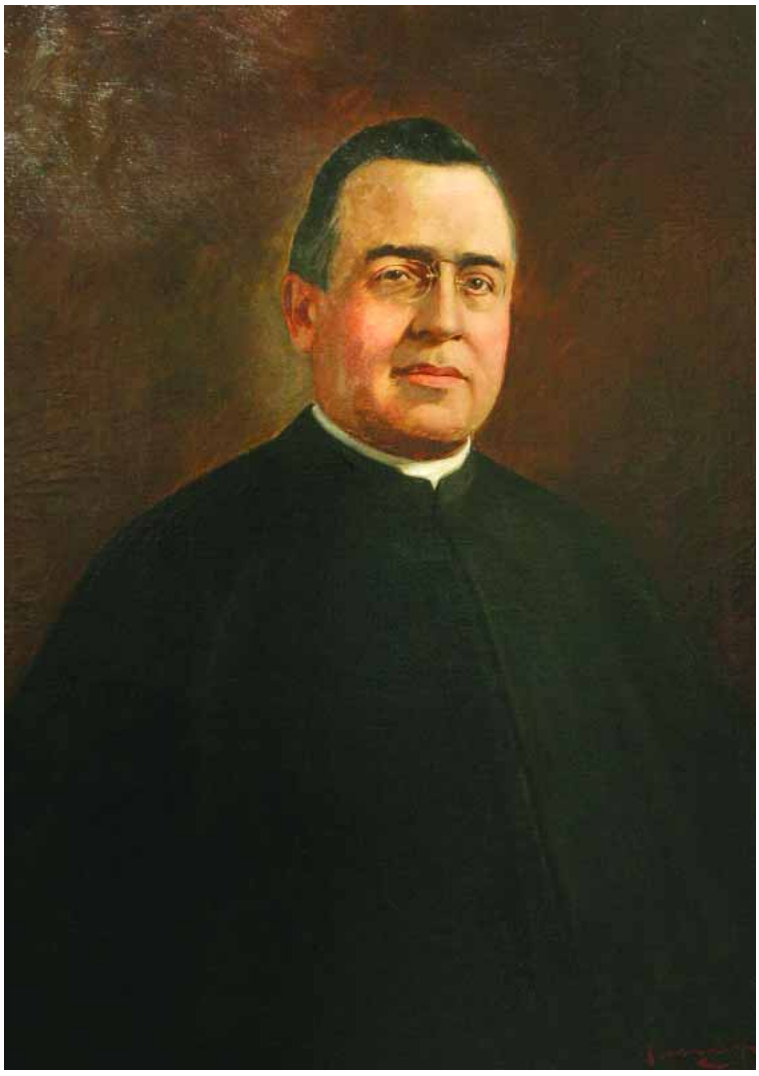
FOUR AMERICAN ARCHDIOCESES celebrate their bicentennial this year: Boston, Louisville, New York and Philadelphia. They share the same birthday, April 8, 1808, when Pope Pius VII created them from the original American diocese, Baltimore. All four are commemorating this anniversary year with public celebration and thanksgiving. Another anniversary will occur in New York in June, but it will be a cause for regret rather than celebration. It is likely to pass unnoticed by all except a handful of people, even though its implications reach far beyond the boundaries of the Archdiocese of New York: the centennial of the demise of a bimonthly Catholic periodical called The New York Review.

The New York Review was a pioneer effort to provide American Catholics with a journal that would keep them abreast of the latest developments in Catholic scholarship in the United States, Great Britain and Europe. It originated with two diocesan priests, Francis P. Duffy and John F. Brady, from the faculty of St. Joseph's Seminary, the seminary of the New York Archdiocese located north of the city in the Dunwoodie section of Yonkers. They brought their proposal to the Sulpician rector, Father James Driscoll, who endorsed it enthusiastically. The three then asked the approval of Archbishop John M. Farley, who assured them that such a review was exactly what he wanted at his seminary. "The exaggerated restrictive policy of the ecclesiastical authorities," Farley said, "only succeed[s] in stifling all initiative on the part of the ablest and best-disposed Catholic scholars."

Ancient Faith and Modern Thought

The first issue appeared on June 21, 1905, a substantial volume of 132 pages. The editors described their purpose as primarily apologetic and had even considered naming the journal "The Apologist" or "The Apologetic Review." The subtitle identified it as "A Journal of the Ancient Faith and Modern Thought." Each issue contained several articles, book reviews and a valuable section called "Notes," written at least partially by Duffy, which provided a brief survey of recent works by Catholic scholars throughout the world.

As promised in the prospectus, the journal's approach



PHOTOS FROM THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

James Driscoll, S.S., rector of St. Joseph's Seminary during the short life of The New York Review.

MSGR. THOMAS J. SHELLEY, a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, is professor of church history at Fordham University, Bronx, N.Y. His most recent book is *The Bicentennial History of the Archdiocese of New York, 1808-2008* (Strasbourg: Editions du Signe, 2007).

was constructive rather than polemical, and the editors obviously tried to avoid iconoclasm. For example, two articles by Francis Gigot on the last 27 chapters of the Book of Isaiah presented the traditional analysis of authorship, followed by the then-modern theories. "Both opinions are beset with numerous and great difficulties," conceded the author, "and, on that account, the readers of The New York Review cannot expect us to define what is the true position." Nonetheless, the progressive tone of the journal was unmistakable. "The Bible nowhere says that Moses wrote the Pentateuch," Joseph Bruneau stated boldly in another article. "Nor should the authority of Our Lord be adduced in such matters," he added, "as He did not pretend to solve for us literary problems."

About half the articles were written by members of the Dunwoodie faculty like Gigot and Bruneau; the other half by such high-caliber scholars as Wilfrid Ward, George Tyrrell, Vincent McNabb, O.P., Joseph Turmel, M. J. Lagrange, O.P., Henri Brémond, Pierre Battifol and Walter McDonald. The contribution of the Dunwoodie faculty was indispensable. Driscoll himself was a well-respected Scripture scholar, as were two of his French Sulpician confreres, Francis Gigot and Joseph Bruneau. All three had been educated in Rome and Paris, where they had been exposed to new currents in Catholic scriptural studies. Francis Duffy had spent several years at The Catholic University of America as a student of Edward Pace, a psychologist trained in Leipzig. John Brady had earned an M.D. degree before entering the seminary. Another notable member of the Dunwoodie faculty, Gabriel Oussani, was a Chaldean Catholic born in Baghdad who had studied Semitic languages and biblical archaeology at Johns Hopkins University.

Dunwoodie had been established only nine years earlier as the New York diocesan seminary, with a mixed faculty of Sulpician and diocesan priests. By 1905 it possessed the strongest faculty of any Catholic seminary in the United States. In the opinion of Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, it was second only to The Catholic University of America as a center of American Catholic intellectual life and the ideal place from which to launch a scholarly journal like The New York Review. The first issue received a favorable reception from the Catholic press, enhanced Dunwoodie's reputation and left Archbishop Farley beaming with pride. However, there was one interested observer who was anything but pleased with the success of The New York Review. He had opposed the project from the beginning and predicted that it would end in disaster.

Cardinal John Farley, archbishop of New York from 1902 to 1918.

Storm Clouds of the Modernist Crisis

The person in question was Edward Dyer, S.S., the first rector of Dunwoodie and by 1905 the vicar general of the Sulpicians in the United States. Dyer was no obscurantist; in fact, he shared the progressive views of his friend James Driscoll. He was keenly aware, however, that in Europe the storm clouds were gathering that would soon lead to the modernist crisis and a crackdown by the ecclesiastical authorities on the kind of scholarship represented by The New York Review.

Dyer warned Driscoll not to rely on Archbishop Farley to protect The New York Review and asked him to consider what attitude the archbishop would take "if a whiff of disapprobation were wafted from Rome." Meanwhile, the Dunwoodie Sulpicians became involved in a bitter dispute with their superiors in Paris, who attempted to censor the review and their other writings. In January 1906 five of the six Sulpicians resigned from the Society of Saint Sulpice. Farley welcomed them into the archdiocese and retained them on the faculty of Dunwoodie.

Freed now from Sulpician censorship, The New York Review prospered for the next 18 months with Gigot alone contributing over a dozen articles. Then on July 3, 1907, the modernist crisis broke with the publication by the Holy Office (as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith was then known) of *Lamentabili Sane Exitu*, a condemnation of 65 propositions culled from unidentified modernist authors. It was followed two months later by the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* of Pope Pius X, who condemned modernism in the harshest terms as an evolutionary philosophy that threatened to deprive Christianity of any immutable truths. There was good reason for the pope's concern. Today even those who regret the apocalyptic tone of *Pascendi* can admit that it was a skillful summary of ideas that were circulating among some Catholic scholars.

The Catholic modernism of the early 20th century was a many-splendored phenomenon that meant different things to different people, more a tendency or a methodology than the organized movement it was perceived to be in Rome. Above all it was a recognition of the inadequacy of the desiccated Neo-Scholasticism of the day and an attempt to use the critical tools of contemporary scholarship to present the Christian message in a modern idiom.

Duffy liked to quote Cardinal John Henry Newman, saying that one should first learn to shoot around corners before hoping to convert someone with a syllogism. "It is ruin and shame for us," Duffy admitted, "if our people satisfy their mental hunger with husks and their thirst with lees because the wine and corn are locked in inaccessible storehouses." "The old faith does not change and does not need to change," he explained, "but we must find new approaches to it and new ways of presenting it." If these words sound familiar, it may be because Pope John XXIII used almost exactly the same language in his often-quoted address at the opening of the Second Vatican Council in October 1962. Duffy realized the difficulty of presenting age-old truths in a modern idiom. "To do this," he recognized, "we need men of faith, men who will not call the counsel of their own little prejudices sacrosanct and...are not content to live lazily on scraps of begged opinions." "They must," he added, "be men of sufficient courage to withstand the criticism of those who suspect *a priori* every idea that has not had the test of time."

Prime Targets for the Heresy Hunters

The renowned Louvain church historian Canon Roger Aubert identified three varieties of turn-of-the-20th-century Catholic modernism. Some developments, said Aubert, were completely unobjectionable and caused no controversy at all. Other developments were basically sound but frightened conservatives because of the provocative way in which they were presented. Still other developments, said Aubert, ceased to have any Christian content and were plainly incompatible with Christian orthodoxy. Unfortunately, *Pascendi* collapsed all three varieties of modernism into the third kind and tarred them all with the same brush of heterodoxy. It also touched off a panic-stricken campaign to ferret out modernist "moles" within the Catholic community that degenerated into a witch hunt.

Dunwoodie and The New York Review were prime targets for the heresy hunters. The editors published the full texts of both *Lamentabili* and *Pascendi*. They claimed that the papal documents condemned only "extreme views" and cautioned readers not to extend it to include anyone "who has ever studied biology or Hebrew." Driscoll quickly realized the full dimensions of the "integralist reaction," however, as the crusade against modernism came to be called. "Nothing so violent and drastic as the recent curial documents has appeared on the part of the Vatican authorities since the days of the Inquisition," he said. "I can compare the crisis to nothing but a cyclone during which people must simply make for the cellar."

To "make for the cellar" was the only option left for many Catholic scholars during the next 30 or 40 years. Only two issues of The New York Review appeared after *Pascendi*, and the journal ceased publication entirely in June 1908. The editors claimed that a lack of subscribers forced them to suspend publication and that the review had never been the object of formal ecclesiastical censure. While that statement was technically correct, the editors came closer to the truth when they wrote: "At its inception three years ago the editors promised to present the best work of Catholic scholars at home and abroad on theological and other problems of the day. It is the keeping of that promise, not the breaking of it, that is the cause of the suspension of the Review."

Driscoll, Brady and Duffy were made pastors, and Duffy subsequently became a much-decorated hero as chaplain to the New York 69th Regiment in World War I. Few people who pass his statue today in Times Square are aware of his earlier role as a theologian. Bruneau remained a Sulpician and was transferred to St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore. Gigot and Oussani continued to teach at Dunwoodie, but they never published anything again.

The modernist crisis was a sad chapter in the history of 20th-century Catholicism. It was mainly a European phenomenon, but its impact was especially severe in the United States, where it squelched the first fruits of a modest but promising Catholic intellectual development symbolized by The New York Review. Anniversaries should always be remembered, but not necessarily as occasions for celebration. Sometimes they are reminders of mistakes to be avoided. A

Msgr. Thomas J. Shelley on the legacy of Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, at americamagazine.org.

PHOTO: THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART/ART RESOURCE

A Meditation on Henry Ossawa Tanner's

The Annunciation

Yet you do not blink.
In the intimacy of a bedchamber
Your soul is awakened from sleep,
Fragile flesh before angelic brilliance.

Your rumpled night sheets tossed aside,
You listen in peace with your whole self
To the question that will define history.
Holding its breath for your answer,
All heaven pauses.

"LET IT BE DONE TO ME…"

Here it begins.
In such utter simplicity,
In quiet strength, at the appointed hour,
With the rippled rungs of time at your feet,
And the broad lines of history at your back.

At the balance of His grace in your will,
Eve reborn, humanity to be redeemed
Through a child, from a virgin
Whose name is Mary.

J. Michael Sparough

J. MICHAEL SPAROUGH, S.J., is director of Charis Ministries, a center for retreats and spiritual direction for young adults in the Chicago area. Art: "The Annunciation," 1898. Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937). Purchased with the W. P. Wilstach Fund, 1899. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Penn., U.S.A.

Wisdom for My Children

Reflections on the 'ultimate gift'

BY KEVIN J. BARRY

DEAR CHILDREN,

This time the doctors are serious. Before, when they told me the risks of surgery, they always listed "death," but I don't think they considered it a real risk, and neither did I. This time it's different. The risk is very real. We still think I'll survive, but....

Six years ago I was finally able to agree with Dan Meenan, S.J., who years before had spoken and even preached about his own cancer as "gift." I wrote "The Gift of Cancer" (**America**, 11/20/99) as a testament to Father Dan and as a way to set down my own newly acquired appreciation for how a "bad" thing like cancer can be seen as—indeed can be—a good. Since then, each time the cancer has come back, we've joked about its being "the gift that keeps on giving." It has been that indeed.

Now, because of this cancer, I have been given another gift. That is the gift of being forced to confront my own mortality in a very abbreviated time frame: a week and a half until the surgery, which has now dwindled to a mere three days. So much of this week was spent just trying to get things organized, getting "stuff done."

Now, finally, I have a brief few hours alone to try not only to pray a bit, but also to write down a few thoughts—words of wisdom, I hope—for you, my much-loved children (of course with a copy to your mom).

I want to tell you about what is important to me now, at age 62, as I try to look back and forward at the same time. Some of what I say is tinged with sadness—a sense of wasted opportunity—for I have not necessarily accomplished what I urge you to do.

First, it is not just cancer that is a gift—it is *all* gift: the good things and the bad. It is all about faith, trust and, ultimately, love. With everything that happens in our lives, God is watching and aware. Nothing happens that God does not allow. Even tragedies that bring us to our knees somehow have meaning in our walk with and to the Lord. But it won't be until that day when we see him face to face that we will finally understand.

Second, it is all about love. I know that to love is to choose for the other. But it is so much easier to choose when we are in love. I think this is the way Jesus feels about us—what he meant when he said, "Love one another as I have loved you!" He has fallen in love with us—with me and with you. And that is amazing!

I believe our goal is to nourish the "falling in love" part—and not just with our spouses. The more I fall in love with Jesus, the more I am able to fall in love—and stay in love—with your mom. I didn't always understand that. For a long time I thought that to love Jesus in the way the saints did somehow meant not being able to be in love also with someone else. I lost a lot of years holding back on prayer because of this fear. Only in the last few years have I realized that being "in love" with Jesus is the catalyst and fertile earth that allows for being "in love" with everyone else.

I am enamored of the mystics. How did they fall in love with Jesus? Either by pure, unsolicited gift from the Lord, or by asking him for that gift and then by doing their part—spending ample time alone in prayer with Jesus—to allow for the gift, once given, to take root and flourish.

If we are all called to holiness, as the Gospels teach, then we are all called to be "in love" with the Lord. We are all offered the gift. We all have the potential to be persons of prayer—perhaps even mystical prayer.

I have struggled for years to make

ART BY SEAN QUIRK

KEVIN J. BARRY, a former chief of legislation for the U.S. Coast Guard, is a director of the National Institute of Military Justice. He is a co-author of *Military Criminal Procedure Forms.*

time every day to pray. I wonder now what my spiritual state might have been if I had spent time each day just being quiet and trying to be present with the Lord—or getting to know him—by reading the Scriptures and other spiritual books. Suddenly, the time to do that may have passed. One reason I hope to survive this surgery is to make up for lost time and opportunity.

Why do I tell you this? Because I think that taking the time to pray is the most important thing you can do in life. So I encourage you to make the effort, to spend time every day being with the Lord. Advocates of centering prayer suggest two periods each day of 20 minutes. With the press of your busy lives, that is tough, especially in the beginning. But never should there be less than one 20-minute period, if you truly seek God's grace.

When I say good-bye to your mom before they put me under anesthesia next Monday, I will tell her how much I love her, that being in love with her has been a lifetime adventure and a joy. But I hope that the last name on my lips and my last conscious thought will be of that other One who loved me first, who, in the words of St. Francis Xavier, "hugged me to his heart upon the cross."

I hope I will wake up to see your mother's smiling face. But I know (in hope) that one day—perhaps this day—I will wake to see another smiling face. I also hope that by the time that day comes, I have more adequately responded to his gift—the one inviting me to be "in love" with him.

I pray each of you will know this great gift, and have the courage and generosity to respond to it. That's the only advice I offer and all you will need: to walk side by side with Jesus in everything you do.

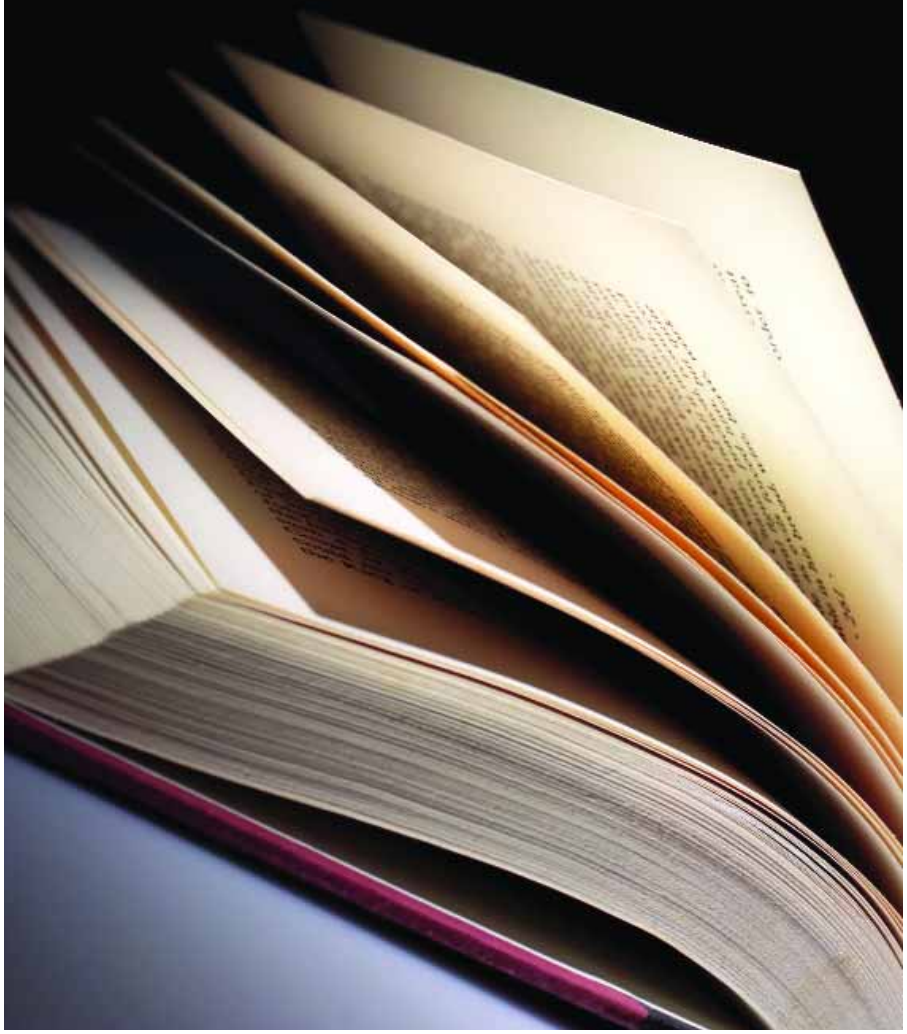
I love you very much, and thank God for you. Please pray for me!

Friday, Sept 23, 2005

Postscript: I am delighted to report that I have been the recipient of a constant stream of miracles—this surgery and the next one six months later were successful, and for the past 20 months I've been on a number of chemotherapy programs. Currently the cancer is again advancing, and the future is uncertain. The only thing that is certain is that I remain as always in the hands of the Lord. A

New Light From Biblical Scholarship

BY DANIEL J. HARRINGTON



THE AUTHORS of the books discussed in this year's survey are senior scholars who have distinguished themselves through many years of teaching and lecturing, original contributions to biblical research and proven ability to communicate their learning to the general public. Their recent publications offer reliable and accessible points of entry to important areas within the biblical field.

What do today's biblical scholars do? What should they do? In *The Nature of Biblical Criticism* (Westminster John Knox), John Barton, professor of the interpretation of holy Scripture at Oxford University, contends that the main task of biblical criticism is to read texts carefully and establish their "plain sense." He views biblical criticism as first and foremost a semantic or linguistic and literary operation, concerned with the recognition of genre and with what follows from this about the possible meaning of the texts.

Barton makes many sound and sensible comments about biblical interpretation today. He notes that most "historical" interpretations have arisen out of real difficulties in the texts, that in its essence biblical criticism is neither historical nor a method, that the plain sense can contain within itself possibilities for finding meaning well beyond the literal (or original or intended or historical) sense, that biblical criticism owes as much to the Renaissance as it does to the Reformation or the Enlightenment and that biblical criticism need not be regarded as hostile to theology or the church.

Barton regards biblical criticism as a rich and profound way of taking the Bible seriously, of which ordinary Christians should not be kept in ignorance. Most of his examples are taken from the Old Testament, and he is an engaging and amiable guide to the history and current state of biblical scholarship. He enjoys challenging and overturning false polarities and misleading judgments, and views the biblical scholar's task as serving as an enlightened and helpful guide to the meaning and significance of sacred Scripture.

In *How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now* (Free Press), James L. Kugel offers a more critical view of modern biblical criticism. His book is neither a manual of exegetical methodology nor a standard introduction to the Bible. Rather, he explores how selected parts of the Hebrew Bible were interpreted by Jews and Christians around the turn of the Common Era, and how these interpreters have shaped our traditional approach to the Bible. He also examines how these same texts are now understood according to the methods and concerns of modern critical scholarship.

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PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/QUAYSIDE

Kugel, who taught for many years at Harvard and now teaches at Bar Ilan University in Israel, identifies himself as an observant Orthodox Jew and regards the Hebrew Bible as the beginning of a manual entitled *How to Serve God*. He is equally at home in both the traditional and the critical approaches to the Bible. While not dismissing or ignoring the critical approach, he favors the traditional approach as more appropriate to what the Bible became in antiquity, and regards this approach as ultimately irreconcilable with the modern critical approach. His intellectual heroes are such early interpreters as Philo, Josephus, Ben Sira, Paul, the rabbis and Augustine, who were instrumental in making the Bible what it has become for Jews and Christians and in shaping how we read it.

Whether or not one agrees with Kugel (I don't) that the two approaches are irreconcilable, one must admire his great learning, intellectual curiosity, spiritual honesty and ability to write clear and engaging prose. The real brilliance of his work resides in the short essays on various parts of the Hebrew Bible, in which he uncovers problems in the biblical texts and juxtaposes the two approaches to them. Here he illustrates beautifully how to read the Bible both respectfully and critically, without losing a sense of the Bible's continuing significance.

What Kugel does for the Hebrew Bible on a grand scale, Frances M. Young, in *Brokenness and Blessing: Towards a Biblical Spirituality* (Baker Academic), does on a smaller scale and in a more personal way, by exploring how the Church Fathers have shaped our reading of the Christian Bible. Young, who recently retired as professor of theology at the University of Birmingham (U.K.), is best known as a patrologist with a special interest in how the fathers interpreted and applied Scripture. But she also writes regularly and well on biblical interpretation and on spirituality. In this short work she brings together her several interests by focusing on five biblical themes—the desert experience, Jacob's wrestling with God, the way of Jesus, strangers and exiles, and desire frustrated and fulfilled in the Song of Songs—and examines how the Church Fathers developed these biblical topics and what significance they might have for Christian spirituality today.

Young promises a biblical spirituality that challenges our current culture while offering both a realistic view of the human condition and the wonderful gift of grace that brings hope of transformation. She refers frequently to her developmentally disabled adult son, Arthur, from whom she has learned much about being a Christian. She characterizes the biblical spirituality that emerges from her five essays as "never achieved, never self-satisfied, never comfortable, always longing" and yet "always grace received, the fulfillment of promises, the acceptance of Christ." If you are seeking substantive, readable and challenging spiritual reading, this is a book for you.

> All these books are models of sound biblical scholarship by authors who have honed their skills over many years.

In recent years the publicity surrounding Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* and Mel Gibson's film "The Passion of the Christ," as well as exaggerated claims by scholars about the importance of apocryphal and Gnostic gospels outside the canon have left many of us intrigued, confused and puzzled. Pheme Perkins's *Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels* (Eerdmans) provides not only a knowledgeable overview of the three canonical Gospels attributed to Mark, Matthew and Luke, but also a sound evaluation of the significance of those other "gospels" from antiquity.

After explaining what a gospel is and how we came to have the traditional four-gospel canon, Perkins describes how the gospels were written and used in the early church, and what sources were available to the evangelists. The core of her work is a comprehensive and well-informed discussion of each Synoptic Gospel, with regard to its distinctive narrative or plot, literary features, characterization, presentation of Jesus, community background and influence. The final chapter is a systematic treatment of the extracanonical gospels, with particular attention to their relationship to the canonical traditions and to their significance for understanding developments in second- and third-century Christianity.

Perkins has published widely in the area of early Christian apocryphal writings and the Gnostic texts from Nag Hammadi, and knows very well what these texts say and do not say. Moreover, she has drawn on her many years of teaching the canonical Gospels to undergraduates and graduate students at Boston College and on her longstanding involvement in parish adult education programs to produce a remarkably clear and balanced treatment of some very complicated material. The author's long experience as a teacher, her knowledge and love of the ancient texts, sound judgment and clarity of thought and expression make this introduction to the Synoptic Gospels a trustworthy guide for all who are perplexed about Christian origins. It can serve as a fine textbook for college and seminary courses, as well as a reliable survey for all those who want to know where Gospel studies are today.

In *The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus* (Liturgical Press), Benjamin Fiore, S.J., who taught for many years at Canisius College in Buffalo and is now president and professor of religious studies at Campion College at the University of Regina in Canada, seeks both to show how these very influential New Testament writings reflect the world of the ancient Greco-Roman moralists and rhetoricians and to find in them teachings of relevance beyond their original context that may be applicable to church audiences of any age. These two concerns have animated Fiore's teaching and writing for over 25 years. His 20-page introduction deals with methodology and interpretive approach, the literary character of these letters, their historical background and hortatory strategy and context. Then he provides for 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus, respectively, a brief introduction and for each passage a translation, notes on the text and an interpreta-

tion. Fiore observes that their pastoral strategy in bringing the Gospel message to the world is twofold: teaching the true tradition and demonstrating it in virtuous actions. With this volume, the Sacra Pagina series—the first modern, full-scale, English-language Catholic commentary on the New Testament—is complete (disclosure: I edited and contributed to the series). The individual volumes are being reprinted in paperback format, with updated bibliographies.

New Testament theology is an irresistible but ambiguous undertaking. It has been understood variously as the history of early Christian thought or religion, a description of diverse theologies, a thematic or systematic synthesis, or a theological interpretation engaging contemporary believers. In *New Testament Theology: Exploring Diversity and Unity* (Westminster John Knox), Frank J. Matera, professor of biblical studies at The Catholic University of America, brings to the task many years of productive research and publication as well as much experience as a teacher and preacher. As far as I know, his is the first full-scale New Testament theological treatment by an American Catholic biblical scholar.

Matera sets two goals for himself: to describe the distinctive ways in which the various New Testament writings express the experience of salvation that God has effected in Christ, and to identify the underlying unity of the diverse theologies in the New Testament. The four major parts of his book deal, respectively, with the theologies in the Synoptic Gospels, the Pauline tradition, the Johannine tradition and the other parts of the New Testament. Under those headings he treats the individual documents, with particular attention to their major theological concerns and themes. By way of conclusion, Matera sketches the "diverse unity" running through the New Testament in five basic themes: humankind in need of salvation (anthropology and soteriology); Christ the bringer of salvation (Christology); the community of the sanctified (ecclesiology); the life of the sanctified (ethics); and the hope of the sanctified (eschatology). He observes that the term "diverse unity" is appropriate to the New Testament, since no one way can fully capture the mystery that is God in Christ.

Matera's work is a remarkable synthesis of biblical scholarship and theological sensitivity. He allows the diverse theological voices in the New Testament to speak and at the same time leads readers to discern connections and correlations. Those interested in theology, from beginners to professors, can profit greatly from reading and consulting this excellent work.

Jerome H. Neyrey, S.J., emeritus professor of New Testament at the University of Notre Dame and current president of the Catholic Biblical Association of America, has been one of the pioneers in applying social science concepts and models to the interpretation of biblical texts. In *Give God the Glory: Ancient Prayer and Worship in Cultural Perspective* (Eerdmans), he illustrates this approach with reference to prayers found in the New Testament and other ancient texts. Using the tag "in other words," he seeks to bring new light to ancient texts with the help of methods developed in cultural anthropology.

Neyrey treats the ancient prayer passages from the perspective of communication between the one who prays and God. In analyzing these texts he considers their sender or speaker, message, medium,

receiver and purpose. He also takes account of the cultural assumptions that persons in antiquity would have brought to prayer, especially regarding honor, reciprocity, patron-client relationships, social stratification and so on. With these analytical tools he offers fresh readings of the Lord's Prayer, the Magnificat, the doxologies and Jesus' "high priestly prayer" in John 17. He also explores prayers in praise of God's uniqueness, the nature of worship as communication, and worship in the fourth Gospel, in the *Didache* and Justin's *First Apology*. Neyrey's work places old and familiar texts in a new framework and brings them alive again. He also challenges us to rethink what we do when we pray and why we do it.

The collection of Gnostic writings discovered at Nag Hammadi in Egypt over 60 years ago has provided scholars with access to a philosophical and religious literature that had been only vaguely known through the polemical descriptions of some Church Fathers and a few scraps of ancient texts. Birger Pearson, emeritus professor of religious studies at the University of California in Santa Barbara, has proved himself to be one of the foremost experts in the translation and interpretation of these very difficult texts. In his *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* (Fortress), he presents for a general audience an accessible, comprehensive and balanced description and assessment of the Nag Hammadi texts and related works, as well as the relevant testimonies by the patristic writers. He regards the *Gospel of Thomas* as gnostic only to the extent that its central concern is self-knowledge and was the product of a long and complex process of transmission. He also discusses related ancient movements such as Hermetism, Manichaeism and Mandaeism, as well as some modern varieties of gnosticism.

Pearson recognizes and illustrates the wide variety of ancient movements that have been placed under the heading of "gnosticism." Nevertheless, he offers this overarching definition: In gnosticism saving *gnosis* (knowledge) comes by revelation from a transcendent realm, mediated by a revealer who has come from that realm in order to awaken people to a knowledge of God and a knowledge of the true nature of the human self. He traces the origins of gnosticism to Neoplatonic interpretations of Plato's *Timaeus* filtered through Jewish exegetical and apocalyptic traditions, and "Christianized" to varying degrees in some early Christian circles. The key deviation from biblical Judaism and orthodox Christianity was the split between the transcendent God above creation and a lower creator responsible for the world as we know it. He attributes the attraction of ancient gnosticism to the age-old problems of explaining the presence of evil in the world and how God could create a flawed world. For those confused by competing claims about gnosticism in the popular media, Pearson provides a readable and reliable introduction to the topic.

All these books are models of sound biblical scholarship by authors who have honed their skills over many years and who are willing and eager to share their learning with the general public and especially with those who stand in the biblical tradition. They offer a very rich harvest of scholarship, indeed. A

Matt Malone, S.J., reviews the HBO miniseries "John Adams," at americamagazine.org.

Classified

Bound Volumes

AMERICA PRESS INC. is compiling a set of bound volumes of **America** for a digital scanning project. We are currently in need of Vol. 1 and Vols. 13-71. **America** will provide a digital copy of the scanned material in return for the volumes. Contact Tim Reidy at reidy@americamagazine.org or (212) 515-0111.

Positions

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS. St. Edmund Preparatory High School is a private Roman Catholic secondary school for young men and women with its roots in the Dominican tradition. It is chartered by the Board of Regents of the State of New York, and accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Located in Brooklyn, N.Y., St. Edmund Prep is an International Baccalaureate World school that serves a diverse student body of 750, with a faculty and staff of 65 professionals. The school offers a college-preparatory curriculum and a wide variety of co-curricular and extracurricular activities. It is committed to providing an environment that encourages academic excellence in a faith-filled and supportive community. St. Edmund Preparatory High School seeks an Assistant Principal to serve in its two-person central office administration. Primary responsibilities include, but are not limited to, student discipline and academics. This is a 12-month position with a negotiable salary commensurate with experience. *Requirements:* A candidate must be a practicing Catholic; master's degree in an accredited program, preferably in administration and supervision; a minimum of five years' teaching experience, with some experience at the Catholic secondary level preferred; ability to demonstrate strong leadership and communication skills. *Application:* Applicants must submit a letter of interest and résumé by April 10, 2008, to: Gerard Buckley and Mark Amatrucola, Search Committee Chairpersons, St. Edmund Prep, 2474 Ocean Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11229; fax: (718) 743-5243; e-mail: apsearch@stedmundprep.org. Note: If faxing a letter of interest and résumé, it should be followed with an original by mail.

COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY to develop and direct shared high school/junior high programs for two active parishes in the Cleveland area. Applicant should be committed to the eight goals of comprehensive youth ministry, possess pastoral and organizational skills, a background in theology and catechesis, and previous youth ministry experience. $40,000 to $50,000 with benefits. Job description is available at www.divinewordkirtland.org. Résumé can be submitted by April 30, 2008, to: Rev. George Smiga, St. Noel Church, 35200 Chardon Road, Willoughby Hills, OH 44094.

DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS MINISTRY/CHAPLAIN, as an ordained Catholic priest, plans, coordinates and directs pastoral ministry and religious activities for the campus community. Fosters and nurtures the faith life of students, faculty and staff by his presence and through retreats, prayers and education in areas including social justice. Provides instruction, including catechetical; administers sacraments, specifically Eucharist, reconciliation, baptism and confirmation. Serves as principal celebrant for daily Eucharist. Leads campus ministry team in planning and implementing extraordinary liturgical events, i.e. Mass of the Holy Spirit, Candlelight Ceremony, Advent/Lenten services, baccalaureate and graduate Masses, and those called for by special circumstances. Oversees campus ministry staff and budget operations. Duly ordained Catholic priest, in good standing with the Catholic Church. M.A. in theology required; master of divinity preferred. Three-plus years in a university setting and/or experience with programs dealing with young adults. Experience in a residential setting in higher education a plus. For more information, go to the Web site www.ollusa.edu.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY sought for active college-town parish with growing Latino population. Successful candidate will have B.A. or M.A. with theological course work; experience in youth ministry, in curriculum-based and liturgical catechesis, and in *Renewing the Vision*; strong leadership, organizational and communi-

cation skills. Parish is integrating stewardship into all programs, including youth ministry. D.Y.M. is directly responsible for continuing to create a prayerful and dynamic environment for youth in grades 9-12 by working with faith development team—Junior Youth Minister (grades 6-8), adult faith formation, staff, catechists and parents. Should want to set standard for such ministries. Competitive salary and benefits. Spanish speaking a plus. Contact: D.Y.M. Search Committee, St. Thomas More Catholic Church, 940 Carmichael Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, by April 21 for position available immediately.

SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO SEMINARY seeks a full-time CHURCH HISTORY PROFESSOR. Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary is a free-standing seminary with college, pre-theology and theology programs. We are currently seeking to hire a full-time church history instructor who has earned at least a licentiate from a pontifical university. For an application, interested parties should submit their C.V. to: Rev. David Diamond, Vice Rector, Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, 100 East Wynnewood Road, Wynnewood, PA 19096; e-mail: vicerectorscs-@adphila.org.

ST. ALOYSIUS SCHOOL (www.staloysiusschool.org), a highly successful inner-city Jesuit parish grammar school of the Archdiocese of New York, located on two campuses in Central Harlem, seeks applications for the position of PRINCIPAL, starting on July 1, 2008. The school, with total enrollment of 300, includes separate boys' and girls' middle schools (grades 6-8) in the Nativity model (www.nativitymiguelschools.org), grades 1-5, and Pre-K and Kindergarten. The school has a strong and lively concentration in the arts, with classes and activities in music, art, oratory and dance. We are accredited by Middle States and our students have the highest test scores in our district.

Basic qualifications include: practicing Roman Catholic with commitment to the church's education and social justice mission, five years' teaching experience and three years as assistant principal.

Additional qualifications preferred include: knowledge/experience in school finance and development activities; strong communication skills to work well with advisory board and pastor; understanding and support of multi-cultural and inclusive education. Salary is negotiable, based on experience and degree.

Persons wishing to apply for the position should submit a written expression of interest, accompanied by a résumé, official transcripts and three letters of recommendation, directly to the Search Committee. Materials should be received by Monday, March 31, 2008.

Please direct all correspondence to: Search Committee, St. Aloysius Church, 219 West 132 Street, New York, NY 10027.

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA, Catholic Student Center, Des Moines, Iowa, is seeking full-time DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND LITURGY to serve on our campus ministry team. St. Catherine is a faith community of students and nonstudents, with a strong tradition dedicated to prayerful liturgical celebrations. Applicant should have education and experience in Catholic liturgical theology. We seek a candidate with a background in music, music ministry and choral direction with organizational skills, strong spirituality and willingness to work in a collaborative setting on campus ministry team. Requirements: Practicing Catholic, bachelor's degree in religious studies, liturgy or equivalent. Knowledge and experience with Catholic liturgy and music and good communication and organizational skills. Preferred: Master's degree in liturgy; practicing musician, either piano or guitar; experience in campus ministry. Send letter of interest, résumé and names and addresses of three references to: Search Committee, St. Catherine of Siena, 1150 28th St., Des Moines, IA 50311. Applications accepted until the position is filled.

Retreats

BETHANY RETREAT HOUSE, East Chicago, Ind., offers private and individually directed silent retreats, including Ignatian 30 days, year-round in a prayerful home setting. Contact Joyce Diltz, P.H.J.C.: (219) 398-5047; bethanyrh@sbcglobal.net; www.bethanyretreathouse.org.

Letters

Values and Priorities

Regarding "Curbing Medical Costs," by Daniel Callahan (3/10): We already have medical care rationing, and it is determined by who has the money.

Countries that have a universal health care system address the rationing issue in a basically ethical way. They do not let market forces that at present rule our health care systems decide who deserves to suffer and die and who does not.

If we can fund the fiasco of the Iraq occupation, we can fund decent health care. It is all about our values and priorities, our ability to question the lies and our courage to speak out.

Elaine Tannesen
Woodinville, Wash.

Tenable Theology

In his review of my book, *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church* (3/10), the many kind things Richard Gaillardetz says about the book take up most of the space, and for all of these statements I am grateful. Unfortunately, with one devastating sentence, he takes away as much as he has given when he says, "I have to confess a deep frustration with the shoddy argumentation that is marshalled in defense of many of his proposals." My problem is that he then gives only three examples of "shoddy" argumentation, and none of the three is convincing.

First, he says that I state that the Ascension is a nonessential truth. What I do say is that the fact that Jesus, at the end of his time on earth, returned to his Father is an essential truth, but that the particular means by which he did so (ascending vertically from the earth?) are not essential.

Second, he says that I appeal to a secular "parliament" as a model for church governance and that a more fruitful path would be to speak of conciliarity, collegiality and synodality. I do speak of conciliarity, collegiality and synodality, but in the chapter he refers to I make the important point that these terms will remain beautiful but empty unless we give them concrete form in specific, though imperfect, structures. Consequently I suggest some such structures, though I do not use the term "secular parliament" and I specifically reject the idea that the church could function as a liberal democracy.

Third, his main example concerns the fact that I question the necessity of the church's teaching on infallibility, that I refer to infallible statements when Vatican I spoke instead of acts of judgment and that I falsely presume that dogmatic statements are unchanging. I freely

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acknowledge that Richard Gaillardetz is a far better theologian than I will ever be, but I have difficulties with these ideas. Surely infallible judgments are expressed through infallible statements. Is this not what *Pastor Aeternus* itself says? Surely, also, if doctrines can develop, the prohibition of any discussion on the ordination of women is out of place.

When I first heard the news that a theologian of standing had reviewed my book, I was delighted and hoped to learn much from the review. While again grateful for the many good things said, I have to add that I am left disappointed.

(Most Rev.) Geoffrey Robinson
Enfield, N.S.W., Australia

From the Pews

Regarding "Lessons From an Extraordinary Era," by Roger Haight, S.J. (3/17): Father Haight is correct in assessing the next steps in determining how to make our faith understandable to the modern church, as well as enabling us to relate this to others in an ever-changing world. But this is made more difficult by our church's movements to return to a more ritualized liturgical experience. This liturgical experience is how we, the laity, experience theology. When that theology does not speak to us even when we are both listening and desiring to experience God, one can see how many become frustrated and eventually disinterested.

Michael Anthony
York, Pa.

On the Mountaintop

Thank you for addressing the issue of mountaintop removal (editorial, "King Coal," 3/3). This is a very serious issue that many people who live in the Appalachian region contend with every day, but it is generally not recognized on the national level. Education and awareness are essential to addressing the issue and beginning the process to save and reclaim our land and people.

Dianna Dickins
Morgantown, W.Va.

Failed Leadership

I was disappointed by the unfounded conclusion in your editorial "Lost Sheep" (3/17) that the decline in religious participation represented in the Pew Forum study "is proof enough of catechetical failure in the past two generations." It is also a failure of leadership to assign blame instead of encouraging solutions.

Moreover, it does not follow from the research that catechetical methods are to blame for the decline in religious participation. Evangelical and nondenominational communities, which are increasing their membership, are using methods developed in Catholic catechetical programs like the adult catechumenate and youth ministry. What these communities do differently is outreach, evangelization and mystagogy.

The decline in participation in mainstream churches and ecclesial communities is a cultural phenomenon brought on by many factors. The approach that John Paul II suggested was a new evangelization, not a new catechesis.

Your admonition against internecine squabbles over Catholic identity should have been reflected in a reluctance to assign blame and accuracy in analyzing the study.

Andrew J. Russell
Director of Religious Education
St. Mary and St. Joseph Parishes
Appleton, Wis.

The Word

Celebrating the Paschal Mystery

Third Sunday of Easter (A), April 6, 2008

Readings: Acts 2:14, 22-33; Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-11; 1 Pt 1:17-21; Lk 24:13-35

"Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (Lk 24:26)

THE WORD "PASCHAL" pertains to the Jewish feast of Passover, when the Exodus as the path from slavery to freedom is celebrated and the Passover lamb is slain and eaten. Christians use the term "paschal mystery" to refer to Jesus' death and resurrection at Passover time and its saving significance for us. At every Eucharist we renew our participation in this mystery through the reading of sacred Scripture and our sharing in the body and blood of Christ.

The Emmaus story in Luke 24 is the longest and most elegant appearance story in the Gospels. In the afternoon of the first Easter Sunday two discouraged disciples, ready to give up on Jesus and his movement and on their way out of Jerusalem, encounter a mysterious stranger who turns out to be the risen Jesus. When the stranger interprets the Scriptures for them and shares a meal with them, they move from a plaintive "We were hoping" to burning hearts and shouts of joy.

The passage takes up three major themes in Luke's Gospel: Jesus as a prophet, his fulfillment of Israel's Scriptures and his shared meals. Jesus exhibited the characteristics of a biblical prophet: he taught the people in words and deeds (miracles, symbolic actions), offered predictions about the future, called his people to repent and suffered hostility and opposition. In his conversation with the two disciples, the risen Jesus explains (probably in terms of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53) that the Messiah had to suffer. The encounter reaches its climax in a meal, at which they come to recognize that the mysterious stranger is the risen Jesus. In celebrating the Eucharist today, Christians repeat the experience of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We come to know the risen Jesus in Scripture and "the breaking of the bread."

Today's excerpt from Peter's speech in Acts 2 gives a sample of early Christian preaching, in which the interpretation of the Old Testament in light of the paschal mystery was an essential feature. As in the Emmaus story, the paschal mystery functions as the key that opens up all the mysteries hidden in Israel's Scriptures.

The principal images in today's selection from 1 Peter develop further the significance of the paschal mystery for us. As with the Emmaus pilgrims, our life in

Christ has become a sojourn or journey in search of our heavenly home—that is, in search of right relationship with God, the fullness of God's kingdom and eternal life with God. The image of ransom or redemption refers to the paschal mystery as that which has enabled us to be freed from the slavery of sin and death and freed for life in the Spirit. The reference to "the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb" connects Jesus' death with the sacrificial system of ancient Israel and its belief that life is in the blood. Thus it suggests that his death was the perfect and all-sufficient sacrifice for sins, and that the blood that Jesus shed has given us new life.

Praying With Scripture

- In what sense was Jesus a prophet and the fulfillment of the prophecies in the Scriptures?
- What does the risen Jesus' sharing meals with his disciples say about the nature of his resurrection?
- How might today's readings enrich your participation in the Eucharist?

Following the Good Shepherd

Fourth Sunday of Easter (A), April 13, 2008

Readings: Acts 2:14, 36-41; Ps 23:1-6; 1 Pt 2:20-25; Jn 10:1-10

"I came so that they may have life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10)

THE FOURTH SUNDAY in the Easter season is Good Shepherd Sunday, with the Gospel reading taken from part of Jesus' "Good Shepherd" discourse in John 10. While most of us in 21st-century America have little or no personal exposure to sheep and shepherds, the biblical imagery is easy enough to understand. The key element is the intimate relationship between the sheep and their shepherd. The sheep know and trust the shepherd and willingly follow.

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

This Sunday's selection from John 10 features two short parables about shepherds and sheepgates. The first parable contrasts the good shepherd with a thief or a stranger. We are to imagine a large pen where the sheep stay when they are not in the fields at pasture. Unlike a thief or stranger, the good shepherd enters through the gate, calls his sheep by name and leads them out. They follow him not because they are stupid, but because they know and trust the shepherd. Who is the shepherd? Psalm 23 reminds us that "shepherd" is a prominent biblical image for God. The point of the parable is that as God the shepherd acts, so Jesus the shepherd acts. In John's Gospel there is no sharp dividing line between Jesus and the Father.

In the second parable the focus is on the gate for the sheep. Here Jesus identifies himself as the sheepgate. Whoever enters the pen through him will be safe and well cared for. Here Jesus is the way to the Father, the one who gives us direct and personal access to the creator and lord of all things. This is the abundant life that Jesus promises. His promise summarizes the spirit and goal of the Easter season. It reminds us that our life in Christ is a precious gift, and that the fullness of life resides in the intimate relationship with God made available for us through the paschal mystery.

How we become part of this abundant life is indicated by the conclusion in Acts 2 of Peter's speech at Pentecost. There Peter proclaims that the proper response to the good news about Jesus is to repent and be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ." Thus we become members of the Good Shepherd's flock.

The images of sheep and shepherd are also prominent in today's reading from 1 Peter 2. Here Peter seeks to encourage suffering Christians by appealing to the sufferings of Jesus the Servant of God, after the pattern set forth in Isaiah 53. Recall that there the Servant was described as "like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before his shearers." Peter shows how Jesus, the innocent sufferer, was a model of patience and trust in God, and that his suffering has enabled us to become more fully children of God ("by his wounds you have been healed"). Through his resurrection the slain Lamb has become for straying sheep "the shepherd and guardian of your souls." This startling transformation is a neat summary of what Christians believe about the paschal mystery.

Daniel J. Harrington

ART BY TAD DUNNE

Praying With Scripture

- How do you respond to the biblical imagery of sheep and shepherds? Is it helpful? Or does it put you off? Why?
- What distinctive points do the two short parables make about Jesus?
- What made possible the transformation of Jesus from the slain Lamb to the Good Shepherd?

An audio interview with the filmmaker Martin Doblmeier, director of "The Power of Forgiveness," at americamagazine.org