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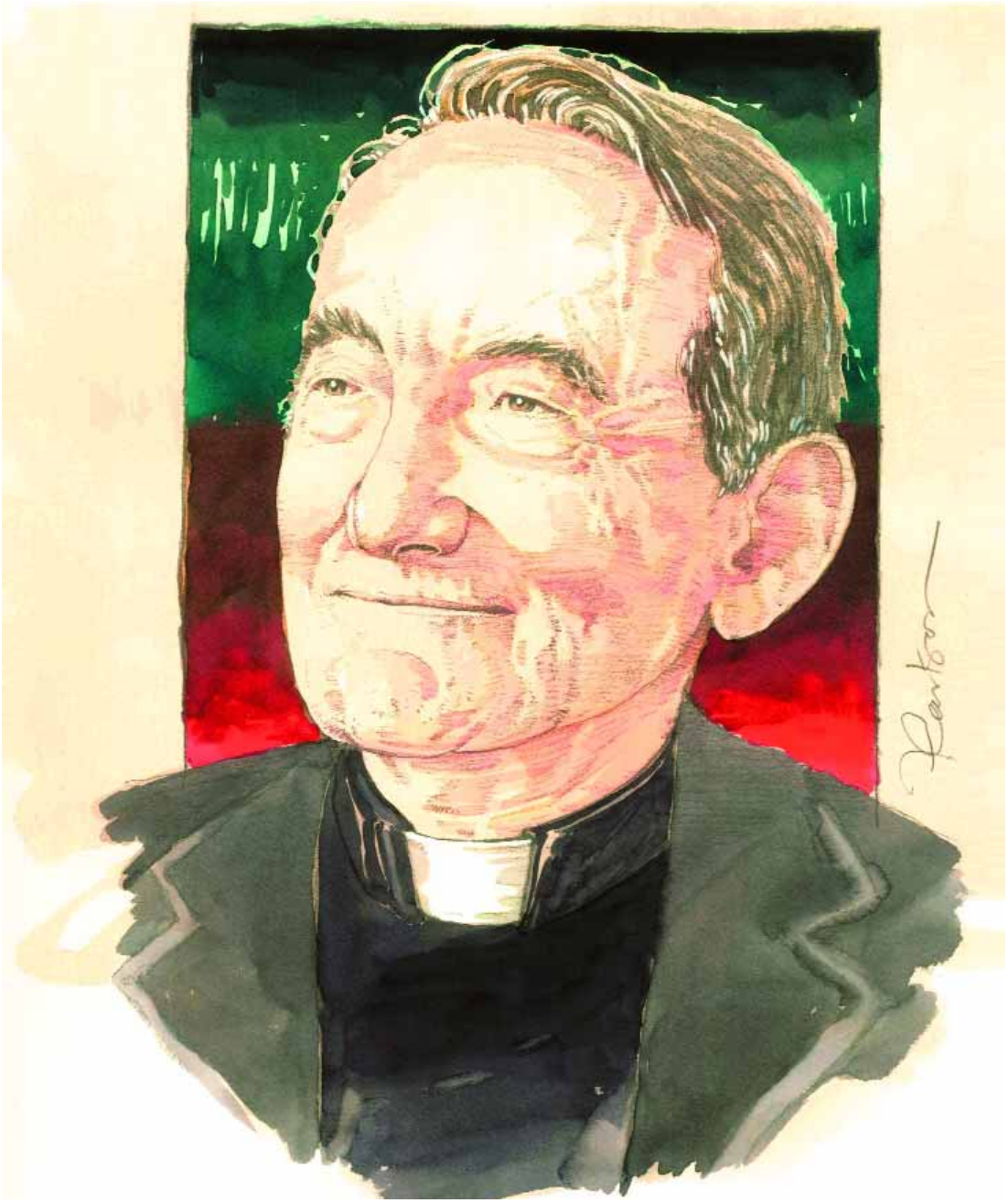

Avery Dulles
A Life in Theology
The 39th McGinley Lecture

Of Many Things

AT THE CASA, the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Ariz., where I recently made a retreat, a participant told me, "Volunteers do nearly everything here." A few friars could not accomplish all that the center does. It operates a conventual parish and puts on such excellent liturgies that thousands of worshippers attend its Holy Week services outdoors in the desert foothills. It also maintains a bookstore and sponsors retreats, counseling services, and educational and social action programs. Her comment bolsters what a friend who visited the Casa several years ago, said, "The daily prayer is led entirely by laypeople." (For more on my retreat, see **America**'s blog, In All Things).

New forms of leadership are emerging around the nation as parishes of vastly different descriptions address changing circumstances and extend their mission. A close look shows that new structures and models are being tried and that many of them are successful.

For six years, the project called Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership has played a unique role in this nationwide transition, commissioning analytic research, convening leaders who otherwise would neither see nor hear one another, and processing what is being learned. Now that project has joined with Loyola Press to publish *Shaping Catholic Parishes*, the first in a series of resources, edited by Carole Ganim. The appearance of this volume of 22 first-person accounts coincides with the project's National Ministry Summit 2008, which takes place on April 20-23 in Orlando, Fla. I'll be there.

Models show how some people have achieved their goals in ways that can be imitated and adapted. One learns, for example, from a parishioner's account how an evening Sunday Mass at St. Vincent de Paul parish in San Francisco has come to be "filled with young adults in their 20s and 30s being served by lectors, eucharistic ministers and ushers of the same age."

As a genre, success stories in which a parish overcomes obstacles can be irresistible. Even when briefly told, as these are, an authentic voice rings out.

"We had to find a way to enable people to be part of the community that would not become another burden or an addition to a long list of things they needed to do," writes a sister about a mostly Caribbean parish in Queens, N.Y., that is filled with single parents and parishioners working more than one job.

In another account, a parish council came up $11,000 shy of what it needed to pay for a new building. A quiet 88-year-old proposed, "If 11 people sacrificed and gave $1,000 each, the money could be easily raised." Ten minutes later she returned "with pledges adding up to $11,000." The incident took place in a rural Oklahoma parish of 120 families with no resident pastor and no paid staff. Committed volunteers maintain a hospital ministry team, an ecumenical grief-support group, a food-sack program for hungry travelers and an annual car show, the proceeds from which enable the parish to buy "a coat for every needy child in the county."

One more example: When a beloved young pastor died at the Cristo Rey parish in Seattle, the bishop sent not a resident priest, but a female pastoral life director to lead the grieving parishioners. "To them I was a slap in the face," she writes. She spent her first year poring over the names of the 2,000 families in the parish directory, praying for them page by page. She also asked the parishioners to pray for one another "one page each night." Over nine years, she and the two non-resident priests who work with her as a team built unity in the half-Anglo, half-Hispanic parish.

Such stories show the uniqueness and importance of parishes—the local lifeline of the worldwide church. One can also see in these developments an immense potential for reform, even transformation, presenting itself to the church now in two respects. First, the church is beginning to acknowledge and extend the range of leadership by women. (Arguably this is an area in which the early Christians were ahead of us.) Second, the church's enriched theology of baptism—one that leads to a universal Christian vocation to discipleship and mission—has led laypeople to respond to the call to religious leadership, no longer leaving pastoral care solely to clergy and religious. These two developments hold such promise in terms of new energy, spiritual gifts and the sheer number of Christians who could become engaged and active, that a revival of staggering proportions might eventually be the result.

Karen Sue Smith

America

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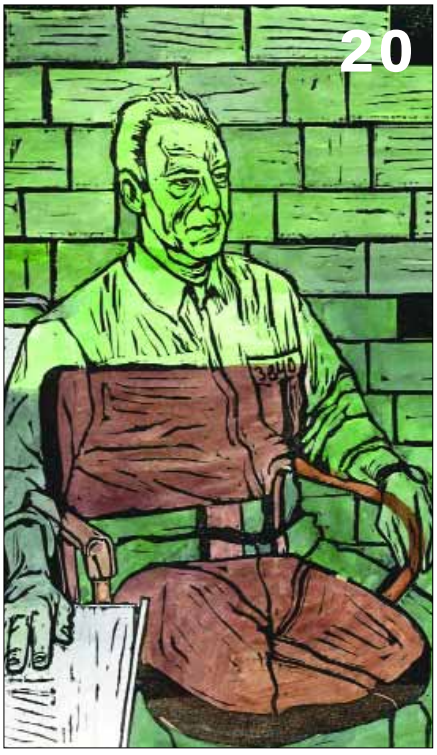


This week @ America Connects

A selection of archive articles by Avery Dulles, S.J., and the Rev. Robert P. Imbelli's response to the cardinal's final McGinley lecture. Plus, Donna Freitas discusses her new book, *Sex and the Soul*. All at americamagazine.org.

Benedict in America

What will Pope Benedict XVI say during his visits to Washington, D.C., and New York City? Will he hew to a simple proclamation of the Gospel? Or will he tackle hot-button issues like same-sex marriage, abortion and the Iraq war? Likewise, will he take aim at neuralgic issues in the church, like the sexual abuse crisis or religious fidelity at Catholic colleges? During the pope's Palm Sunday homily, he asked, "Is our faith open and pure enough?" That had some Vaticanologists wondering whether he will focus more on the sacred or the secular.

Most likely he will give attention to both. While his address at The Catholic University of America will certainly speak of the proclamation of the Gospel, listeners should expect at least a few mentions of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae.* While the crowds at Nationals Park and Yankee Stadium will hear about the love of God, they will also hear about the perils of American consumerism. In any event, it is a false dichotomy: the Gospel always has something to say about the secular world. When Pope John Paul II came to Yankee Stadium in 1979, he used the parable of Lazarus and the rich man to remind Americans about their obligation to the poor: "You must never be content to leave them just the crumbs of the feast. You must take of your substance, and not just of your abundance, in order to help them."

Unfortunately, many people may hear only what the pope has to say on the hot-button issues. "Christ is risen!" may be the boldest of proclamations, but to the media it is not news and not worth reporting. All the more reason to read the complete talks of Benedict, a teacher par excellence, and not rely solely on the media's boiled-down commentary.

Dubious Distinction

The State of Rajasthan in northwest India, home to the cities of Jaipur and Jodhpur, has majestic mountains, spectacular ancient forts, wildlife preserves and a newly passed anti-conversion law. It shares this last dubious distinction with five other Indian states since the end of last month, when its legislative assembly again approved a bill that had been withdrawn after it was passed in 2006. The stated aim of the law is to prevent conversions that are said to be effected by use of force, allurement or fraudulent means. The penalties for violators include five years in prison and a $1,200 fine. Local Catholic authorities fear that the law could provide an excuse for further violence against Christians.

Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, C.Ss.R., the archbishop of Ernakulam and president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, has criticized this legislative action. "This so-called Freedom of Religion Bill is a slur on the culture of our nation. India has long been respected in the international community as a country of tolerance, peace and respect for cultural and religious diversity, and this is a black mark for our nation." He said that such bills are against Indian constitutional freedom, since India's founding fathers included in the Constitution the right to the practice, profession and propagation of faith.

As a practical matter, available statistics suggest that Rajasthan is unlikely to be disrupted by mass conversions from the nearly 90 percent Hindu majority or from the nearly 10 percent Muslim minority. It has been suggested, instead, that passage of the bill was a pre-election ploy to attract extreme Hindu fundamentalist voters. Whatever else it may have been, it is surely a bad sign for the cultural and religious diversity praised by Cardinal Vithayathil and hoped for by all people of good will.

Polar Bears at Risk

The U.S. Department of the Interior announced plans early this year to permit oil drilling in Alaska's Chukchi Sea. Carl Pope, the Sierra Club's executive director, has said that an oil spill in that body of water could be catastrophic for polar bears, because "where there is off-shore drilling, there are oil spills, and there is no proven method for cleaning up oil in the Arctic's broken sea ice." Another environmental organization points out that oil-covered polar bears have little chance to survive spills, because the oil the bears ingest while trying to clean themselves could cause death.

The threat to the bears is already great because of global warming; as sea ice diminishes they face starvation and drowning. The Interior Department has been considering placing polar bears on the list of endangered species. The department has the responsibility not only of managing oil leases, but also of protecting U.S. wildlife, two roles that in cases of this kind seem to require the department to work virtually against itself. Some environmental groups are therefore skeptical about the department's ability to balance wildlife interests and those of energy developers. The department was to have made a decision in early January listing polar bears as threatened. Three conservation groups are suing it for missing its original deadline. Given the twin threats of oil drilling in the Chukchi Sea and ongoing global warming, the Interior Department should lose no more time in adding polar bears to its list of threatened species. They need federal protection.

Zimbabwe's Anguish

THE OUTCOME of Zimbabwe's presidential election on March 29 has remained uncertain for two weeks, amid signs of manipulation by President Robert Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF party. Underscoring these signs was the arrest of several foreign journalists on April 4 on the trumped-up charge of practicing journalism without government approval. Such a charge reflects just one of many human rights abuses that have plagued the nation during the 28 years of Mr. Mugabe's rule. Although it appears that the main opposition party's candidate, Morgan Tsvangirai, may have won by a slender margin, with barely 50 percent of the vote, Mr. Mugabe has shown no signs of accepting defeat and may call for a runoff. Violence is a constant threat. Last year Mr. Tsvangirai and a number of his followers were badly beaten by opponents.

Once hailed as a hero for leading the struggle for independence from British rule, the 84-year-old Mugabe has brought desolation to his country, especially through a "land reform" program in 2000 that benefited primarily his friends. Now the impoverished country has an inflation rate of 100,000 percent, which has rendered its currency nearly worthless. In a land that was once called the breadbasket of Africa because of its abundant harvests, hunger is an everyday experience for millions. The World Food Program has estimated that as much as a third of the population will need donated food assistance this year.

Mr. Mugabe, sadly, has used food as a political weapon. Only his closest supporters have had access to state-subsidized items like corn, the staple food of the nation's diet. Food shortages and unemployment (now 80 percent) have led millions of Zimbabweans to leave their native land for neighboring countries. Remittances sent home have helped, but few receive them. Adding to the nation's suffering is its high rate of H.I.V./AIDS, which has contributed to a sharp decline in life expectancy—currently 37 years for men, 34 for women—the lowest in the world. But despite the extremes of poverty endured by a majority of the population, Shari Eppel, a longtime human rights advocate in Zimbabwe, told **America** that "the rich have never been richer."

Especially troubling is the trampling of human rights by the very governmental entities, like the police, that should be upholding them. Georgette Gagnon, Africa director at Human Rights Watch, has commented that "it is appalling that the police, who are supposed to prevent abuses, are committing them." Just this past February, police agents arrested nine members of a teachers union for distributing flyers related to an education campaign. Taken to headquarters, they were beaten with iron bars, and a woman in the group was sexually assaulted.

Not only the police, but also members of the army and other branches of the security forces have abused their virtually unlimited powers, including the use of torture. What makes these abuses particularly disturbing is the atmosphere of impunity in which they take place. The government has done little to investigate them and to bring the perpetrators to justice. It has even prevented human rights organizations from conducting independent investigations. As the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference stated in its report last year, *God Hears the Cry of the Oppressed*, "It almost appears as though someone sat down with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and deliberately scrubbed out each in turn."

ONE CLEAR NEED is for human rights monitors to be more active. The monitors deployed by the member states of the Southern African Development Community have shown little backbone thus far, but they could help promote stability as well as much-needed respect for human rights. The African Union, a larger, intergovernmental organization consisting of over 50 African nations, should also help restore genuine democratic principles and overall security in the region.

In the event that Mr. Mugabe does finally step aside, the international community must help this all but moribund nation return to life by providing economic support. Strong pressure should also be brought to bear to protect human rights, which have been trampled in an atmosphere that has lacked the transparency needed to inspire confidence among Zimbabwe's own population and abroad. Accountability on the part of the police, army and security forces in general must be a priority if the country is to gain the respect of other nations. The humanitarian crisis in this country of 12 million has continued for too long. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice correctly pointed out on the day after the elections that Mr. Mugabe's regime has become a disgrace "to the [African] continent as a whole." His regime, we hope, is now finally coming to an end.

Pope to Bring Message of Hope to U.S., U.N.

In a videotaped message, Pope Benedict XVI said he wants to bring a message of Christian hope to all Americans and to the United Nations when he visits in mid-April. "I shall come to the United States as pope for the first time to proclaim this great truth: Jesus Christ is hope for men and women of every language, race, culture and social condition," the pope said. He said he intends to reach out to U.S. Catholics and show fraternity and friendship to other Christians, to followers of other religions and to all people of good will. The text of the papal message, released at the Vatican April 8, was designed to set the thematic stage for the pope's visit to Washington, D.C., and New York on April 15-20. The pope read the text mostly in English, but with a short section in Spanish.

Congress Acts on H.I.V./AIDS Bill

Federal lawmakers must maintain their bipartisan commitment in the global fight against H.I.V./AIDS, Archbishop George H. Niederauer of San Francisco said in a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Democrat of California.The archbishop's letter came before the House voted April 2 to pass President George W. Bush's $50 billion, five-year President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief, known as Pepfar. The program has provided $19 billion since it was inaugurated in 2003; it must be reauthorized this year. Archbishop Niederauer noted that while "the Catholic community would like to see" improvements in the measure, he had urged Pelosi to "ensure a swift and clean consideration of the bill."

In an April 3 statement, Bishop Thomas G. Wenski of Orlando, Fla., chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, welcomed the "bipartisan spirit" of the vote on "our nation's flagship program to combat H.I.V./AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria." The House action "sends two messages to anyone wondering about our nation's commitment to the world's poor and vulnerable: The United States will continue its solidarity with those affected by these terrible diseases, and such programs must continue to support morally appropriate evidence-based prevention and treatment activities that have been shown to save lives," Bishop Wenski said.

The House approved the measure by a 308-to-116 vote. The Senate's version of the bill was passed out of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee in March and is waiting to be considered on the floor of the chamber.

From CNS and other sources. CNS photos.

Bishops Urge Bill to Protect Farm Workers

Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas, of Tucson, Ariz., (left) and Bishop José Isidro Guerrero Macías of Mexicali, Mexico, (right) pose with farm workers in San Luis Río Colorado, Mexico, in September.

Expressing "deep concern for the men and women" who labor in the fields of southwestern Arizona and northern Mexico, the bishops of Tucson, Ariz., and Mexicali, Mexico, have issued a joint statement calling for legislation to end "exploitation of the undocumented farm worker." Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson and Bishop José Isidro Guerrero Macias of Mexicali urged passage of the Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits and Security Act, a bipartisan bill in the U.S. Congress known as Agjobs, which they said would be "a very positive step toward reversing discrimination." The bill, they said, enjoys broad support from both employers and workers' organizations and would streamline and improve the H-2A agricultural guest-worker immigration program, giving workers the right to appeal in federal court for enforcement of their rights and to receive higher wages. The bishops said their March 28 statement "was inspired by our experiences in September of last year, when we visited a farm worker project sponsored by Catholic Relief Services, the U.S. bishops' overseas relief and development agency, and our two dioceses in Yuma, Ariz., and San Luis Río Colorado,[in the Mexican state of] Sonora."

"We visited the workers in the fields," the statement said. "We saw the communities in Mexico in which they live. We listened to farm workers and employers share their needs and their dreams." Known as the nation's "winter salad bowl," the Yuma area supplies more than 90 percent of the lettuce sold in the United States from November through February, and this "requires a huge pool of readily available labor," the bishops said.

Pope Adds Visits With Jewish Leaders to Trip

When Pope Benedict XVI visits the United States, he will meet with Jewish representatives as they prepare for the Jewish feast of Passover, which begins April 19. After the pope's meeting with 200 interreligious leaders April 17 at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington, D.C., he will meet with Jewish leaders briefly to extend "cordial greetings for the imminent feast of Passover," said Msgr. David Malloy, general secretary of the U.S. Conference of

Catholic Bishops. On Pope Benedict's way to the ecumenical prayer service in New York City April 18, he will also make a 20-minute visit to the Park East Synagogue. The synagogue is near the residence of the Vatican's ambassador to the United Nations, where the pope will be residing. "By this personal and informal visit, which is not part of his official program, His Holiness wishes to express his good will toward the local Jewish community as they prepare for Passover," Monsignor Malloy said.

Vatican: Prayer for the Jews Not a Step Back

Pope Benedict XVI's revised prayer for the Jews for use in the Tridentine-rite Good Friday liturgy does not indicate any form of stepping back from the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, the Vatican said. "The Holy See wishes to reassure that the new formulation of the prayer, which modifies certain expressions of the 1962 Missal, in no way intends to indicate a change in the Catholic Church's regard for the Jews, which has evolved from the basis of the Second Vatican Council," said an April 4 statement from the Vatican press office.

The revised prayer removed 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." The April 4 statement said some members of the Jewish community felt the new prayer was "not in harmony with the official declarations and statements of the Holy See regarding the Jewish people and their faith which have marked the progress of friendly relations between the Jews and the Catholic Church over the last 40 years." In particular, some Jews, as well as some Catholics, felt the prayer contained an explicit call to attempt to convert Jews to Christianity.

In early February, the Vatican published Pope Benedict's revision of the Good Friday prayer, which is used only in the liturgy celebrated according to the 1962 Roman Missal, or Tridentine rite. The rite is no longer widely used by Catholics but may be used by some church communities under recently revised norms.

Blair Says Faith Can Transform Humanity

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has spoken of his "passionate" conviction that religious faith can transform humanity for the better. Blair, 54, a former Anglican who was received into the Catholic Church just days before Christmas, said he wanted to promote the "idea of faith itself as something dynamic, modern and full of present relevance." He told 1,600 people gathered in London's Westminster Cathedral April 3 that faith had a "major part to play in shaping the values which guide the modern world and can and should be a force for progress.... But it has to be rescued on the one hand from the extremist and exclusionary tendency within religion today and on the other from the danger that religious faith is seen as an interesting part of history and tradition, but with nothing to say about the contemporary human condition."

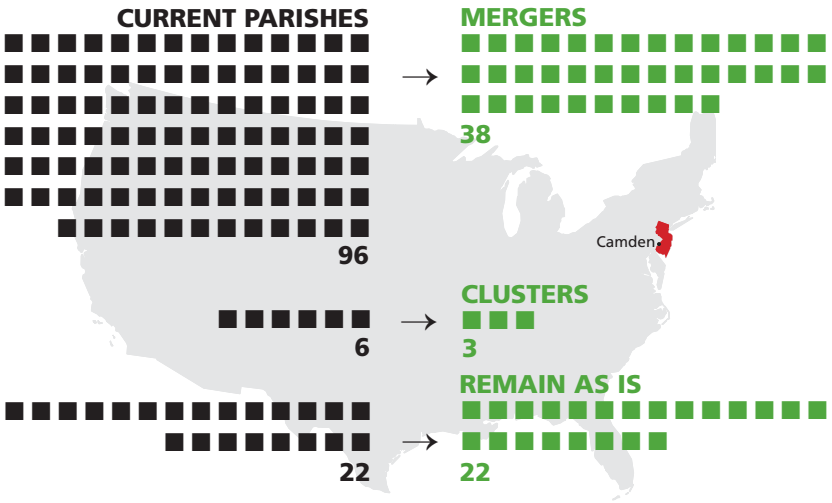
"I see faith and reason, faith and progress, as in alliance, not contention," he said. His remarks were made during a lecture entitled "Faith and Globalization," the first in a series of six speeches hosted by the Archdiocese of Westminster on faith and life in Britain.

New Co-Cathedral Dedicated in Houston

As the 23 bells of the campanile at the new Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Houston summoned the faithful for its Mass of dedication, the special choir gathered for the occasion sang "The Church's One Foundation." The dedication on April 2 marked the birth of a new central place of worship for the 1.3 million faithful within the borders of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Following a procession of deacons, priests and nearly two dozen bishops from the United States, Honduras and Canada, Deacon Gerald DuPont carried a box containing the relics of 11 saints as well as a sizable fragment of the true cross that St. Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, brought back to Rome from Jerusalem. Among the relics were those of the first American-born saint, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Leo the Great, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston was the main celebrant of the three-hour Mass.

Diocese of Camden Announces Reconfiguration

Bishop Joseph A. Galante of Camden, N.J., announced a reconfiguration plan that will affect most parishes in the diocese.



Source: www.camdendiocese.org

Sorry Business

'We can learn from the Australian experience.'

"SORRY" IS THE HARDEST thing to say. And also the easiest. Anyone who has lived with teenagers knows the easy version, the "Sorreee" that translates roughly into "O.K., so whatever; just get off my case." Such apologies are meaningless; in fact they are derisory. We have also, in recent times, heard a few official apologies about various matters, some of which may have left us with the slightly sour aftertaste of political expediency. The lips have spoken. But was the heart engaged, we might wonder.

In Australia a very different kind of apology was recently made. The people of that continent have long carried a collective sense of guilt about the treatment of aboriginal people in the past, and especially with regard to the so-called "stolen generations." These were children who were forcibly removed from their families and taken to boarding schools, where they were forbidden to use their own languages and where the culture and value systems of the colonizing power were imposed on them, often violently. The pattern was repeated in other parts of the "new world," and the churches actively colluded in the abuses. The United States, Canada and Australia are now very consciously trying to put right those wrongs—wrongs that originated not in the new world at all, but in European imperialism. Tragically, this pattern of cultural imperialism is far from dead in our own times.

So why was the Australian experience so moving?

The Sydney Times of Feb. 14 commented that "Australians cannot rewrite their history, but they can re-shape their future." The previous day the newly elected Australian prime minister, Kevin Rudd, had honored the promise of his manifesto, and on behalf of the people said "Sorry" to the indigenous peoples of the continent. Can we redress past wrongs simply with a word? Of course not. The same issue of The Sydney Times has a cartoon showing a trucker waving a cursory "Sorry," as he drives on, to a man he has just mown down on the road. Words can kill, but words alone cannot heal. But they can be the beginning of a different way forward.

Certainly Rudd's words were far from cursory. They were a major speech to all Australians, totally and exclusively focused on the matter in hand, the matter of repentance. More important, they were not simply the convenient words of a politician, but an expression of the true spirit of the nation, a spirit he had been specifically elected to express. I saw many tears that morning, both of deep sorrow and great joy. Very few hearts remained untouched.

Another comment, however, made me prick up my ears. A friend remarked, "For the aboriginal people, the word 'sorry' is hugely important and means much more than it does for us. In fact they would use the expression 'sorry business.'" He went on to explain that in aboriginal culture, the word of apology is only just the beginning of a long process of making that sorrow and repentance incarnate in actions and in change. Not a word, but a whole business is involved when wrong has been done. Rudd obviously knew this all too well, as he proceeded to spell out practical measures that would be implemented, for example to improve aboriginal education, health care and employment opportunities. This was the "business," and it was going to be costly and difficult and demanding, but utterly necessary if this "Sorry" was to be more than a "Sorreee."

I wondered, out loud, how the aboriginal communities would respond. I guess I half hoped for a public acceptance of the apology in the next day's post, so to speak. Wrong again! My informant continued my education: "There is sorry business," he told me, and "sorry time." When wrong has been done, and the apology made and the business begun in earnest, then the offender has to serve "sorry time." This means waiting until the one you have harmed chooses to extend the hand of forgiveness. It takes time. These indigenous people understand, better than we do, that forgiveness, like repentance, cannot just be dispensed in words (or even in sacraments), but has to be grown, and that growing takes time—painful time. Who knows when and how Australia's first peoples will feel that the sorry business has been done and the sorry time has been served?

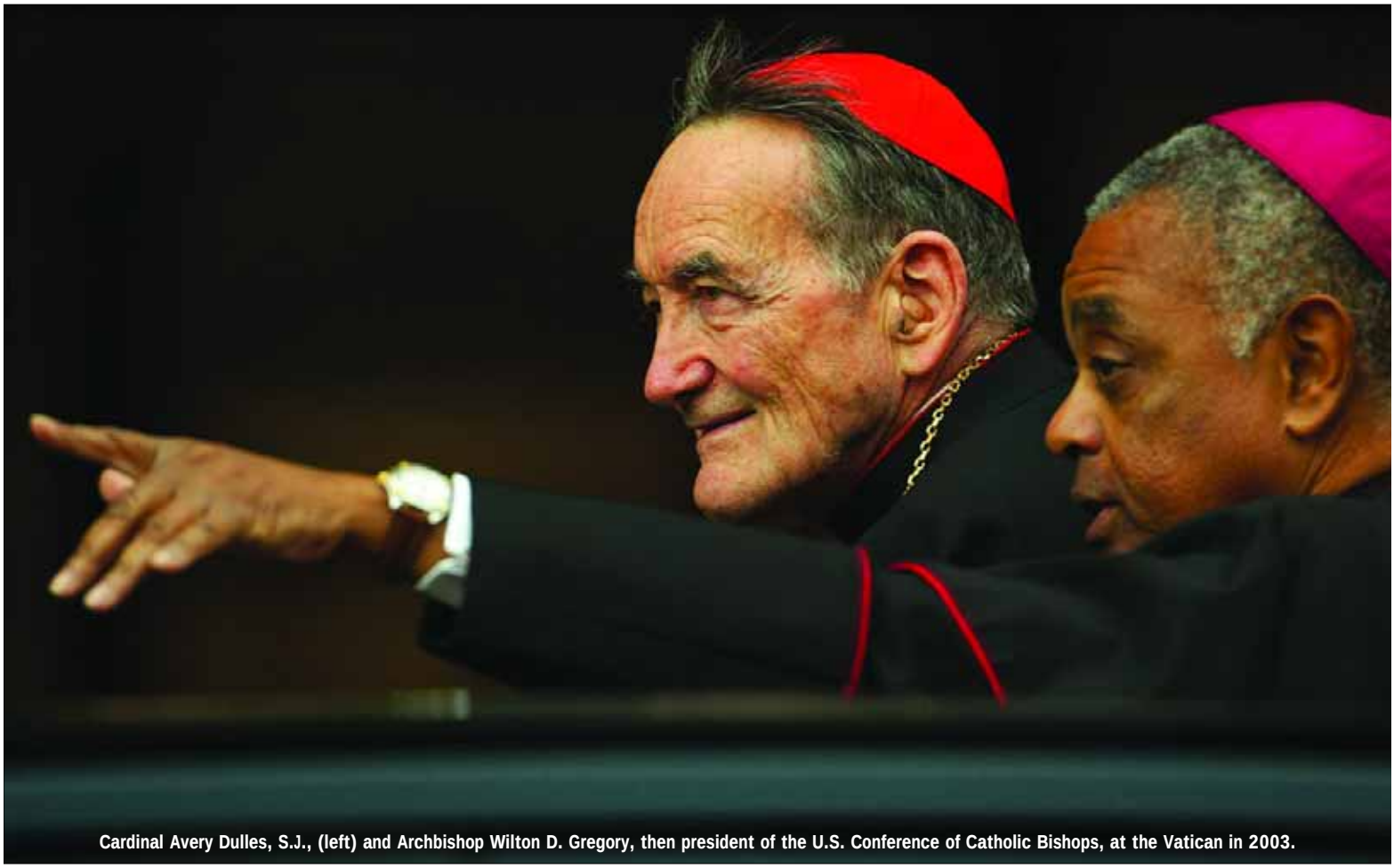
The sacrament of reconciliation reflects this wisdom. It requires that the penitent express true contrition and offers absolution with the requirement that a penance be performed. In other words, the penitent's "Sorry" must be genuine and must lead into the "sorry business."

We often hear complaints that this sacrament is falling into disuse. It would be easy to come to the conclusion that people in today's world have lapsed into the "Sorreee" habit, and we are no longer taking seriously the damage we do to one another or to the planet. There may be other reasons, however. Could it be that people realize that if our "Sorry" to God is merely a perfunctory prayer in a confessional, then it will never address the real and deep and painful issues that are churning away within us and among us?

I believe we can learn something from the Australian experience. And I wait, not too patiently, for the word of sorrow that my own nation of Great Britain owes the world in general, and the people of Ireland in particular, for past wrongs. And I pray for the grace to be part of the "sorry business" in whatever way I can, because collective sorrow can only become real in personal lives.

Margaret Silf

MARGARET SILF lives in Staffordshire, England. Her latest books are *Companions of Christ: Ignatian Spirituality for Everyday Living* and *The Gift of Prayer*.



Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J., (left) and Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory, then president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, at the Vatican in 2003.

CNS PHOTO FROM REUTERS

39th McGinley Lecture

A Life in Theology

– BY AVERY DULLES –

IT IS A MATTER OF SURPRISE that I have occupied the Laurence J. McGinley Chair in Religion and Society for 20 years. When I reached the statutory retirement age at The Catholic University of America in 1988, I received several academic offers. As a Jesuit, I consulted my provincial superior as to which I should accept, and he replied that I should await an offer from Fordham that was still in the making. In another month I received a letter from Joseph A. O'Hare, S.J., the president of Fordham, inviting me to be the first holder of this new professorship named

CARDINAL AVERY DULLES, S.J., is the Laurence J. McGinley Professor of Religion and Society at Fordham University, Bronx, N.Y. This article is the text of the Laurence J. McGinley Lecture, given on April 1, 2008.

for the president emeritus, Laurence J. McGinley, S.J. Father O'Hare gave me a choice of accepting for two years or for one year renewable. Being of a cautious nature, I opted for the second alternative. As it turned out, there was no limit on the number of possible renewals, which have cordially been extended both by Father O'Hare and by his successor Father Joseph McShane, and so here I am, 20 years later, still sitting on the metaphorical chair.

Why, then, a farewell? Why not 30 or 40 years on this blissful seat? In this life, unfortunately, all good things must come to an end. I was already making serious preparations to resign when I began to be stricken with a succession of health problems, all resulting from a bout of polio dating from 1945, when I was a naval officer in World War II. Until at least the year 2000 it seemed that I had pretty well overcome the disabilities, but the aftereffects began to manifest themselves in recent years, and in the past year they have become so acute as to prevent me from doing the teaching, lecturing and writing that my duties here at Fordham require. Divine providence, which has graciously guided my career throughout these many years, is giving clear signs that it is time to move on and make way for a younger and healthier successor.

> There is no one on earth with whom I would want to exchange places. It has been a special privilege to serve in the Society of Jesus, a religious community specially dedicated to the Savior of the world.

Among the principal responsibilities attached to the McGinley Chair are the semi-annual public lectures that I have been delivering since the fall of 1988. This lecture ought by rights to be the 40th, but because I had to miss one lecture back in 1994, there are only 39. The first 38 have been gathered into a book just published by Fordham University Press. The book will probably be the most substantial, if not the sole, memorial of my tenure of the McGinley Chair.

Selection of Topics

All told, I have given hundreds of lectures on a great variety of themes during the past 20 years, but the McGinley lectures belong in a category by themselves. I have given them my closest attention to make sure of having in each case a publishable text. Whereas in other cases the theme has usually been set by the persons issuing the invitation, almost all the topics and titles of the McGinley lectures are my own.

The designation of my professorship—religion and society—leaves open a very wide field of choice, ranging from the religious to the secular, from ecclesiastical doctrine to social analysis. I have spoken on strictly theological themes such as the sacrifice of the cross, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, heaven and hell. But also, gravitating toward the societal pole, I have talked of secular themes such as politics, human rights and the death penalty.

In the selection of topics I have followed three criteria.

First of all, I wanted all the topics to have at least a theological dimension. A theologian is what I am, and I work within the Catholic tradition, which is my home. Although I try not to display ignorance of fields such as philosophy, history, literature and sociology, insofar as they are relevant to my inquiry, I claim competence only in theology.

In the second place, I attempted to concentrate on themes that were matters of debate among Catholic theologians. These lectures are not a simple exercise in catechesis or Christian doctrine. In every instance, I suspect, a controversy is being addressed, or at least lurks in the background. My intention is to give an informed judgment as to which positions are sound and which should be rejected.

Third, I have tried to choose topics of general interest not reserved to a small clique of specialists. For these lectures are public. I make an effort to avoid theological jargon and to speak a language that all educated Christians can understand. I recognize the necessity of using technical terms for discussing recondite questions, and even in these lectures I borrow from the church councils terms such as "substantial presence" and "subsisting in," but I hope I have made these terms generally intelligible. Theologians are sometimes tempted to display their erudition by adopting the most recent coinages of sophisticated European intellectuals even when the terminology serves more to obscure than to clarify their message.

As I glance over the titles of my McGinley lectures, I have the impression that they form a solid collection dealing with major theological and social issues inherited from the Second Vatican Council and still under discussion today. I dare to hope that the opinions I have proposed and defended are true and persuasive. The faith that underlies them is not true today and false tomorrow; its teachings are permanent and universal.

A certain number of these McGinley lectures, I acknowledge, are linked with events now past, such as the

advent of the third millennium. Pope John Paul II, however, used the great jubilee as a teaching moment to impress on the faithful ideas that should guide them, and us, at all times. The teaching ministry of that extraordinary pope until his death in 2005 gave me much necessary guidance.

Listening and Learning Before Speaking

I cannot claim that these lectures are unified by a single method. In each case the method has to be adapted to the topic. But in general I have begun my investigation by asking what others, especially authoritative voices, have had to say about pertinent questions. I want to learn before I speak. If all the witnesses agree, and if there are no unanswered objections, it will be sufficient to note the consensus. But because I have deliberately selected controversial topics, I have generally found both agreements and disagreements. After ascertaining the spectrum of opinions, I search out the best arguments in favor of each major position. To present and classify the existing opinions is, I take it, a service to theology, but I think it necessary also to criticize views that are inadequate. Feeling a responsibility to reach a judgment, I draw conclusions that bring me into conflict with some of my colleagues. In my conclusions I try to incorporate the valid insights of all parties to the discussion, rather than perpetuate a one-sided view that is partial and incomplete. I think of myself as a moderate trying to make peace between opposed schools of thought. While doing so, however, I insist on logical consistency. Unlike certain relativists of our time, I abhor mixtures of contradictions.

I mentioned above that I speak as a theologian. By that term I mean that I draw conclusions from what I believe as a Catholic Christian. The church teaches, and I firmly believe, that the Son of God became man some 2,000 years ago, died to redeem us and rose for the sake of our salvation. Christ the Redeemer, who has given the fullness of revelation, has also made provision for the revelation to be kept alive in the church without corruption or dilution. These basic teachings of our faith, held in common by all believers, are presupposed by Catholic theology. The faith takes nothing away from what I can know by my native reasoning powers, but it adds a vast new light coming from on high.

In my lectures, then, I have made continual use of Christian revelation as conveyed through holy Scripture and Catholic tradition. I am reluctant to say anything that runs against these sacred sources on the pretext that we have superior insight today. Respect for the deposit of faith should not be called conservatism in the pejorative sense but a simple loyalty to the word of God. When in these lectures I affirm that Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross, or that he makes himself substantially present in the Eucharist, or that the gate to salvation is a narrow one, or that priestly ordination is reserved to men, or that capital punishment is sometimes warranted, in each case I am willingly adhering to the testimony of Scripture and perennial Catholic tradition.

These lectures, I hope, make it clear that tradition is a developing thing because the church lives in history. Tradition develops in fidelity to its own deepest principles, as this set of lectures illustrates, for instance, with reference to religious freedom and Mariology. To anticipate what developments are appropriate often requires an exceptional sense of the faith. Developments of doctrine always involve a certain continuity; a reversal of course is not a development.

As the reader will easily discover, I do not particularly strive for originality. Very few new ideas, I suspect, are true. If I conceived a theological idea that had never occurred to anyone in the past, I would have every reason to think myself mistaken. The current confusion in theology is in no small part due to a plethora of innovations, which last a few years only to be overtaken by further, and equally ephemeral, theories. The effort to keep up with the latest theological fashions is hardly a profitable investment of time. Far more valuable would it be to insert oneself in the great tradition of the fathers and doctors of the church. I myself try to think and speak within that tradition, while taking due notice of new and deviant opinions.

Without in any way comparing myself to Pope Benedict XVI, I feel that I can make his words my own when he writes:

> I have never tried to create a system of my own, an individual theology. What is specific, if you want to call it that, is that I simply want to think in communion with the faith of the Church, and that means above all to think in communion with the great thinkers of the faith. The aim is not an isolated theology that I draw out of myself but one that opens as widely as possible into the common intellectual pathways of the faith.
>
> *Salt of the Earth*, 1997, pg. 66

These words speak very powerfully to me because, as a Jesuit, I am committed to St. Ignatius of Loyola's "Rules for Thinking with the Church."

The Quest for Eternal Truth and Wisdom

The present climate of opinion does not favor tradition and orthodoxy, two terms that have negative connotations for many hearers. Our culture is dominated by experimental science, which works by entirely different methods, leaving

A selection of archive articles by Avery Dulles, S.J., may be found at americamagazine.org/dulles.cfm.

its own past behind as it forges into the future. Science, we all know, does not rest on a treasury of revealed knowledge handed down in authoritative tradition. Science has wonderfully increased our powers to make and to destroy, but it does not tell us what we ought to do and why. It does not tell us where the universe came from, or why we exist or what our final destination is. And yet some scientists speak as though their discipline were the only kind of valid knowledge.

This brand of scientism has been around for centuries, but only today is it boasting of its powers to displace philosophical wisdom and religious faith, as I noted in my McGinley Lecture "God and Evolution," a year ago. Already as a college undergraduate 70 years ago, I felt the oppressive nature of a culture that had no place for objective moral norms and meaning. I was desperate for enlightenment about whether there was anything worth living and dying for, as I explained in one of my earliest books, *A Testimonial to Grace*. That very desperation set me on the path that led through ancient Greek philosophy to Catholic faith.

All of us today are immersed in a culture that lacks abiding truths and fixed moral norms. But there is no necessity for our culture to have taken this negative turn. Ancient philosophers, like Plato and Aristotle, had refuted the materialism, relativism, subjectivism and hedonism of their day and had shown the validity of metaphysical knowledge. Western thought followed in the path of cognitive realism for many centuries before the revival of agnosticism in the Renaissance. Catholic believers and indeed all clear thinkers have good reasons not to be engulfed in the superficial trends of the times. In his great encyclical *Faith and Reason* (1998), which forms the topic of one McGinley Lecture, John Paul II summoned philosophy to resume its original quest for eternal truth and wisdom.

As mentioned earlier, I entered college in a quagmire of confusion about whether life and the universe could make sense at all. I was conscious of the emptiness of a selfish life based on the pursuit of pleasure. Happiness, I gradually came to see, is the reward given for holding fast to what is truly good and important. To some extent the philosophers of antiquity identified these goals. But Christian revelation brought a tremendous increase of light. God alone, I learned from the New Testament, was good and true in an unqualified sense. And the same God in all his beauty and majesty became one of our human family in Jesus Christ, the truth, the way and the life. The most important thing about my career, and many of yours, I feel sure, is the discovery of the pearl of great price, the treasure hidden in the field, the Lord Jesus himself.

As I approach the termination of my active life, I gratefully acknowledge that a benign providence has governed my days. The persons I have met, the places I have been, the things I have been asked to do, have all coalesced into a pattern, so that each stage of my life has prepared me for the next. My 20 years on the McGinley Chair have been a kind of climax, at least from my personal point of view. I often feel that there is no one on earth with whom I would want to exchange places. It has been a special privilege to serve in the Society of Jesus, a religious community specially dedicated to the Savior of the world.

The good life does not have to be an easy one, as our blessed Lord and the saints have taught us. Pope John Paul II in his later years used to say, "The Pope must suffer." Suffering and diminishment are not the greatest of evils, but are normal ingredients in life, especially in old age. They are to be accepted as elements of a full human existence. Well into my 90th year I have been able to work productively. As I become increasingly paralyzed and unable to speak, I can identify with the many paralytics and mute persons in the Gospels, grateful for the loving and skillful care I receive and for the hope of everlasting life in Christ. If the Lord now calls me to a period of weakness, I know well that his power can be made perfect in infirmity. "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" A

Read selections from the Rev. Robert P. Imbelli's response to Cardinal Dulles's lecture, at americamagazine.org.

Becoming Kosovo

The economic struggles of an emerging nation

BY MATTHEW J. GAUDET

Kosovo's Albanians celebrate in Pristina on Feb. 17, 2008, following their declaration of independence from Serbia.

PHOTO: REUTERS/DAMIR SAGOLJ

PERHAPS THE MOST TELLING SYMBOL of the fragility of Kosovo is the family home. Upon arriving in Kosovo, one's immediate impression is that the entire region appears to be under construction. Cranes dot the skyline and construction materials line the sidewalks and streets. The vast majority of homes lie in mid-construction and the few buildings that appear complete were built in the last eight years. When Serbia drove the Albanians out in 1998 and 1999, Serbs looted homes, burning them to the ground in an effort to ensure that Albanians would not return. When the Albanians returned in 1999, they retaliated in kind. Little was left standing when peace finally came at the end of 1999. As the conflict ended, however, a great hope emerged among the Albanian population. International aid poured in and created good jobs for many, especially those who could speak English. The foreign aid, combined with millions of dollars worth of remittances coming from Kosovar relatives who remained overseas, sparked a great reconstruction in Kosovo that provided more jobs and furthered the economic recovery.

Today, however, nearly all of those homes remain unfinished. Upon closer examination, one finds no signs of active construction on most of them. The largest hindrance to economic prosperity in Kosovo has been the question of its international status. Since the end of the conflict, Kosovo has been a pawn in a game of global politics, and the new nation has not fared well in that role. After the conflict,

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Kosovo was governed by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, though officially Kosovo remained part of Serbia. During that time, the Serbian government rejected any settlement that included independence for Kosovo. Serbia was backed by Russia, which is concerned about the influence of the United States on the region and the precedent Kosovo's independence could set for Russia's own renegade province of Chechnya. The United States and the countries of the European Union (with a few exceptions), by contrast, have made it no secret that independence for Kosovo was their ultimate goal.

The Consequences of Political Stalemate

The impasse lasted for almost nine years until Kosovo declared independence on Feb. 17, 2008. Kosovo's economy suffered greatly during the standstill. In recent years, the international aid that boosted Kosovo's economy just after the conflict has tapered off in anticipation of international corporate investment. But corporations were wary of investing until the matter of independence was resolved. That left many Kosovars out of work or settling for work that pays a fraction of their former U.N. or nongovernmental organization salaries and well below the poverty line. In 2006, 37 percent of Kosovars lived on less than $2 a day.

A national bank was set up just after the conflict in an effort to stimulate the economy by providing loans to businesses and individuals. Initially, the bank served this purpose well, but as the political stalemate dragged on and the economy began to stall, the bank also tightened its pockets. Today, mortgages to finish those half-started homes are nearly impossible to get, and there are no small business loans for entrepreneurs. When loans are granted, they come saddled with high fees and interest rates to mitigate the bank's risk.

While work stoppages and decreased salaries have prevented many homes from being finished, they have not prevented them from being occupied. A typical Kosovar home has a basic frame of clay brick, but most lack any sort of insulation or finishing to protect their inhabitants from the elements. Many families cannot afford the luxury of windows. In such cases, owners fill empty window frames with loose bricks to keep the weather out.

An ineffective power grid causes daily blackouts throughout the country. Local businesses cope with the outages by using gas-powered generators. Families have adapted by keeping a propane stove and a supply of water on hand for those times when the electric stove and water pump are not usable. It is said that Kosovo has enough coal in its hills to provide power to Kosovo and some of its neighbors for another 80 years. Supply is not the problem. Rather, the power station and the grid itself need vital upgrades if the country is to develop. International aid has been targeted to construct a modern power plant, but even that will not help unless the power companies can find a way to get people to pay their utility bills. The first step is to install meters and educate the people throughout this former Communist country, where utilities were centrally funded in the past. But even after a proper billing system is in place, many families simply will not be able to pay.

A vacuum left by reductions in international aid and the reluctance of corporations to invest has been filled recently by a rise in emigrant remittances. While remittance aid has gone a long way to help feed, clothe and shelter the average Kosovar family, it is not the best form of income for the long term. Increasingly remittances are being used for daily subsistence rather than economic growth. The shift appears to be a response to rising unemployment, which has reached astounding proportions recently. Survival in the short term is more important than sustainability in the long term.

Battling Unemployment, Poverty and Crime

Kosovo has Europe's youngest population (more than half are under 26), with a much larger percentage of Kosovars still of school age than in the rest of Europe. Its high unemployment is compounded by a relatively uneducated workforce. Many of those who have "completed" school did so during the tumultuous 1990s. In the late 1980s, Serbian

authorities converted Albanian-language schools into Serbian. The Albanian population protested by removing their children from schools and establishing a private Albanian-language system in homes and mosques. These schools severely lacked resources and funding, so the education suffered. Today, the highest rate of unemployment is among the young; since jobs are at a premium, employers favor those with education and experience.

The increasing poverty and lack of education have made Kosovo a breeding ground for organized crime. As the political impasse has dragged on, crime has become more entrenched. A large percentage of businesses in Kosovo are believed to have links to organized crime. While Kosovo's new government has an entire ministry dedicated to good governance and anticorruption efforts, implementation will not be easy. One of the largest battles the government faces is wiping out the now rampant trade in human trafficking—one of the most tragic consequences of western involvement in Kosovo. Human trafficking did not exist before the conflict; now it thrives. The poverty cycle in Kosovo has increased the trade, as individuals seeking to get themselves out of poverty fall victim to traffickers' false promises of well-paying jobs.

Kosovo's declaration of independence will certainly have a positive effect on the psyche of Albanian Kosovars and may provide much-needed stability. Ideally, it will allow financial institutions the stability to provide loans at a reasonable rate, which will help to stimulate entrepreneurship, the growth of small businesses and construction. Furthermore, stability should encourage greater foreign investment in Kosovo and alleviate the effect of drops in foreign aid and the unemployment crisis. On the other hand, the tenuous nature of Kosovo's independence leaves plenty of room for doubt about a rosy future. Serbia continues to claim sovereignty over Kosovo, and other nations have refused to accept Kosovo's autonomy. Trade may prove difficult without universal recognition of Kosovo. The threat of another conflict with Serbia may still keep investors away. Moreover, the simple declaration of independence cannot immediately cure the new nation's economic woes. Poor education, decrepit infrastructure and organized crime combine to make Kosovo's path to economic security a steep uphill climb. A

The Papal Visit: April 15-20

For this special event, **America** will post timely articles at americamagazine.org. Look for related material on our blog, In All Things. An editorial and Signs of the Times coverage with photos will appear in the issue of May 5, followed by analysis on May 12.

Healing Torture's Wounds

One doctor's fight for the survivors

BY GEORGE M. ANDERSON

"THERE'S NO WAY TO UNDO what survivors of torture have suffered, but we can help them to get on with their lives," Allen Keller, M.D., told me during an interview in his office at New York City's Bellevue Hospital, the oldest public hospital in the nation. Dr. Keller is director of the Bellevue/N.Y.U. Program for Survivors of Torture, co-sponsored by Bellevue and the adjoining New York University School of Medicine. More than 2,000 people from around the world have received treatment there.

Allen S. Keller, M.D., examines a patient at the Bellevue/New York University Program for Survivors of Torture at Bellevue Hospital Center, New York, N.Y.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ALLEN S. KELLER, M.D.

Survivors' stories can be horrific. Keller tells of a Tibetan artist who was forced by Chinese interrogators to put his hands into an oven as punishment for having criticized the government. Eventually, he managed to flee to India, and then to the survivors program in New York. "He could barely hold a pen when he arrived," says Dr. Keller, who treated him. But after pain management and reconstructive surgery, together with individual and group therapy, the artist is now drawing again and writing poetry. In describing the long road back to recovery, Dr. Keller stresses the interdependency of various aspects of the program—physical, psychological and social. But even with extensive medical intervention on all three levels, "suffering often continues in the form of nightmares and flashbacks," he says. After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, he notes, "a lot of patients in our program had disturbing retraumatizing memories."

The survivors program had its roots in Dr. Keller's experiences as a medical student. Taking a year off from his studies in the mid-1980s, he traveled to southeast Asia to work as a volunteer in refugee camps on the Thai-Cambodian border. That work, says Keller, "opened my eyes to the interrelationship between health and human rights." Volunteering within a large refugee population, he "realized that they were not there because of natural disasters, but because of the widespread human rights abuses that come from war. It was my first time," he observes, "to hear stories of trauma, torture and death by starvation."

On his return to New York, Keller joined Physicians for Human Rights, a network of health professionals who, among other activities, volunteer to examine individuals who claim to have been tortured and are applying for political asylum in the United States. Members help to prepare affidavits on their behalf. Dr. Keller sat in on a session with a torture survivor and subsequently began to do evaluations himself. On completing his residency, he returned to southeast Asia to spend the year 1992-93 in Cambodia. There, he says, "I was doing public health work but also helping train Cambodian health professionals how to document human rights abuses." The abuses were many. "Every Cambodian I met there had lost one or more family members during the rule of the Khmer Rouge, both then and in the succeeding years."

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The Program for Survivors of Torture

Back in New York and joined by colleagues, he set up the Program for Survivors of Torture in 1995. The program has established an international reputation. The issue of torture has become more pressing after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and since then with allegations that U.S. interrogators of terrorism suspects have crossed the line into practices that some saw as torture.

Dr. Keller began to testify before Congress as an expert in the evaluation of torture victims. In testimony in September 2007 as a member of the program's advisory council, he spoke of the now highly publicized form of torture by water immersion. One of his patients, who had been repeatedly submerged in a vat of water while being interrogated, told him that even years later, he "still felt as if he was gasping for air whenever he went out in the rain." Another patient of his "had a gun pointed at his head which would be abruptly pulled away and then fired into the air." The patient told him, "even now I still hear the sound of the gunshot in my head—this torture is encrusted in my brain."

> 'Torture undermines a sense of who we are as a society and the core values we hold dear in the United States; that's why by trying to eradicate it, we make the world a more humane place.'

Dr. Keller emphasizes that the various forms of torture rarely occur in isolation. Rather, a person placed in prolonged isolation in a dark cell might also be exposed to intense heat or cold and to loud noises. When combined, the physical and psychological impact is compounded. The psychological impact can be the more damaging, Keller says. "One individual I cared for spoke of the dread of waiting to be called in for an interrogation and hearing the screams of a colleague or loved one being tortured."

Other common forms of torture include sleep deprivation, forced standing, sexual assaults and beatings. The term water boarding—made infamous by Michael Mukasey's equivocal answers about the interrogation method during his confirmation hearings as candidate for attorney general—is symptomatic of the misleading terms for coercive questioning the C.I.A. has used. Such terms are intended to de-emphasize the agonizing nature of what actually takes place. "And we use other ridiculous terms like 'enhanced interrogation techniques' that have now come into the C.I.A.'s lexicon," Dr. Keller says. The same is true of the term "extraordinary rendition," he adds. "Let's call it what it is: arresting individuals and sending them to secret overseas locations where they'll be tortured, because we think that sending them to another country that allows it to happen somehow distances the torture from us." By sending the prisoners, though, we ourselves are just as culpable, Keller says. But by whatever sanitized names they are known, he says, "all torture methods have dangerous health consequences. They make the world a much more dangerous place; using them is like pouring kerosene on a fire."

Expert Testimony and Retaliation

That metaphor took on special relevance a few days later, when I attended a daylong conference Dr. Keller co-organized at the New York University School of Medicine. One of the speakers, Sheri Eppel, a clinical psychologist, is from Zimbabwe, where torture has been common for decades, first under white rule when the country was known as Rhodesia, and in recent years under Robert Mugabe. (Dr. Keller himself visited Zimbabwe last summer to investigate its use of torture.) Ms. Eppel, who has treated torture survivors, described how the U.S. involvement in torture at the notorious Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq has led to a sense in countries like hers that "since the Americans torture, we can too." In other words, the bad example set at Abu Ghraib and by U.S. interrogators at Guantánamo has indirectly lent support to the use of methods banned by the U.N. Convention Against Torture. Ms. Eppel said that she has received death threats because of her research on the massacre of 20,000 people under President Mugabe in the 1980s.

Similarly Alp Ayan, M.D., another speaker at the conference, spoke of retaliatory measures the government of Turkey has taken against him and his associates because of their advocacy work there. Dr. Ayan, a psychiatrist, is a cofounder of the Human Rights Federation of Turkey and has defended many prisoners who have been abused while incarcerated. He said that in retaliation for his challenging such abuse, the government had brought 60 cases against him in half a dozen years, charging him with such fabricated offenses as "humiliating the justice system and the military." Although some of the charges have been dismissed, Dr. Ayan said that he currently faces three years in prison. That sentence is being appealed, and he may never have to serve it, but it shows the dangers confronting those who by denouncing torture bring an unwanted spotlight on governments that allow it.

Medical Collaborators

In his lecture, Dr. Ayan noted a situation about which Dr. Keller too has expressed concern: the collaboration of some medical doctors with "enhanced interrogation techniques." Such collaboration can extend to doctors' issuing false medical reports to conceal the fact that torture occurred. In Turkey, Dr. Ayan and other members of the federation they founded persevered in interviewing prisoners, to the point of "measuring scars" to prove that physical abuse had occurred within the walls of detention facilities. Such proof intensified the government's efforts to retaliate against him and his organization. He points out that torture is not an individual act, but one that involves all who play even an indirect role. Indirect participation can include the deliberate withholding of medical care from prisoners with life-threatening illnesses. He described a man sent to prison with early-stage cancer and chained to his bed. Because doctors in his detention center chose not to treat him, the disease progressed so far that it became irreversible.

For his part, Dr. Keller spoke before the Senate's intelligence committee regarding doctors who violate the spirit of the Hippocratic oath: "A dual role as health professional-interrogator undermines the health professional's role as healer...and using medical information from any source for interrogation purposes is unethical." At the same hearing, he flatly denied claims that "enhanced" interrogation techniques like those used by the C.I.A. were safe because of medical supervision. As for the negative impact of torture on the image of the United States abroad, Keller said that it "undermines the moral core of who we are as a society.... I'm saddened that we now have to rebuild our credibility, not least in the wake of a president who has claimed that the United States does not torture."

"Such a claim is nonsense," Dr. Keller told me, citing the U.S. Army's field manual as a useful guide for establishing a minimum standard, with its refusal to condone torture or to use abusive interrogation methods on captured militants.

Even torturers themselves sometimes awaken to the realization of what they have done, he pointed out. "They may be haunted by nightmares, shame and terrifying memories, ironically mimicking the same reactions they had induced in those they tortured. In the long run, they often pay a terrible price."

Defining Torture

The Program for Survivors of Torture, Dr. Keller observes, follows the United Nations' definition of torture, which he paraphrased as severe physical or mental suffering inflicted for a variety of reasons, be it to intimidate or to collect information, done by individuals acting in an official capacity. The New York survivors program also treats people whose abusive treatment "does not meet that classic definition." As an example, he referred to wartime events in the former Yugoslavia: "We saw a lot of people from Kosovo whose homes were set on fire by Serbian troops; they were not tortured in the more usual sense of the word, but they were profoundly traumatized." He mentioned a situation in an Eastern European country that involved what he referred to as "deliberately induced refugee trauma" when, in the presence of her parents, paramilitary forces poured scalding water over a girl's head.

Few victims of torture and trauma are fortunate enough to reach the survivors program in New York or others elsewhere. "What we see here," Dr. Keller says, "is only a discrete sample—individuals who had the wherewithal to get out of their countries and the resources to make it to our program for help." Here, he continues, "we try to restore their dignity and a sense of trust and safety." But he warns that the lengthy healing process can mean one step forward and two steps back. Dr. Keller emphasizes that most torture victims around the world are not terrorist suspects. "Torture is more commonly used to intimidate and harass, not only individuals but entire communities," he explains. "When the Chinese authorities torture a Tibetan monk for chanting 'Long live the Dalai Lama,' or when a despotic government like Zimbabwe's tortures a student human rights advocate, they're doing it not so much to get information as to send a message to others: if you dare to speak out, this is what will happen to you." What torture does effectively, he concludes, is to undermine "a sense of who we are as a society and the core values we hold dear in the United States; that's why by trying to eradicate it, we make the world a more humane place."

Has torture increased over the past decades or has focused reporting heightened public awareness of the issue? In Dr. Keller's opinion both are true. He says, "There are more resources to document torture, which is known to occur in over 90 countries." Much of the debate in the United States over its use revolves around an argument that in these dangerous times abusive interrogation techniques may be justified. "But that argument is dubious at best," Keller says, "it's not accurate to say that such methods elicit useful information." He noted that individuals under torture "will say anything to stop the pain."

Early in my visit with Dr. Keller, he answered a question from someone passing by in the hallway. I had a chance to glance around the room. It was mid-afternoon, and his uneaten lunch still lay on the table behind his desk. On the wall hung a plaque, the 2003 Humanism in Medicine award. I heard him say to the person at the door, "I'm one of those people who's swamped." Swamped, an observer could say, by dedication to helping victims of torture resume their lives and to pressing the U.S. government to stop its direct and indirect use of torture. A

A Prisoner's Story

37 years behind bars, one year of freedom

BY JENS SOERING

ART BY SEAN QUIRK

NO ONE CARES that Al died—not his family, not the folks at the halfway house where he lived, not even those of us who had served time with him. Only old man Bob on the third floor of B-Building mourned Al's passing. Al used to clean Bob's cell and wash his laundry. But Bob is as crazy as Al ever was, so Bob doesn't really count.

Part of the reason nobody cares about Al's death is that virtually every statement that came out of his mouth was a lie. In the penitentiary, deception is an important survival tool. But Al carried it to such an extreme that the rest of us ended up simply ignoring him as another nut case; the big house is full of them.

In the end, all that is certain about Al's life are a few key dates: born in 1950, convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in 1969; paroled in 1986, violated parole eight months later, reincarcerated from 1987 to 2007; paroled in late spring, deceased in early autumn. A little more than a year's worth of freedom since 1969—that is all Al had. Thirty-seven years of his life were spent behind bars.

After his conviction in 1969, Al was sent to the Walls, Virginia's notoriously brutal maximum security prison in downtown Richmond. Nineteen-year-old white youngsters like him didn't stand a chance there. He was immediately "turned out," forced to become a punk or sex slave.

Every three or four months, the older, stronger convicts would put on "The Follies," a stage production where punks like Al had to wear make-up and women's clothing. Then they had to dance, sing and perform skits for the assembled prisoners and guards. In those days Al was known as Strawberry, for his long red hair.

Ironically, one of the men who had turned out Al at the Walls in the early 1970s spent the first few years of this century living with him in B-Building at our medium-security facility. In the evenings they would play pinochle together in the dayroom. "And the beat goes on"—that's what Al would say when reflecting upon the insanities of penitentiary life, "And the beat goes on."

The Walls was torn down in the late 1980s, but a half-hearted version of "The Follies" was staged at our prison as recently as last winter. According to Congressional testimony, 20 percent of all inmates are pressured or forced into sexual activity, and according to Michael Horrock in a report distributed by UPI, "Hundreds of Thousands Raped in U.S.

JENS SOERING is a freelance writer. His third book, *The Convict Christ: What the Gospel Says About Criminal Justice* (Orbis, 2006), won first place in the category Social Concerns at the 2007 Catholic Press Association Awards. His fourth book, *The Church of the Second Chance: A Faith-Based Approach to Prison Reform* (Lantern), is forthcoming this month.

Lockups" (7/31/02), another 10 percent are raped outright. And the beat goes on.

After nearly 17 years behind bars, Al was paroled in 1986. But eight months later he was back. He had driven a 16-year-old girl to the house of a marijuana dealer who was under police surveillance. In this respect Al was atypical, because statistically speaking, paroled lifers have the lowest recidivism rate of any group of offenders. But the type of crime he committed, a nonviolent misdemeanor, was entirely characteristic. When paroled lifers re-offend, only 3.7 percent commit an act of violence (according to research by Mauer, King, Young, "The Meaning of 'Life,'" The Sentencing Project, May 2004).

When I first met Al in summer 2000, 14 years later, he was 50 years old, potbellied and bespectacled. His work assignment then, as chief library aide, was a position that entailed considerable responsibility and required what is euphemistically called "a positive attitude toward staff." In other words, Al used to snitch to the civilian librarian or the guard whenever his fellow prisoners misbehaved.

Snitches inevitably fall out of favor, and Al was eventually demoted to the job of cleaner in B-Building. To supplement his income, he engaged in the usual penitentiary hustles: selling the rest of us stolen toilet paper and cleaning supplies, and giving "massages," especially to the weightlifters.

Mental Illness and Aging

No doubt Al entertained his clients with tales of his past and his family: his stint with the Navy Seals, the maple syrup farm in Vermont that his father had left him, the sister who was a doctor and another who was a high-ranking administrator in the Department of Corrections. All who lived in B-Building had heard his stories many times and paid no attention. But to Al, it was all terribly serious. His father died three times over the years, for instance, and on each occasion Al would stumble ashen-faced and wild-haired through the dayroom as he mourned the loss.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, before the administration shut down the Veterans' Insight Group, Al managed to get himself adopted as the group's mascot simply by being so sincere in his belief that he had once proudly served as a Navy Seal. Then he found out that "in his day" the Seals were known as Underwater Demolition Teams and the narrative of his exploits underwent a metamorphosis. None of us bothered to challenge Al on the fact that he now referred to his service with the U.D.T.'s instead of the Seals.

To anyone familiar with modern corrections, Al's delusions come as no surprise: 20 percent of all inmates are officially acknowledged to be mentally ill. According to a recent report by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, an additional 25 percent to 44 percent of prisoners have also "exhibited signs of mental disorder" in the previous year (Benson, "Rehabilitate or Punish?" Monitor on Psychology, Vol. 34, No. 7). And the beat goes on.

Despite his numerous problems, however, Al was the only inmate in B-Building who took the time to clean old man Bob's cell every week and wash his laundry. Bob is very old, frail and partially demented. Sometimes when it gets hot, he takes showers with his clothes on, and sometimes weeks pass before he remembers to comb his hair. To the rest of us, Bob is a frightening portent of our own future, so we avoid him even as we pity him. But Al not only helped Bob in the building; he also sat with Bob in the chow hall and brought him extra paper napkins whenever the old man spit up his milk.

By reaching out to Bob, Al was riding the wave of the future: elderly prisoners are one of the fastest growing demographic groups in the penitentiary system. Between 2000 and 2005, their number grew 3.5 times as quickly as the general inmate population, and by 2025 up to 25 percent of prisoners will resemble Bob. The beat just keeps going on and on.

Little Chance of Success

After Al made parole, Bob deteriorated markedly. Al did not fare well either, though he was fortunate in one respect. While the overwhelming majority of inmates are released with nothing more than $25 and a bus ticket, Al was given a bed in one of Virginia's very few halfway houses. But 37 years behind bars had not prepared him to enter the high-tech workforce of 21st-century America.

On his way back from another unsuccessful job interview, Al was struck by a car and killed. He should have known better than to cross a six-lane highway on foot, but during nearly four decades of incarceration, Al's instincts had been honed to detect only two-legged threats, not four-wheeled ones.

The operator of the halfway house wrote me that Al's death did not make much of an impression on the staff or other residents. Just as in prison, he was considered "difficult," to put it politely.

His father—the one who had died three times and left Al the maple syrup farm—took several days to claim his son's body and gather his belongings. No funeral arrangements were made.

According to the Criminal Justice Institute, 27.5 percent of the adult inmate population, or roughly 525,000 prisoners, are serving sentences of 20 years or more. Al spent almost twice that much time behind bars. It would be fair and reasonably accurate to project that America's prison system is currently producing a crop of 525,000 Als. Slowly but surely, they will dribble out of the penitentiaries and onto six-lane highways across the nation.

And the beat goes on. A

Book Reviews

God in the Public Square

Faith in the Halls of Power

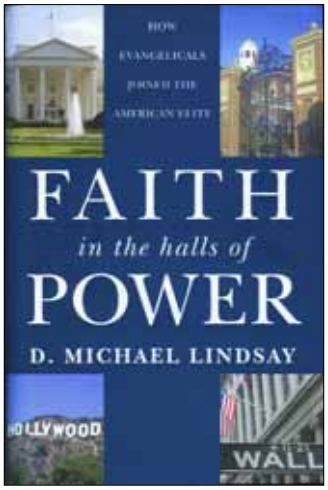
How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite

By D. Michael Lindsay
Oxford Univ. Press. 352p $24.95
ISBN 9780195326666

Writing in The Washington Post 15 years ago, the reporter Michael Weiskopf famously characterized evangelical Christians as "poor, uneducated and easy to command." No doubt there are some evangelicals who fit that description, as there are some people like that in every segment of American society. But as D. Michael Lindsay shows in his impressively researched new book, during the past generation evangelicals have assumed positions of influence in politics, academia, culture and business. (They are also in the military, which he did not study systematically.)

The subtitle of Lindsay's book, "How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite," both states a fact and points to a problem: power is not only an opportunity to do good, but also a temptation to place one's own aspirations ahead of God's work. Have evangelicals transformed power, or has power transformed them? While Lindsay does not investigate this question as carefully as I would have liked, he does offer a fair amount of material that bears on it. On the one hand, evangelicals have had an important influence on both domestic and foreign policy. The domestic issues are familiar—abortion, family planning and public assistance for faith-based institutions, among others.

In foreign policy, evangelicals have taken the lead on such issues as religious liberty, sexual slavery and the genocide in Darfur. On the other hand, as Lindsay observes, "a calling to business means an acceptance of the capitalist system. Very few [evangelical business leaders] questioned the American economic system, and they often linked their ideas about the market to evangelical faith." This can lead, he points out, to careerism and materialism at the expense of deeper values: "Among the most successful business leaders, I found that a tension exists between professional success and spiritual grounding.... Over the course of my interviews, I was struck by how rarely leaders mentioned the many biblical passages that speak against the pursuit of wealth." Many evangelical executives have made their firms "faith-friendly"; but very few, it seems, have allowed faith to transform the purposes their firms pursue. Regarding capitalism, anyway, the historic gap between the positions of evangelicals and traditionalist Catholics remains wide.



In an interview conducted after the publication of this book, Lindsay, who teaches sociology at Rice University, reflected on another temptation of power—an elitism that threatens to separate evangelical leaders from the mainstream of their faith communities. The leaders are "cosmopolitan" rather than "populist," more likely to spend the bulk of their time with nonevangelicals and less inclined to try to convert them. Evangelical leaders tend to spend time with one another in "parachurch" organizations such as World Vision and a somewhat shadowy Washington, D.C., organization called "the Fellowship." They are less drawn to their local churches, in part because they do not feel close to congregants with less money, education and influence, and also because they do not believe that local pastors understand the world in which the leaders live. Some actively resent pastors who criticize individual and corporate greed. They do not accept the "eye of the needle" story as the true measure of their chance to reach heaven.

This thinking raises an important distinction: the individuals whose rise to prominence Lindsay chronicles are leaders from the evangelical community but not necessarily leaders of that community. As recent events have made clear, the evangelical agenda is widening in ways that are proving divisive. As the National Association of Evangelicals has identified environmental stewardship and global climate change as issues of Christian concern, established evangelical organizations have sharply rebuked the N.A.E. for allegedly diverting attention from "core" questions such as abortion and gay marriage. Mike Huckabee's startling victory in Iowa also called into question the alliance between evangelicals and the ideological partisans of limited government.

Evangelicals are reconsidering the decision they made a quarter-century ago to tie their fate to the broader conservative movement. Some feel a sense of betrayal. When George W. Bush was at the peak of his power after the 2004 election, he chose to pursue Social Security reform rather than a marriage amendment to the Constitution. And as shrewd Republican analysts like Ross Douthat have been arguing, many evangelical social conservatives are anything but economic conservatives, a fact that evangelicals in positions of political and corporate leadership have ignored.

Faith in the Halls of Power, in short, offers a plausible reconstruction of evangelicals' rise to positions of influence during the past generation. But the book is stronger on description than on analysis, which makes it difficult to draw inferences about evangelicals' future social role. If recent developments are significant, one suspects that the past will not be prologue.

William A. Galston

The Reviewers

William A. Galston is senior fellow, governance studies, at the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.

William Droel is instructor of humanities at Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills, Ill.

The Rev. Michael P. Orsi is research fellow in law and religion at Ave Maria School of Law in Ann Arbor, Mich.

In Pursuit of Participation

As It Was in the Beginning

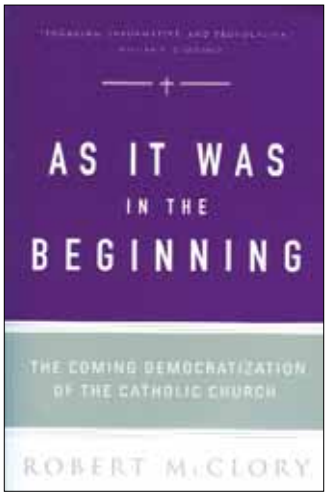
The Coming Democratization of the Catholic Church

By Robert McClory

Crossroad Publishing Co. 229p $19.95 (paperback)
ISBN 9780824524197

"There is," writes Robert McClory, "a democratic dynamic in the church's self-awareness." No, dogma is not subject to a vote. Yes, the church must assert its teachings, popular or not. Yes, a certain hierarchical structure is part of the church's unity. At the same time, the church stays most faithful to its dogma and is most effective in its mission when all its members respectfully listen to one another, breathe together and act together. McClory, a retired journalism professor at Northwestern University and the author of *Faithful Dissenters*, describes in detail how authoritarianism conversely leads to heresy or scandal or declining membership—or all three at once.

As It Was in the Beginning has three sections: the past (six chapters), the second half of the 20th century through today (six chapters) and the future (one chapter). McClory employs many fascinating examples to support his argument and bolster his hope. Following the Council of Nicaea, for example, many Catholic bishops campaigned against the correct teaching on Jesus' humanity and divinity. Instead, they told people to accept heretical Arianism. But the laity did not listen, and 56 years later the correct dogma was reiterated at the Council of Constantinople. Cardinal John Henry Newman later wrote about the incident: "The Nicene dogma was maintained during the greater part of the fourth century…not by the unswerving firmness of the Holy See, Councils or bishops, but…by the *consensus fidelium*."



The author also describes an early 15th-century council that in asserting "that the ultimate focus of authority resides in the whole body of the church" solved the situation in which there were three undesirable claimants to the papacy. Had Catholics responsibly hung onto the council's principle of *conciliarism* for another 100 years, McClory speculates, the Protestant Reformation might not have been necessary.

McClory provides several examples of "reform from above." He highlights the openness of Bishop John Carroll in the early days of the United States, including Carroll's support for the separation of church and state, the use of English in the sacraments and a lay trustee system to manage parishes. McClory describes the Asian Bishops Conference, an umbrella for national con-

ferences, in its deliberate inclusion of lay people in the implementation of the Second Vatican Council and its dialogue with Asian cultures, even around the sensitive topic of Jesus Christ as the only savior. McClory cites Pope John Paul II's 1995 encyclical *That All May Be One*, which opens the door to a more collegial way of understanding the papacy in order to remove ecumenical roadblocks.

Our U.S. bishops' scandalous mismanagement of personnel has cost our dioceses $1.073 billion in settlements alone over the past four years. Is it that some bishops lost sight of Jesus, that they failed as the Lord's stewards? Or is it possible that some bishops did something even worse? Is it possible that some bishops in their authoritarianism abetted child abuse?

McClory includes Fyodor Dostoyevsky's story of the Grand Inquisitor as a motif in *As It Was in the Beginning*. The Inquisitor did not forget Jesus' teachings. He knew Jesus very well. However, the paternalistic Inquisitor deliberately asserted his own authoritarian approach over Jesus' way of grace and sin.

Without drawing an explicit comparison, McClory reports on the prepared remarks of a prominent, moderate United States bishop several months after the current scandal attained worldwide attention. We must be cautious about accountability in the church, the bishop said. "We do not vote or take a headcount to determine what we should believe or how the church should be structured."

Some fair-minded Catholics are tempted to cynicism or despair upon hearing what they perceive to be an arrogant comment. McClory urges patience and hope. Similar situations in the past have been tempered and even overcome. Openness and reform are part of the essence of the church, gifts of the Holy Spirit. Even in this dark time, "the courage, skill, and persistence of those laymen and laywomen who are sensitive to the signs of the times" can restore credibility to our church. ***William Droel***

Reason, Not Revealed Truths

Thomas Paine's 'Rights of Man'

A Biography

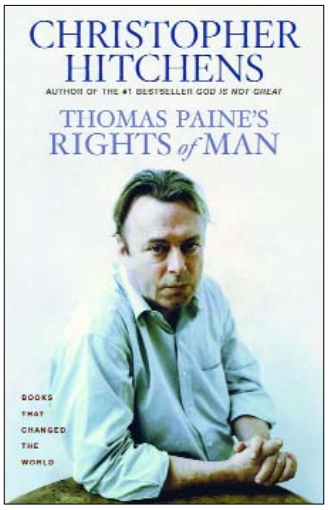
By Christopher Hitchens

Atlantic Monthly Press. 160p $19.95
ISBN 9780871139559

Christopher Hitchens, an atheist and best-selling author, has provided a political sequel to his popular a-theological work *God Is Not Great*. Gadflies such as Hitchens often try to attach themselves to past luminaries to bolster their causes. In this case, the author has fastened onto Thomas Paine (1737-1809), the great pamphleteer of the American Revolution.

Someone like Hitchens, who believes that "religion poisons everything" and who seeks to remove its influence from the public sphere, could hardly have chosen better. In the famous pamphlet "Common Sense" (1775), Paine wrote, "We have it in our power to begin to make the world over again," a line that energized American resistance to British rule and has inspired countless revolutions and reform movements ever since.

Implicit in Paine's words is a justification for endless political improvisation. This idea was extremely problematic from the outset. For instance, it threw into question numerous church-state arrangements existing in the states of Europe. And it completely eliminated any role for organized religion (with its revealed truths) in the focus of government policy or the guiding of public order upon which these governments were built.



Paine was in the English radical tradition that was suspicious of all authority and quick to disparage all forms of hierarchy. Religion and monarchy, therefore, were both targets of his polemic. He saw in the two institutions a symbiotic relationship that suppressed human freedom, which is ordained by the laws of nature and behind which is, in Jefferson's words, "Nature's God." Paine held that governments come "out of the people" and can therefore be designed according to their needs and wants. He was an early proponent, for example, of the welfare state. He believed that government had an obligation to provide its citizens such benefits as "cradle-to-grave" health care and a one-time stipend of money to get them started in life. To fund these emoluments he called for a graduated income tax and a death tax.

Regarding the monarchy, Hitchens says that "Paine directly anticipates Thomas Jefferson's wording of the later Declaration of Independence, with its pursuit of happiness, [and] its itemization of a long train of abuses and usurpations" attributed to King George III. Paine's distrust of religion is made obvious by his participation in the French Revolution, which desired to overthrow Christianity in favor of the goddess "Reason."

In Paine's *Rights of Man* Hitchens sees "dual purpose of subverting organized religion and asserting deism." That 1791 volume was written as a reply to Edmund Burke (1729-97), a conservative member of the English Parliament who had an attachment to Catholicism. Burke defended tradition, property and heredity, all of which, Paine contended, were promoted by the relationship between church and state. While Paine was never, per se, a sectarian in his religious antipathies, he did especially decry the hierarchically structured cosmology advanced by Roman Catholicism. The following passage from Paine reflects this:

> It is not among the least of evils of the present existing government in all parts of Europe, that man, considered as man, is thrown back to a vast distance from his Maker, and the artificial chasm filled up by a succession of barriers, or sort of turnpike gates, through which he has to pass. I will quote Mr. Burke's catalogue of barriers that he has set up between man and his Maker. Putting himself in the character of a herald, he says: "We fear God—we look with awe to

kings—with affection to parliaments—with duty to magistrates—with reverence to priests, and respect to nobility." Mr. Burke has forgotten to put in "chivalry." He has also forgotten to put in Peter.

Paine, however, was aghast at the atrocities committed by Robespierre (1758-94) during the Reign of Terror (1793-94), especially when he was imprisoned and nearly lost his own head. In light of this, he therefore acquiesced to the utility of religion, if only to maintain a moral order. Nevertheless, he was an early promoter of what is referred to as the "naked public square." He called for a government much akin to that proposed by those who today demand "a wall of separation between church and state."

Paine was a deist. Deism is a philosophy that derives the existence and nature of God from reason. Knowledge of God then presents humans with a knowledge of themselves and their requisite duties and responsibilities. According to this philosophy, the affairs of men and women are not God's concern. Hitchens seems to suggest that Paine would have been an atheist, were it fashionable and safe at the time, and credits Paine with helping pave the way for other "emancipators of humanity." He writes:

> 8 June 1809, Thomas Paine dies. On 12 February of the same year, Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln had been born. These two emancipators of humanity—Darwin the greatest —were in different ways to complete and round off the arguments that Paine had helped to begin.

This comment is indicative of Hitchens's anti-God agenda. In the end it also shows how selectively Hitchens takes Paine's words and then interprets them to fit his thesis. No doubt Paine was a radical Enlightenment thinker, but certainly not as radical as Hitchens presents him to be in this volume. Letting Paine speak for himself, by reading *Rights of Man* first, will certainly help temper Hitchens's interpretation. On the other hand, reading both works will clarify for the reader the genesis of the politico-liberal philosophy regarding the separation of church and state that became rampant in 19th-century Europe.

For Hitchens, Paine is a hero whose words were and are powerful motivators for human emancipation and creativity. Paine undoubtedly influenced Jefferson. But he also worried Washington, Adams and Gouverneur Morris, as he should worry most contemporary Americans who consider themselves religious and rely on religious faith to guide their leaders. In fact, the founders never really embraced Paine as one of their own. They all recognized his usefulness for the cause of emancipation from England; but for the most part they kept their distance from him.

Some contemporary commentators believe that Paine's thought came to fruition not in the American Revolution (1776), nor in the quickly aborted ideals of the French Revolution (1789), but 200 years later in the proposed European Constitution, which, as of now, refuses even to recognize the role of Christianity in the founding of Western European civilization. Hitchens must be delighted.

Michael P. Orsi

Classifieds

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Positions

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Letters

National Heresy

As I read Of Many Things on March 31, by James T. Keane, S.J., and his reflections on Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the nation's capital, I was jarred by his unnecessary putdown of the Washington Nationals' lineup as one that would not "ever be worth remembering." From the courageous comebacks of first basemen Dmitri Young and Nick Johnson to the dazzling play of the young third baseman Ryan Zimmerman, the Nationals offer a season of promise and excitement for Washington fans in a magnificently constructed new stadium.

Mary Gordon Dubill
Alexandria, Va.

Running Dry

As a scientist and a former worker in the "oil patch," I disagree with the conclusions of "Forestalling Disaster," by Richard J. Green and Wil Lepkowski (3/31). The article is certainly correct when it notes that "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." But the correct estimate is not 80 to 100 years, but today, plus or minus a decade.

Oil wells produce in such a manner that their output declines over time (a gross oversimplification, but true for this argument). The wells we have today will not be adequate even next week, even if demand remains constant. And as the article notes, competing and increasing demands from China and India could drain much of our oil flow away. India has even started to produce automobiles that should increase the demand for oil quite significantly.

Oil production has always gone up and down in dramatic fashion over the years. The difference now is that there are few places where "supergiant" fields can be hiding that will make up for the decline in current production. The current run-up in prices is not temporary; it is a simple reflection of decline in production combined with an increase in demand from other, less developed economies.

In terms of impact to our economy, the phrase "time is not on our side" is an understatement.

Richard Kuebbing
Kennesaw, Ga.

Alive and Thriving

Re: "A Somber Anniversary," by Thomas J. Shelley (3/31): As the editor of a large archdiocesan newspaper, I can only say that the heresy hunters he mentions in his article are still alive and thriving. Nay, they are increasing in number today.

I have been labeled a heretic more often in the past few years than ever before, and I have spent 25 years in the Catholic press.

Tricia Gallagher Hempel
Cincinnati, Ohio

All Too Familiar

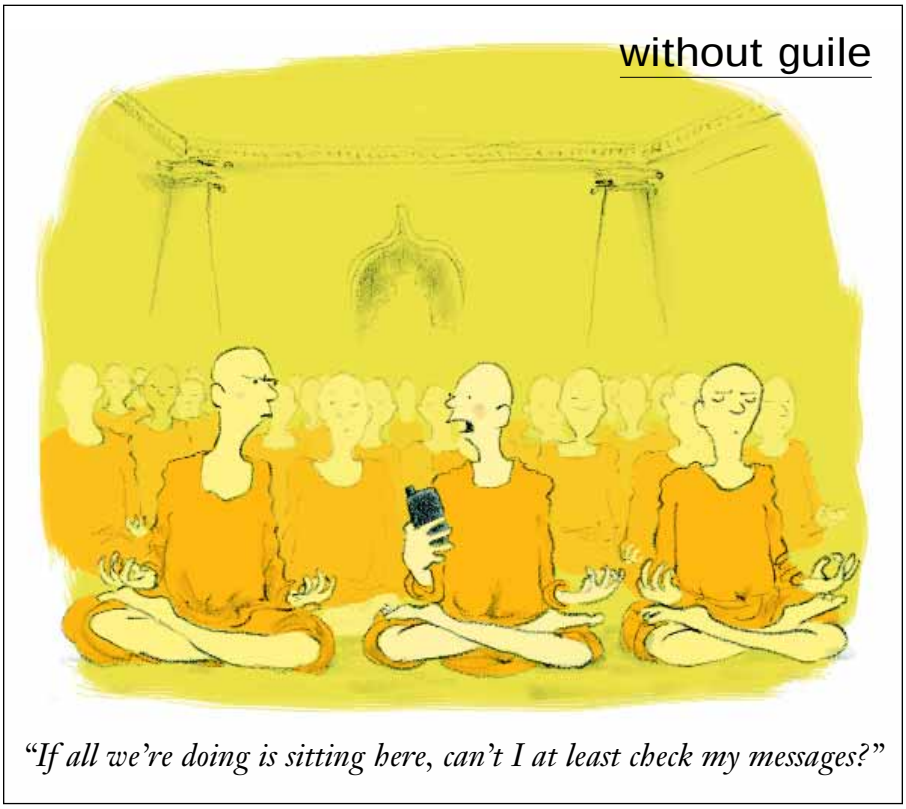
I knew nothing of The New York Review's impressive story until I read "A Somber Anniversary" by Msgr. Thomas J. Shelley (3/31). I could not help but see disappointing similarities between the situation at the time of the modernist crisis and the situation in today's church.

Bill Heimbuch
Hackensack, N.J.

Uncritical Acceptance

The editorial "Cuba Sí, Castro, No!" (3/10) made some good points but also conveyed an uncritical acceptance of a leftist dictatorship. For many years under Fidel Castro, Cuba was under the control of the Soviet Union and served as a military base for them (a type of "colonialism"), and the people suffered repression, controlled media and lack of freedom of expression and of travel. The "well-educated people" you describe might better be described as a well-indoctrinated people with skills. A good education is not possible in a closed society where censorship is the norm.

When one speaks with people who have recently left Cuba, one hears a



"If all we're doing is sitting here, can't I at least check my messages?"

CARTOON BY PAT BYRNES

To send a letter to the editor we recommend using the link that appears below articles on **America**'s Web site, www.americamagazine.org. This allows us to consider your letter for publication in both print and online versions of the magazine. Letters may also be sent to **America**'s editorial office (address on page 2) or by e-mail to: letters@americamagazine.org. They should be brief and include the writer's name, postal address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Letters

much different scenario than the somewhat content and stable nation that the editorial indirectly portrays. Those who have ventured onto the high seas and attempted to flee on makeshift rafts may not agree that "socialism's gains" in Cuba are all that satisfactory.

I hope and pray for a peaceful transition in Cuba that will bring justice and peace as well as all the values that the social teaching of the Catholic Church desires for all people.

Rafael Garcia, S.J.
Tijuana, Mexico

Dark Nights

"Shadows in Prayer," by James Martin, S.J. (3/17), delivered an important message, but in my experience, depression has nothing to do directly with prayer. It is emotional and physiological, and the effect of these disturbances is to drag down our thoughts (thus reinforcing our negative feelings) and weaken our wills. In that case, if we try to pray, very little happens.

Campion Murphy, S.T.
Stirling, N.J.

Don't Tread on Me

The problem to which John F. Kavanaugh, S.J., alludes in "Sharp Words From Another Jeremiah" (4/14) is hypernationalism, the idea that one must follow "my country, right or wrong." This phenomenon blinds our ability to be self-critical and goes back to the "exceptionalism" myth first propagated by the Pilgrims and repeated all the way up to leaders like Ronald Reagan. It is in many ways burned into the national psyche. It is fundamentally racist, and the view that we are superior to the rest of the world leads to hatred. Reverend Wright, it seems, came too close to the national wound.

John Van Damme
London, Ontario

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Love and the Holy Spirit

Sixth Sunday of Easter (A), April 27, 2008

Readings: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; Ps 66:1-7, 16, 20; 1 Pt 3:15-18; Jn 14:15-21

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (Jn 14:15)

ART BY TAD DUNNE

KEEPING ALIVE the memory of Jesus and continuing the movement he began are two activities incumbent on every Christian. The readings for the Sixth Sunday of Easter describe ways in which we as individuals and as a church can carry out this noble and important task. Today's excerpt from Jesus' farewell discourse in John 14 gives us two. It deals first with love, then with the Holy Spirit and finally with love again; thus these two great themes are closely related and intertwined.

Those who love Jesus will keep his commandments. His commandments do not seem to be the 613 precepts of the Old Testament Law or even what we call the Ten Commandments. His are simpler but more challenging than those. They involve believing in God and in Jesus as the one who reveals God, and loving God, Jesus and one another. If we believe and love, all the other virtues and good deeds will follow. Thus we find ourselves in a kind of chain of love extending from the Father to the Son and to those who believe. Likewise, those who love one another will love the Son and the Father.

The community formed by Jesus affirms that the power of love is stronger than the power of hate. It is dedicated to the ideal of love as the great motivating force that extends even to enemies. It is dedicated to the ideal of self-giving and selfless love, because it is defined by the love that Jesus showed for us. In Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 13, this love is patient and kind, does not envy or boast, is not proud or rude or self-seeking, is not easily angered, bears no grudges, rejoices with the truth and always protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres.

These high ideals are beyond our unaided human capacity. Therefore, the departing Jesus promises to his followers divine help in the form of "another advocate," who is the Holy Spirit. The Greek word *parakletos* (here rendered "advocate") refers to someone who offers help and consolation to those in need of it. The term can also describe an attorney who pleads our case, defends us and protects our rights. Thus Jesus promises that the community he formed will always have divine help. By calling the Holy Spirit "another advocate," Jesus suggests that the Holy Spirit will do for the church what Jesus himself did during his earthly ministry.

Love and the activity of the Holy Spirit are two ways by which the memory of Jesus has been kept alive, and the movement he began has flourished for almost 2,000 years. In carrying out this task, we need always recall that God has taken the initiative, that God's love has been poured out on us through Jesus and that from his teachings and example we can learn how to love one another. God's Holy Spirit has been given to us in baptism, and we need to cooperate with the divine power that is among us and within us.

The Acts of the Apostles describes how the power of the Holy Spirit manifested itself in the spread of Christianity throughout the ancient Mediterranean world. While its greatest heroes are Peter and Paul, other figures, like Philip, contributed to the church's missionary outreach. Today's passage from Acts 8 shows how the Gospel message began to move beyond Jerusalem and Judea into Samaria. There Philip does what the earthly Jesus did. He teaches the people and performs miraculous healings. His success in turn leads the Jerusalem apostles, Peter and John, to come to Samaria and bring baptism with the Holy Spirit to the people of Samaria.

While the great apostles played significant roles in keeping Jesus' memory alive and spreading his movement, many other "ordinary" and now anonymous early Christians also made contributions we ought not forget. The Christians addressed in 1 Peter were Gentiles by birth, perhaps migrant workers and certainly "strangers and aliens" in their social and cultural setting. They found their way to the church through the good example of other Christians. Today's passage from 1 Peter 3 urges them to share their theological vision and good behavior after the example of Christ. It suggests that the missionary strategy of good example entails knowledge of the Christian faith and a willingness to share it, a gentle and respectful manner toward others, personal integrity, courage in the face of rejection and even persecution—all following Jesus' example. This missionary strategy was, is and always will be the most effective way to keep Jesus' memory alive and carry on his movement. ***Daniel J. Harrington***

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Praying With Scripture

- Do you ever reflect on the chain of love in which you share through Jesus?
- How do you understand Jesus' description of the Holy Spirit as "another advocate"?
- Why are you a Christian? What is your reason for hope? Do you ever tell others about it?