BOOKS ON THE BIBLE

America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY

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The Bible's Influence

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Global Health Gap

MICHAEL J. WESTERHAUS

Moving Closer to God

JAMES MARTIN

OF MANY THINGS

What is it like to pray in another language?

I'm afraid I can't answer that question. Though I took Latin and German in high school and French in college, I have mastered none of them. Living in northern Manhattan, many of my neighbors speak Spanish, though they know not to try it on me. When we traveled to Spain, my wife did all the talking, having learned serviceable Spanish in medical school.

Every so often, however, I try to fend for myself. The occasion, almost always, is Mass. Our parish, once mostly Irish-American, is now dominated by immigrants from the Dominican Republic. Usually, we attend the English Mass on Sunday afternoon, but sometimes we find ourselves with no other option than to attend the Spanish liturgy. So there I am, on a Holy Thursday or holy day of obligation, seated in the back row trying to follow along.

For most of the Mass, I do just fine. The rhythms of the liturgy are so familiar to me that I rarely feel lost. During the Liturgy of the Word, I turn to the Missal to study the readings, and I open it again to read the Nicene Creed. My only weak moment is the homily, when even our Anglo pastor's clearly enunciated Spanish is nearly impossible for me to understand. In those moments, I turn to the prayers printed on the back of the Missal or meditate on the Gospel reading.

Sadly, I don't approach every liturgy with the same conscientious spirit. At an English Mass, where (in theory) I can grasp all that is said, I don't feel the same obligation to be present and active. Too often, I drift into a reverie that has little to do with the celebration at hand. My desire to participate fully in the Spanish liturgy may be born of Catholic-schoolboy guilt. (Will the Mass "count" if I don't understand a word of it?) But it has proven to be a useful discipline nonetheless.

Our attendance at the occasional Spanish Mass has also connected me to my community in ways that I did not expect. Our neighborhood is rather neatly divided along language lines. West of Broadway, the residents are mostly English speakers, and they tend to attend Mass at a shrine in the heart of their district. The Spanish speakers live to the east, and prefer Mass at the parish church. For various reasons, we prefer the parish church too, which has allowed us to witness a distinctive form of Catholic life.

The music is different, of course, though I like some hymns more than others. I am more taken by the fact that people actually sing. At the greeting of peace, the worshipers flash peace signs to the whole congregation, their smiles wide and welcoming.

My wife and I were most impressed by our first bilingual Holy Thursday liturgy. We arrived on time but still could not find a seat. Though we had to stand for over an hour, we found ourselves energized by the hundreds of people crammed into the church. Here were fellow Catholics I might never encounter in my corner of the neighborhood, and their mere presence gave me hope for the future of our faith community.

Now that we have a young daughter, we will soon have to move to a larger apartment. Will we continue to live in our community, and if we do will we send our daughter to the parish school? Or will we choose a neighborhood that has a better school and is more reflective of our socioeconomic background?

Whatever we decide, I hope we will still find time to take my daughter to Spanish Mass. She has recently started speaking, and to our delight she is mixing in Spanish words (*agua*, *leche*) with English ones. (My wife enjoys speaking some Spanish to her.) As she grows older, maybe we will try saying the Hail Mary or Our Father *en español*. I could use the practice.

MAURICE TIMOTHY REIDY

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106 West 56th Street
New York, NY 10019-3803
Ph: 212-581-4640; Fax: 212-399-3596
E-mail: america@americamagazine.org; letters@americamagazine.org
Web site: www.americamagazine.org.
Customer Service: 1-800-627-9533

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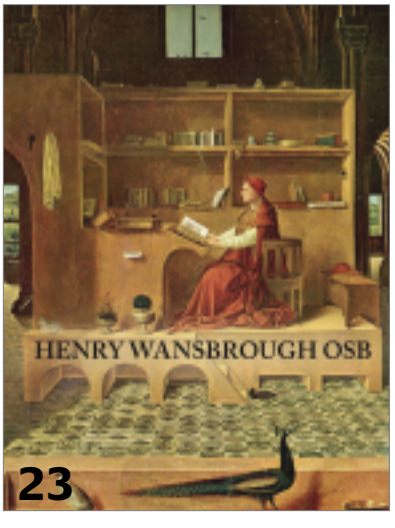

BOOKS ON THE BIBLE

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BOOKS & CULTURE

ON THE WEB

Mario J. Paredes, right, discusses the work of the **American Bible Society** on our podcast. Plus, a slideshow of **Vatican coins and medals** and additional resources for collectors. All at americamagazine.org.

Congress Kills the Dialogue

Of all the proposed budget cuts, the most shortsighted is the determination to shut down the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (which helps support NPR and PBS). The House voted in February to cut all funding. Not one Republican objected.

Perhaps it is a kabuki drama, playacting to threaten a news source like PBS—which bends over backward to be impartial and whose corporate president is a Republican, Patricia S. Harrison—into becoming even more conservative or silent. But a defunded version of PBS and NPR would be more dependent on corporate sponsorship and less free to speak truth to power. Culture would also be dumbed down and democracy's dialogue reduced to a stammer.

The news media are already gasping for breath. News outlets have laid off reporters, cut investigative staffs and dropped book and classical music reviewers. Meanwhile the public stations have been the closest thing we have to a national university, where high culture is available free to low income people who might otherwise never hear an opera.

Some congressmen want the media to be weak and want to leave the news delivery and classical music to the free market system. So it's back to the wasteland of laugh-track sitcoms, celebrity gossip and the ravings of Charlie Sheen as the volume surges for commercials and drug ads. And goodbye Beethoven, "American Experience," the "News Hour," "The Civil War," "Frontline," "Car Talk," "Prairie Home Companion," "Charlie Rose" and Sherlock Holmes. The United States, says Congress, just cannot afford you.

Tax-Dodge City

Welcome to Tax-Dodge City, a 100-year-old municipality where business booms. Today 1,800 businesses enjoy its lax regulation, low taxes and cheap utilities. The city council also has made elections hassle-free. Not one election was contested between 1984 and 2006, and now the council conveniently appoints its members. Who would vote, anyway? The population of the city is 95.

Yet Tax-Dodge owns the power and light, fire, police and health departments and every house, all 30 of them, which are rented to city workers and relatives of city officials. In Tax-Dodge, municipal salaries are high. In 2008 the city reportedly paid $1.65 million to a man who served as both city administrator and deputy city attorney; he still works as a consultant. The $500,000 annual pension of a retired city administrator is the state's highest.

What is the city's secret? Virtually all 50,000 local workers commute to Tax-Dodge from real towns where elected governments spend tax revenue on schools, parks and social services for their residents. In Tax-Dodge, the millions raised are divided among a few—a set-up for corruption. One person who served as mayor and councilman for 50 years was convicted of fraudulently claiming Tax-Dodge City as his legal residence. Last year a city administrator was indicted for misappropriation of public funds. The biggest hoax, though, is calling Tax-Dodge a city. Unconvinced, a state assemblyman has sponsored a bill to disincorporate cities with fewer than 151 people.

Businesses in Tax-Dodge say disincorporation would shutter them, and the Teamsters Union opposes any loss of local jobs. But every city must have residents, which is where Tax-Dodge (real name Vernon, Calif.) fails. It might be a great place to work, but no one wants to live there.

Fast Train Coming?

In search of a metaphor for the gulf that separates the nation's political parties? Look no further than the high-speed locomotive. Adored by many Democrats, who wax poetic about a speed and efficiency of communal travel, trains have become a favorite target of conservative Republicans, who fret about their cost. In the last six months, Ohio, Florida and Wisconsin have turned down federal money for rail construction because, they argue, they cannot afford their share of the bill.

Ignore for a moment the political calculus that may be at work in these state capitals. (High-speed rail is a signature project of the Obama administration, which has pledged $53 billion to improve the nation's trains.) The idea that train travel is just not an investment worth making should give every citizen pause. In the short term, rail improvements provide jobs, a prospect that any governor should welcome. And in the long term, it is a good bet that such investments will turn a profit. Dwight Eisenhower's interstate highway system has proven to be a real moneymaker. Imagine if local governments had turned down funding because they did not want pay for the entrance ramps.

In a country as large as the United States, wedded as it is to the automobile, trains will never be as popular or prevalent as they are in Europe. Yet President Obama's plan is not overly ambitious; it seeks to improve regional transportation and existing rail corridors. Few investments could do more to boost the country's recovery and wean it from dependence on oil. One need not be a railroad buff to see that.

Just Adjustments

The pace of change runs ever faster, and it is proving ever harder for older nations to keep up. The latest disruption is the Arab Revolution, which swept across North Africa and down the Arabian Gulf. The consequent anxiety over oil supplies has driven prices up, threatening to slow or end economic recovery in the United States and Europe. In the meantime, rapid economic growth and innovation in the emerging giants—China, India and Brazil—has led to a scramble for the rare metals needed to manufacture high-tech equipment. Globalization, moreover, relentlessly advances the creative destruction inherent in the capitalist system, with only the nimblest, most entrepreneurial societies able to profit.

In this white-water turmoil, the U.S. political system has had a particularly hard time adjusting. Our once-vaunted governmental checks and balances make it hard to adjust to rapidly changing conditions and to exploit new opportunities. Whether it is responding to climate change, concluding free trade agreements or rebuilding deteriorating infrastructure, the U.S. system lacks the institutional will to do what needs to be done. Multinational corporations and states that take a long view, like China, are able to pursue long-term goals. In the United States, by contrast, to make needed short-term savings and long-term adjustments, several states are focused on gutting public service unions.

The attack on unions is just the latest trend in a hollowing out of America. Science, for example, ceases to be an adventure that engages the nation. With the decommissioning of the last space shuttle, the United States will become dependent on the Russians to fly American astronauts into space. The former Number One finds itself fallen to the middle or near the bottom in the ranking of industrial nations by the academic skills of its students. The lists of food stamp recipients and Medicaid patients grow. Financiers receive bonuses because their contracts demand them, while workers have their contracts voided.

In states like Wisconsin, Indiana and Ohio, unions are whipping boys for politicians. There was a time when unions had become an impediment to economic growth, but for more than a generation now they have been sustaining businesses and preventing government defaults through their givebacks. The revival of General Motors, for example, was made possible in part by concessions made by the United Auto Workers. Unions, like our other institutions, will have to adjust continually to the changing dynamics of the world economy. But unions should not be made to bear costs of transition alone. Adjustment to evolving conditions must be just across society.

A flourishing economy is the foundation of the common good in which all have a right to a fair share. The principle of participation applies especially to labor. Pope John Paul II contended that "the priority of labor" is the cornerstone of economic justice, for it is human labor and ingenuity that add value to mere natural products. Capital itself is a product of labor. Accordingly, the pope argued, working people deserve a share in the profit of their industry. But in an interest-based world, as Reinhold Niebuhr observed, unions provide the power required to shape economic arrangements that are fair and just for workers. While unions, like businesses and governments, have sometimes abused that power, they are nonetheless necessary for securing a just society. Collective bargaining is the mechanism by which unions advance and defend worker interests.

Today unions are needed more than at any time since the Great Depression. As their power has been attenuated, so have the conditions of American workers. Productivity is up, but income has declined; and employees work longer hours. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, before the present recession Americans worked 1,777 hours per year on average, whereas their prosperous, better protected German counterparts worked only 1,362, a difference of more than 400 hours, nearly ten 40-hour workweeks.

It is encouraging that some governors, rejecting the anti-union gambit, are attempting to build a future in cooperation with unions that embraces shared sacrifice and public investment. Montana's governor, Brian Schweitzer, Maryland's Martin O'Malley and Connecticut's Daniel P. Malloy, among others, are partnering with unions to find ways to share the pain of austerity as they protect the vulnerable. Within a few years it will be clear whether the common-good approach to government or the anti-union, business-only approach advances the bottom line better. But, in the case of the let's-work-together states, the ends will have already been achieved in the means. The participation of all in the economy will have been served: workers, the elderly, children, the poor and the vulnerable will benefit. Adjustments will have been achieved with a modicum of justice.

LIBYA

Setbacks for Qaddafi Opposition; U.S. Debates No-Fly Zone

Calls for the creation of a no-fly zone over Libya grew louder in the United States as civilians came under fire from forces loyal to the Libyan leader, Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, and opposition forces suffered a number of battlefield setbacks. Over the course of a handful of brutal days in early March, pro-Qaddafi forces reclaimed communities and much of an oil facility that had been under control of Qaddafi's lightly armed resistance.

The poorly organized opposition force, which first emerged as a peaceful protest against Qaddafi's strong-arm rule in mid-February, came under heavy fire from tanks, helicopters and jet fighters that halted a somewhat chaotic advance toward the capital, Tripoli. Unarmed protesters against Qaddafi rule in Tripoli were met with automatic weapons, and noncombatants have been in harm's way at other sites of conflict because of the indiscriminate use of force by Qaddafi loyalists. Congressional leaders, including Senator John McCain of Arizona, a Republican, and Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, the Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, have urged stronger measures from the Obama administration.

But any unilateral U.S. action would be a mistake, said Emad Shahin, the Henry R. Luce Associate Professor of Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. "The United States has two presences in the region that are already viewed by many as a kind of occupation," Shahin said. "Any kind of conspicuous or heavy U.S. presence in this conflict is not good for the [opposition] and it's not

PAKISTAN

Was Shahbaz Bhatti a Martyr?

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Pakistan may formally submit a request to the Holy See to declare Shahbaz Bhatti a martyr at the conclusion of its general assembly in Multan, Punjab, on March 25. Bhatti, a Catholic, was the country's minister for religious minorities. Bishop Andrew Francis of Multan said: "Bhatti is a man who gave his life for his crystalline faith in Jesus Christ. It is up to us, the bishops, to tell his story and experience to the church in Rome, to call for official recognition of his martyrdom."

Archbishop Lawrence Saldanha of Lahore said Bhatti's murder showed how extremist religious parties were gaining the upper hand over a "very weak" Pakistan government. The archbishop, who is president of Pakistan's Catholic Bishops' Conference, said the country's 2.5 million Christians were now increasingly exposed to violence and intimidation from people "whose mind-set is centered more and more on an extremist form of Islam."

Archbishop Saldanha said, "The murder of Shahbaz Bhatti means that we have lost a great leader of our community who stood up for us and articulated the concerns and fears of our people. We do not have a leader now." The archbishop said, "Our people are quite down. They are fearful of the future."

Bhatti was gunned down in a residential district of Islamabad on his way to a cabinet meeting on March 2. He had received numerous death threats because of his criticism of Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Virginia Farris, a policy adviser for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office of International Justice and Peace, said the blasphemy laws Bhatti hoped to amend have been widely used to intimidate and abuse Christians and other religious minorities in Pakistan.

Rebel fighters shelled by forces loyal to Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi near Bin Jawad, Libya, on March 6.

good for the United States," which should first seek the endorsement of the African Union or the Arab League.

"I think that the Libyans need protection from the strikes being launched against them," Shahin said. But without regional support, a U.S. move against Qaddafi would delegitimize the resistance movement, Shahin said, and would play directly into Qaddafi's narrative of external forces manipulating the opposition. A unilateral gesture would also further weaken the U.S. position in the Middle East, he said, where "the United States does not want to get entangled" in another conflict.

While it works toward a potential no-fly zone "in cooperation with other states," Shahin said, the United States should aggressively continue diplomatic efforts to press the Qaddafi regime, including possible recognition of the resistance forces as the legitimate government of Libya. The United States could also do more to respond to the refugee crisis emerging from the conflict. "I think this is as far as they can go," Shahin said.

In Tripoli on March 4 a degree of calm appeared to have been restored through fear, as residents ceased conducting protests against the regime after they had been repeatedly met by lethal force. Bishop Giovanni Innocenzo Martinelli, the apostolic vicar of Tripoli, Libya, said: "The situation is very uncertain, and for the moment anything is possible. In my view, the international embargo and threats will be unlikely to convince the Libyan authorities to surrender.

"I believe that we can find another way out of this situation," Bishop Martinelli said. "And it is not difficult to find one because in the Bedouin culture there are social structures that assist reconciliation. There may be people that would favor a turn in negotiating. In my humble opinion, it is the only way to surpass the crisis and prevent more bloodshed. There are better ways than with violence."

Meanwhile, a Caritas Internationalis team was at work on the Egypt-Libya border in Salloum, where thousands of foreign workers fleeing the violence had been stranded. Around 5,000 more were arriving daily.

She said Americans, whose tax dollars are helping support Pakistan's resistance to Taliban and Al Qaeda power in the nation's tribal provinces, should be concerned by "this uptick in violence and religious intolerance that minister Bhatti had tried so hard in his life to overcome."

Farris had worked on a number of occasions with Bhatti. "He struck me as a man who was very principled," said Farris, "who was trying his darndest under very difficult circumstances to offer hope to [Pakistan's religious] minorities, to try to stand with them and give them the opportunity to have their voice heard."

She added, "He was a very courageous man, obviously, because he went back." She explained that during his last visit to the United States in February for the National Prayer Breakfast at the White House, threats against his life had accumulated and some urged Bhatti to seek refuge in the United States. Bhatti refused. "He said, 'I have to go back. I have to serve [my] people.'"

Whatever Pakistan's bishops decide, Bhatti's martyrdom may already be widely accepted by the community he represented. At Bhatti's funeral on March 4, thousands of Christians, as well as Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, joined together in prayer to remember Bhatti's life and sacrifice.

Mourners remember Shahbaz Bhatti in Lahore, Pakistan, on March 5.

Bishops Review Border Violence

Shared concerns over violence among Mexico's drug gangs and broader issues related to discrimination and human rights violations against immigrants and their impact on the church were discussed by bishops from dioceses along the Texas-Mexico border during a three-day meeting that ended on March 3. Gathering in El Paso, across the border from Ciudad Juárez, ground zero in Mexico's drug war and the site of thousands of murders annually, the 10 bishops also discussed pastoral issues related to the celebration of the sacraments. The bishops agreed to coordinate practices on both sides of the border, making it easier for U.S. residents to get married or have their children baptized in Mexico in front of relatives who find it difficult to cross the border because of the violence. Mexico's crackdown on organized crime and drug cartels has claimed more than 35,000 lives over the past four years.

Philadelphia Suspends 21 Priests

In a major reversal, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced that it had placed 21 priests on administrative leave from active ministry in connection with credible charges that they had sexually abused minors. The announcement on March 8 represented an embarrassing turnaround for Cardinal Justin Rigali, archbishop of Philadelphia, who had said in response to a devastating grand jury report in February that there were no priests in active ministry "who have an admitted or established allegation of sexual abuse of a minor against them." The suspensions follow an initial examination of files, "looking at both the substance of allegations and the process by which those allegations were reviewed," according to the archdiocese, which said a "thorough independent investigation" will follow the suspensions. "I know that for many people their trust in the church has been shaken," Cardinal Rigali said. "I pray that the efforts of the archdiocese to address these cases of concern and to re-evaluate our way of handling allegations will help rebuild that trust in truth and justice."

New Orleans School Paddles On?

For the past 60 years, teachers and administrators at St. Augustine High School in New Orleans have wielded an 18-inch-long wooden paddle—euphemistically called "the board of education"—to administer corporal punishment to students. Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond and Edward Chiffriller, a Josephite priest who is that order's superior general and head of the school's board of trustees, ordered the practice stopped following an intensive review process. But their decision has been met with outspoken opposition from parents, alumni, students, the school's board of directors and both current and former administrators. During a three-hour and 50-minute "disciplinary town-hall meeting" on Feb. 24 at the St. Augustine gym, speaker after speaker—including John Raphael, the Josephite president of St. Augustine—passionately explained why they supported the use of corporal punishment and asked that the moratorium be lifted. St. Augustine is the only Catholic school in the United States to have permitted corporal punishment as recently as 2010.

From CNS and other sources.

NEWS BRIEFS

Protesting hearings on Muslim "radicalism" in New York

Representative Peter King, Republican of New York, convened **controversial congressional hearings** on March 10 to investigate "the extent of radicalization in the American Muslim community." ⬩ The High Court in London has declared Owen and Eunice Johns of Derby, England, **unqualified to become foster parents** because of their Christian views on premarital and homosexual intercourse. ⬩ A federal judge in California ruled on Feb. 28 that a Mexican resident can use a law typically employed for international human rights cases to **sue the Archdiocese of Los Angeles** over charges that he was sexually abused by a priest. ⬩ New York's Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan and Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio of Brooklyn said a New York City ordinance requiring **crisis pregnancy centers** to display disclaimers about the services they provide "is designed to prevent pro-life advocates from speaking freely." ⬩ Ireland's bishops have renewed their opposition to the planned abolition of the 50/50 Catholic-Protestant **recruitment policy for the police** in Northern Ireland. ⬩ The Anglican bishop of Jerusalem, the Rev. Suheil Dawani, has been **forbidden to live in Jerusalem** after his residency visa was revoked by Israel's Interior Ministry.

JOHN J. DiIULIO JR.

Authentic Democracy

Nobody knows what will result from the ongoing political upheavals in Egypt, Libya and several other nations in the Middle East. Many people in those nations and in the West hope that the result will be "democracy."

I share that aspiration, but ending a totalitarian, authoritarian, aristocratic or other nondemocratic regime is one thing; beginning a democracy is another thing. As the old adage goes, two wolves and a sheep deciding what's for supper is not democracy in action. Rather, majority rule, whether in presidential, semipresidential or parliamentary systems, and whether effected through proportional representation or other electoral processes, is only where democracy begins.

Democracy requires not only regular "one person, one vote" plebiscites but also both constitutional and customary limits on government power and those who wield it.

As James Madison wrote in The Federalist No. 51, in instituting a democratic republic that is "to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and, in the next place, oblige it to control itself."

In a democracy would-be leaders must not seek to gain through bullets what they lose through ballots, and elected leaders must be both inclined and obliged to respect human rights and protect civil liberties. Win or lose, in government or out, all who compete for political power in a democracy must accept as legitimate the idea of one or more loyal (and loud) opposition parties.

Historically, empires, dynasties, dictatorships and other nondemocratic regimes are the rule to which democracy is the exception. In 1991, two years before his controversial 1993 book concerning a possible coming "clash of civilizations," the late Harvard University political scientist Samuel P. Huntington published a less speculative, less provocative and less widely read book, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*.

Historically empires, dynasties and dictatorships have been the rule.

In this book, Huntington observed that among nations with a population of a million people or more, the number of political systems widely categorized as democratic had grown in three "waves."

The first "long wave of democratization" occurred in the period between 1828 and 1926. A second, "short wave of democratization" occurred in the period between 1942 and 1962. A "third wave of democratization" began in 1974 and by 1990 included 58 of the 129 nations that were home to a million people or more; today many analysts put that number in the 50s or 60s.

Each global democratic wave has been followed by reversals in some newly democratic nations. The roster of democratic nations in Africa, for instance, changed greatly between 1990 and 2010. And there are only a few dozen nations that have been steadfastly democratic for a half-century or more. Still, with each wave, global democracy reached a higher plateau.

As I stated during a lecture in 1998 before the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, for most of its history our church was no friend of democracy. But—as non-Catholic scholars, including Huntington and the eminent political sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset had emphasized—as a force behind democracy's worldwide post-1974 march, Catholicism was second only to economic development.

In 1987 Pope John Paul II taught in "Sollicitudo Rei Socialis" that "developing nations should favor the self-affirmation of each citizen, through access to a wider culture and a free flow of information."

It was time to "replace corrupt, dictatorial, and authoritarian forms of government with democratic and participatory ones." And in 1991, in "Centesimus Annus," Pope John Paul II taught that "authentic democracy is possible only in a state ruled by law, and on the basis of a correct conception of the human person."

Catholics in the United States are special heirs of that sacred civic vision, for we are both Catholic and citizens of what Lipset famously termed "the first new nation." Pray that a new wave of authentic democracy has begun and that American Catholics will lead, not follow, in supporting and sustaining it.

JOHN J. DiIULIO JR. *is the author of* Godly Republic: A Centrist Blueprint for America's Faith-Based Future *(Univ. of California Press, 2007).*

Dr. Apollo Ahimbisibwe examines a patient at the Kamwokya Christian Caring Community clinic in Kampala, Uganda, in June 2007. The clinic relies in part on funding from Catholic Relief Services.

A REPORT FROM THE MARGINS OF GLOBAL HEALTH CARE

On Call in Amuru

BY MICHAEL J. WESTERHAUS

On most evenings, as midnight arrives at Amuru Peripheral Health Center in rural northern Uganda, a distant roar gently disrupts the peaceful quiet of the star-studded sky. The hum of noise belongs to the jet engines of the British Airways and KLM flights as they ascend to cruising altitude en route to London and Amsterdam from Uganda's Entebbe International Airport.

Inside the planes, flight attendants roll service carts down the aisles offering sodas, wine, beer and orange juice. Passengers recline their seats and turn on their personal in-flight entertainment systems. Over the intercom the pilot welcomes them, announces a flight plan that traverses Sudan, Libya, the Mediterranean, Italy and France and invites all on board to relax and enjoy the comforts provided by the staff. Dinner, choice of chicken or beef, will soon be on its way.

The staff at Amuru Peripheral Health Center

On the ground below, at the brick-walled and tin-roofed clinic, the wards are outfitted with 25 metal-framed beds. The place bursts at the seams with 40 to 50 inpatients and their families, who search out patches of cement on which to unroll their brilliantly colored banana mats and rest their heads for the night. Kerosene lanterns light the wards. The night staff distributes evening medications to treat the cases of malaria, respiratory infections and diarrheal disease that afflict the bulk of patients admitted to the health center. But on any given night, some patients go untreated because the clinic runs short of certain medications, even though they are on the list of essential medicines described by the World Health Organization as the "minimum medicine needs for a basic health-care system." Other patients, whose medications are in stock, wash the pills down with clean running water from a deep well drilled near the clinic. Dinner—if there is any—often consists of rice or beans and disappears all too quickly.

Despite these limitations, Amuru's staff members, with whom I have been

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OPPOSITE: CNS PHOTO/RICK D'ELIA

MICHAEL J. WESTERHAUS, M.D., *a physician and anthropologist at Harvard Medical School in the department of social medicine and global health, also works in Northern Uganda on community-based health care.*

privileged to work over the last three years, remain committed to providing the best care possible to a community that was heavily affected by war during the 20 years between 1986 and 2006. On average, 150 outpatients arrive at the clinic every day, of whom 10 to 20 are admitted. In a recent letter to the clinic staff, a mother expressed deep gratitude for the committed, patient and thoughtful care provided to her son during his recent bout with malaria. A copy of that letter now hangs on the clinic's notice board, proudly displayed for all to view.

A Patient With Asthma

Yet even with the benefit of a committed, well-trained staff, on most nights the challenges of providing health care in a resource-poor setting are crystal clear. On one such night, as the jets passed overhead, a 38-year-old woman named Mary (not her real name) arrived at the clinic wheezing because of tightened airways from an asthma attack. Despite Mary's long struggle with asthma, she had never had an inhaler capable of preventing such attacks. She therefore walked for four hours with her breastfeeding child to reach the clinic.

ON THE WEB
From the archives, Paul Farmer on medicine and social justice.
americamagazine.org/pages

Predictably, Mary arrived in extreme distress. Her breathing was labored. Her baby cried of hunger, prompting her to try breastfeeding while holding herself upright on a stretcher to maximize her ventilation. We measured her vital signs and listened to her lungs and heart, hoping that we could control the situation. We gave her a dose of steroids and salbutamol tablets, standard medications for an asthma exacerbation. We marshaled our best patient-doctor skills as well, trying to console her with a hand on the shoulder or a rub on the back and hoping that the art of medicine would relax the smooth muscle in her airways.

It did not. Her body required the benefits of oxygen therapy and inhaled asthma medications, neither of which was available. Without them, Mary sat bolt upright, struggling for each breath as she settled herself in a hospital bed for the night.

Mary's experience represents a recurring storyline at the clinic: Children whose red blood cells have been extinguished by malarial parasites arrive in desperate need of blood transfusions, which the clinic does not offer. Women arrive with obstructed labor requiring urgent surgical intervention that can be had only if the women can pay $50 to reach a large hospital about an hour's drive away. Others arrive with respiratory infections that induce severe shortness of breath, but they cannot be treated at the clinic for lack of oxygen therapy.

On the night Mary arrived, the overnight nurse woke me at four in the morning, saying, "That asthmatic needs more help." After a brief respite, the tyranny of her uncontrolled asthma attack had returned. As Mary gasped for air in the lantern-lit ward, I had no idea what to do, despite all my training as a global health resident and years of experience in Uganda. We could not step up her therapy. No portable chest x-ray could be ordered to make sure we weren't missing something else. No vehicles were available to transport her to the hospital an hour away. In that space, which felt so much the opposite of our promise to heal suffering and work for health as a human right for all, I simply sat with her.

The Ties That Bind

I thought about the planes in flight, probably over the Mediterranean by that time, and the space between the cabins of those roaring jets above and the clamor of the packed wards at Amuru health center below. The space between is so vast. The privileges and opportunities in life afforded so many on the plane far exceed the opportunities for those who fill the wards below. Access to quality education, health care, sanitation and housing is often taken for granted by those who can come and go as they please, while that access is desperately sought after by the people in Amuru, down below. Community and familial ties among those in Amuru are tight in ways often unimaginable to those on the plane whose lives include living great distances from family and friends. Those in Amuru take time to greet all who pass on the road. In Boston, I often find an avoidance of eye contact or a rushed hello.

And yet that space between is quite small, too. Just down the road from the clinic, oil exploration by a European company has commenced, linking the physical land of Amuru with the fuel that powers the jets passing overhead. Generic drugs produced in India fill the shelves of the clinic in Amuru, circumventing the multinational-pharmaceutical-company restriction that would limit medications to those who can pay for them. Ugandan soldiers and rebels used weapons manufactured in China and Russia in a 20-year war that still haunts the minds and bodies of those who live around Amuru. And international aid, likely subsidized through the taxes of at least some of the airplane passengers, pays for the staff, vehicles, schools and conferences of nongovernmental organizations trying to improve health, education and governance in Amuru.

Morning arrived as rays of sunlight tumbled across the acacia trees on the plains of Amuru. Miraculously, Mary survived. We found her transport to the bigger hospital, where she received oxygen and nebulizer therapy. She then disappeared back into the mass of people living in resource-poor settings, who continually persevere on the margins. By

then, the planes had surely touched down on British and Dutch tarmacs.

In an era of unparalleled global interconnections and expanded funding for global health, Mary's story disturbs me. Northern Uganda teems with local and international N.G.O.'s that relentlessly offer health training programs, rove the land offering mobile outreaches and construct new office spaces equipped with the latest information technology. Global health professionals and students—so many of the passengers on those planes—come and go in the name of work, research and new experiences. Reports are written, research is conducted, and papers are published. Million-dollar contracts are awarded by donor countries to develop sustainable systems of health care delivery in concert with the government. Yet we are still unable to deliver basic primary care to people like Mary. Why?

I worry that those of us who say we "just want to help" are culpable. We continue to perpetuate a system of global health and development largely built upon models of charity, that, as Paul Farmer once wrote in these pages, presuppose that "there will always be those who have and those who have not." While now frowned upon rhetorically, paternalism still holds us captive through the short-term, uncritical application of our answers to other people's problems. We localize the problems of people like Mary with research papers and books citing "corrupt foreign governments," "violent African settings," "failed states" and "exotic cultural practices." The list goes on. Rarely do we look to ourselves to see how we fall short in our commitments or how we participate in and benefit from global systems that perpetuate inequality and structural violence. According to the research of Alnoor Ebrahim, a Harvard professor, N.G.O.'s, beholden to the purse strings of their donors, avoid critical evaluation of their actions for fear of losing funding; instead, they glamorize triumphs in the most dire of circumstances.

Such factors result in a global health enterprise that often lacks long-term commitment, partnership and accountability to the communities we purportedly serve. At Amuru Health Center, local and international N.G.O.'s continually arrive without prior warning and present elaborate plans to address the health crises facing the population. They disrupt the daily workflow at the clinic, promise resources and are never seen again. The hollow legacy of such visits persists in N.G.O. annual reports, lauding the number of community outreach visits accomplished that year.

Business as Usual

Research shows that partly through the institutionalization and professionalization of global health and development, these ways of doing things have come to be taken for granted in international development and global health work. While this style of business as usual is great for marshalling

resources, initiating projects and building résumés, the final criterion should be whether it helps people like Mary. Otherwise, we—out of concern for our advancing careers, published articles and comfortable lives—risk continued acceptance of lower standards of care for the poor, global economic inequities and the fallacy that good intentions are good enough. Within the current economic, political and social systems, the stark reality is that many people in Mary's shoes suffer and die needlessly.

At a time when the fields of development and global health are continuing to emerge, the people of Amuru have taught me to pay close attention to all the connections between these plans, their lives and the spaces between. We can find many, if we start to look. It is in tracing those connections that critical questions arise; unease with the world's inequality and injustice rattles us; and confusion about what to do next can overwhelm us. But it is also then that we see the spaces of shared humanity, settle upon coordinated efforts, however incomplete and imperfect, and envision opportunities for remaking a world grounded in social justice. It is then that we start to reclaim solidarity, a driving force behind Catholic social teaching.

Now, each time I board one of those planes myself, I must confront the question, "What am I going to do about the spaces between?" A

Get Closer

Our desires for God come from God and lead us to the divine Mystery.

BY JAMES MARTIN

Desire is a key part of Christian spirituality because desire is a key way in which God's voice is heard in our lives. And our deepest desire, planted within all of us, is our natural desire for God.

Perhaps you are surprised by the notion that everyone has an innate desire for God. Perhaps you are not sure you have ever experienced such a desire. So how does this desire manifest itself? What does it feel like? And how can you become aware of your desire for God?

There are many ways in which our desires for God are revealed. Let's look at three: incompletion, common longings and vulnerability.

Incompletion

Many of us have felt that, even though we have had some success and happiness in our lives, there is something missing. Way back in the 1960s Peggy Lee sang, "Is That All There Is?" In the 1980s, U2 sang "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For." We all feel that lingering restlessness, the nagging feeling that there must be something more to life than our day-to-day existence.

Feelings of incompletion may reflect dissatisfaction with our daily lives and point us to something that needs to be rectified. If we are trapped in a miserable job, a dead-end relationship or an unhealthy family situation, it might be time to think about some serious change. Dissatisfaction does not have to be stoically endured; it can lead to a decision, change and a more fulfilled life.

Yet no matter how happy our lives are, this feeling of incompletion never fades. This inner restlessness provides a glimpse of our longing for God. "O Lord, our hearts are restless until they rest in you," as St. Augustine wrote. This longing is a sign of the longing of the human heart for God. It is one of the most profound ways that God has of calling us to the divine. And in the echoes of our restlessness we can hear God's voice.

Sometimes those feelings are stronger than simple incompletion and feel more like an awful emptiness. One popular name for this is the "God-shaped hole," the space within our hearts that only God can fill.

Some, however, try desperately to fill that hole with money, status or power. They think: If only I had more I would be happy. A better job. A nicer house. Yet even after acquiring these things, some may still feel incomplete, as if they are chasing something they can never catch. We race ahead, straining to reach the goal of fulfillment, yet it always seems just out of reach. The prize of wholeness is elusive. Emptiness remains.

In their drive to fill this hole, others are pulled toward addictive behaviors, anything to fill them up: drugs, alcohol, gambling, shopping, sexual addictions, compul-

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/DJGIS

JAMES MARTIN, S.J., *is culture editor of* **America**. *This essay is adapted from his new book,* The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything *(HarperOne).*

sive eating. But those addictions lead only to a greater sense of disintegration, a more cavernous emptiness and, eventually, to loneliness and despair.

This hole in our hearts is the space from which we call to God. It is the space where God wants most to meet us. Our longing to fill that space comes from God. And it is the space that only God can begin to fill.

Your desire to fill that emptiness is one way that God calls to you.

Common Longings

Sometimes you experience a desire for God in common situations: for example, standing silently in the snowy woods on a winter's day, finding yourself moved to tears during a movie or recognizing a strange sense of connection during a church service—and feeling an inexpressible longing to savor this feeling and to understand what it is.

In the years after my sister gave birth to my first nephew, I often felt overwhelmed with love when I was with him. Here was a beautiful new child, a person who had never existed before, given to the world. One day I came home from a visit to their house and was so filled with love that I wept—out of gratitude, out of joy and out of wonder. At the same time I longed to connect more with the mysterious source of this joy.

Common longings and heartfelt connections are ways of becoming conscious of our desire for God. We yearn for an understanding of feelings that seem to come from outside of us. We experience what the 16th-century Spanish mystic St. John of the Cross calls the desire for "I know not what."

Many of us have had experiences like this. We feel that we are standing on the brink of something important, on the edge of experiencing something just beyond us. We experience wonder. Awe. So why don't you hear more about these times?

Because many times we ignore them, reject them or deny them. We chalk them up to being overwhelmed, overwrought, overly emotional. "Oh, I was just being silly!" you might say to yourself. So you disregard the strange longing you feel at the first breath of a spring breeze on your face after a long dark winter, because you tell yourself (or others tell you or try to convince you) that you were simply being emotional. This happens even to those practiced in the spiritual life: often, after an intense experience in prayer during a retreat, people are tempted to dismiss it as simply something that "just happened."

Or we simply do not recognize these moments as possibly having their origins in God.

One friend, a self-described workaholic who had not been to church for many years, attended a baptism of a friend's child. Suddenly she was overtaken by powerful feelings—mainly the desire to live a more peaceful and centered existence. She began to cry, though she did not know why. She told me that she felt an intense feeling of peace as she stood in church and watched the priest pour water over the baby's head.

To me, it seemed clear what had happened: she was experiencing, in this moment, when her defenses were down, her desire for God. And God's desires for her. It makes sense that a religious experience would happen in the context of a religious ceremony. But she laughed and dismissed it. "Oh," she said, "I guess I was just being emotional." And that was that.

It is a natural reaction. Much in Western culture tries to tamp down or even deny these naturally spiritual experiences and explain them away in purely rational terms. It is always something other than God.

You may also fear accepting these moments as signs of the divine call. If you accept them as originating with God, you might have to accept that God wants to be in relationship with you or is communicating with you directly, which is a frightening idea.

Fear is a common experience—in the Old and the New Testaments and with modern-day believers. Being confronted with an indication that God is close to you can be alarming. Thinking about God wanting to communicate with us is something that many of us would rather avoid. Fear is a natural reaction to the divine, to the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, as the theologian Rudolf Otto said, the mystery that both fascinates and leaves us trembling.

So religious experiences are often dismissed—not out of doubt that they are not real, but out of fear that they are real after all.

Vulnerability

Here is an often misunderstood statement: Many people feel drawn to God in times of suffering.

During a serious illness, a family crisis, the loss of a job or the death of a loved one, many people will say that they have turned to God in new ways. More skeptical minds may chalk this up to desperation. The person in need, they say, has nowhere else to turn and so turns to God. God is seen in this light as a crutch for the foolish, a superstitious refuge.

But in general, we do not turn to God in suffering because we suddenly become irrational. Rather, God is able to reach us because our defenses are lowered. The barriers that we erected to keep out God—whether pride or fear or lack of interest—are set aside. We are not less rational. We are more open.

ON THE WEB

James Martin, S.J., blogs on the many paths to God.
americamagazine.org/things

When he was in his late 50s, my father lost a good job. After a long while, he found a career, but one that he felt was unsatisfying. As too many people know, it is difficult to find work and start a new career later in life, at an age when many people are looking forward to retirement. It was a hard time for him and for my mother.

His job required an hourlong commute from our home in suburban Philadelphia. One dark night, in the parking lot of his office, far from home, my father had a dizzy spell, lost his balance and fell. He ended up in the hospital. Tests showed what everyone feared: cancer. Cancer of the lungs had spread to his brain, which had caused the fall. (My father had been a heavy smoker for much of his life.)

During the next nine months, my father's physical condition went steadily downhill, despite chemotherapy. Soon he was bedridden and began to rely on my mother to care for all of his physical needs at home. The last month of his life, when my mother could no longer help him out of bed, he said, "I think I should go to the hospital." So we moved him to a sub-acute care facility. But while his physical condition declined, his spiritual condition seemed to improve.

Near the end of his life, my father started to talk more frequently about God. This was a complete surprise. While he had been raised Catholic and graduated from Catholic grammar school and high school, and while he attended Mass on important feast days, he had, at least as long as I had known him, never been overtly religious.

But as my father neared death, he asked my Jesuit friends to pray for him, treasured holy cards that people sent him, mused about which people he wanted to see in heaven, asked what I thought God would be like and made some suggestions about his funeral Mass. My dad also became more gentle, more forgiving and more emotional. I found these changes both consoling and confusing.

One of the last people to visit him was my friend Sister Janice, who had been one of my professors during my theology studies. After my dad's death, I remarked that he seemed to have become more open to God. In response, she said something I had never heard before, but that I seemed to have already known.

"Yes," she said. "Dying is about becoming more human."

Her insight was true in at least two ways. First, becoming more human meant for my father recognizing his inborn connection to God. All of us are connected to God, though we may ignore it, deny it or reject it during our lives. But with my father's defenses completely lowered, God was able to meet him in new ways. Whatever barriers kept God at a distance no longer existed.

This, not desperation, is why there are so many profound spiritual experiences near death. The person is better able to allow God to break through.

But there is a second way that Sister Janice's insight made sense. My father was becoming more "human" because he was becoming more loving. Drawing closer to God transforms us, since the more time we spend with someone we love, the more we become like the object of our love. Paradoxically, the more "human" we become the more "divine" we become.

This is not to say that God desires for us to suffer. Rather, when our defenses fall, our ultimate connection is revealed. Thus, vulnerability is another way in which God is able to draw near to us.

The God Who Seeks

These experiences, which many of us have had, are all ways in which we can become aware of our innate desire for God. There are many others as well, some of which might be so personal as to be incommunicable to others. But anyone can become aware of his or her desire for God. Moreover, finding God and being found by God are really the same, since both of those expressions of desire have God as their source and goal.

Thus, the beginning of the path to God is not only trusting that these desires are placed within us by God, but also trusting that God seeks us even more than we seek God. A

EXHIBIT | WILLIAM VAN ORNUM

SPIRITUAL CURRENCY

The Vatican's coins of the realm

Every coin has a story to tell. Holding a Lincoln penny in your hand, for example, can be a tangible reminder of the life of Abraham Lincoln. Staring at his copper face can evoke memories of the Gettysburg Address or the Emancipation Proclamation. On the back of the coin is a tiny, detailed portrait of the Lincoln Memorial, where the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I have a dream" speech in 1964. His speech, which rang out on those steps, is evoked by the coin.

As a coin enthusiast, I sometimes I pull from my pocket a five lire coin issued by the Vatican in 1939. I keep it for the image on its back of St. Peter struggling in a storm. He knows, I tell myself, that God's efforts, not his own, will save him. This image, common on Vatican coins, is one of the many inspiring coins and medals displayed at the Vatican's Philatelic and Numismatic Museum. Founded in 2007, the museum draws many visitors and fosters an awareness of over 1,300 years of Vatican involvement in the production of coins and medals.

Vatican coins (those since 1929), papal medals (15th century onward) and Papal States coins (8th century to 1870, resumed with 1929 coins) also offer a glimpse of important figures and events in the Catholic Church.

Peter Jencius, one of the most experienced U.S. numismatists specializing in Vatican coins, recounts how in the 1970s his father focused his coin business on Vatican coins, "traveling several times each year to Europe to bring back coins for customers who wanted to keep the heritage of their church alive through these permanent mementos." Jenicus added, "They can underscore what the pope is trying to convey through his encyclicals, showcase a building or museum or other cultural artifact or even re-create a biblical scene with contemporary meaning." Some, like the medal issued annually on the vigil of the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul (June 28), or the two euro coin depicting St. Paul on horseback, can also serve as tools for evangelization.

Top, Julius II coin, ca. 1513: Saints Peter and Andrew fishing from boat. Bottom, same Julius II coin, front. Right, Paul III coin, ca. 1540: St. Peter fishing. (Not actual size.)

PHOTOS COURTESY OF Q. DAVID BOWERS, STACK'S BOWER'S GALLERIES, NYC

The New Museum

The museum showcases the entire Vatican City philatelic and numismatic production from 1929 to the present, and also displays a wide selection of postmarks, sketches, typographic plates, plasters, bronze casts and items illustrating the production stages of stamps and coins. Older coins were typically minted in bronze, copper, silver and gold; modern coins are cast in aluminum or nickel alloys and bimetallic "planchets" (the metal on which a coin is stamped) commonly used in the production of other European coins.

Consider the artistry, history and spiritual themes depicted in the following examples.

Vatican coins since 1929. These were minted soon after the Lateran Agreements, signed by Mussolini, created the Vatican City State, during a perilous time for the church. Several

Vatican coins of that era depict St. Peter in a storm: He sits alone in a small boat as whitecaps threaten to capsize it. With one oar in the water and the other in the boat, Peter raises his right hand to heaven. All seems hopeless. Peter wears a look of terror on his face; it will take the Lord's help to save him.

By contrast, on the obverse (front side) of the 50 euro coin minted in 2002 is a profile of an aging John Paul II holding a walking stick. The image suggests both forward movement and past pilgrimages. The reverse (back side) portrays Abraham's near-sacrifice of Isaac, an event crucial to Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Looking at the image recently, I was reminded of Abraham's family tree in the Book of Genesis. From Isaac came the nations of Israel; and from his brother, Ishmael, came the nations of Islam. These two sons once dwelt together in the same family.

Papal medals. A precious gold medal from the reign of Julius II (1503 to 1513) is stamped with a different impression of St. Peter in the storm (See photo, p. 21). Historians debate the legacy of Julius. He constructed many lasting Roman edifices, encouraged Bramante to begin St. Peter's Basilica and supported Raphael and Michelangelo. Yet his projects depended on money from indulgences, a practice that later led to Martin Luther's revolutionary departure from the church, and on gold that was either discovered in or looted from the New World. In this image Peter is accompanied by St. Andrew. One could apply the imaginative techniques of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and ask: What were the two apostles thinking? Where are James and John, the other fishermen? How much did human effort count in quelling the metaphorical storms of the 16th century or the 20th century? Which actions were due to God?

ON THE WEB
A slideshow of coins from the Vatican and links to resources.
americamagazine.org/slideshow

Peter Jencius notes that during the 15th century papal medals became a popular form of artistic expression. The medium of thick medallions requires skill in sculpture and relief; the artist must also create a die that can withstand hundreds or thousands of replications.

Papal coins before 1929. Alan G. Berman, an expert in medieval and papal coins, recently compiled a scholarly catalogue of papal coinage, beginning with the papacy of St. Gregory III (731–41) and ending in 2001, during the papacy of John Paul II. On the front is usually a bust of the pope. But Berman notes that "papal reverse types are among the most varied and creative to be found on Western coinage." They include symbols, heraldry, inscriptions, allegories, biblical scenes, architecture and saints. Many numismatists hope the Vatican will extend its virtual museum of coins, being built online to include coins since 1929, to offer older images, including some historic masterpieces.

Praying With Coins

In a trip to Rome or online, you might want to incorporate these images into your spiritual life. The Spiritual Exercises suggest a way: 1) Offer a preparatory prayer asking that the scene on the coin be helpful in understanding God; 2) imagine the scene in as much detail as possible, filling in the story; 3) contemplate how the scene is relevant to one's own life; 4) include a conversation with those depicted on the coin; and 5) offer thanks for how God has worked through the event on which you have meditated.

Vatican coins and papal coins and medals offer something more than the average penny: an insight into one's own relationship with God.

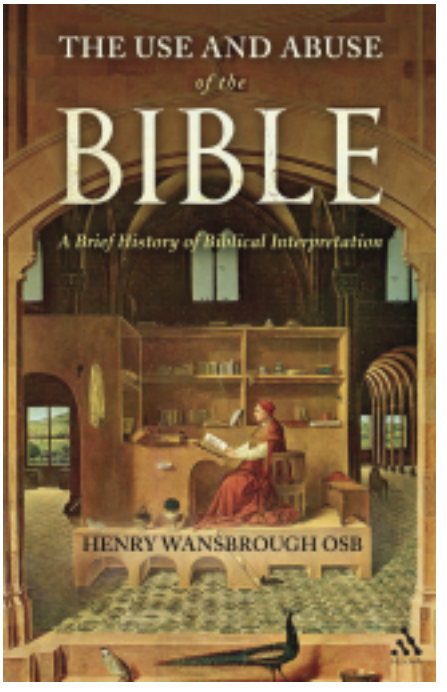
WILLIAM VAN ORNUM, *a regular blogger for* ***America****'s "In All Things," is a professor of psychology at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., and director of research and development at the American Mental Health Foundation.*

BOOKS ON THE BIBLE | DANIEL J. HARRINGTON

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

The Bible's influence through history

One of the most attractive and productive approaches in biblical studies in recent years goes by the German term *Wirkungsgeschichte*, that is, the history of the Bible's influence or effects. The books covered in this survey illustrate in various ways the influence of the Bible and its interpretation throughout the centuries and today.



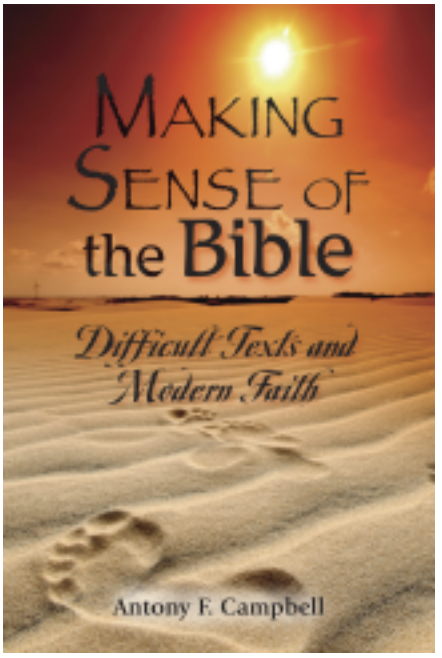
Henry Wansbrough's *The Use and Abuse of the Bible: A Brief History of Biblical Interpretation* (T&T Clark) offers a sound, concise, engaging and stimulating journey through the history of biblical interpretation from New Testament times to the present. Wansbrough, a British Benedictine monk of Ampleforth Abbey, seeks to capture some of the ways in which the Scriptures have been interpreted in Christianity and on its fringes—for good (mostly) or for ill (in some cases). His volume contains general chapters on the interpretation of the Old Testament in the New Testament, the Bible in the politics of early 17th-century England, the Bible and the State of Israel, and the Second Vatican Council and the revival of *lectio divina*. It also considers individuals and their contributions to the history of biblical interpretation: Melito of Sardis, Irenaeus, Origen, Jerome, Bede, Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Aquinas, Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe, Martin

Luther, John and Charles Wesley and John Henry Newman.

In treating these topics and figures, Wansbrough offers a nice blend of historical and biographical context, samples of their approaches to the Bible and appropriate praise and blame for the results. For example, he praises Origen for insisting on the mystical sense of Scripture and Jerome for stressing the literal sense, while noting the dangers of overemphasizing either approach. And he applauds the Wesley brothers for their abundant use of Scripture in their hymns and preaching, but also lauds Newman for striking a balance between Scripture and tradition and facing up to the challenges posed by the new archaeological, historical and literary studies of the Bible in the 19th century. He regards most of these interpreters sympathetically and even affectionately, though he is very tough on the early Zionists' political/propagandistic use of the Old Testament and biblical archaeology in the Land of Israel. All in all, this is a remarkably solid and appealing survey of Christian biblical interpretation and theology by a distinguished biblical interpreter in his own right.

What happens when familiar interpretations of biblical texts (such as the creation story in Genesis 1) clash with history and archaeology, modern science, biblical scholarship and good sense? In *Making Sense of the Bible: Difficult Texts and Modern Faith* (Paulist), Antony F. Campbell, S.J., explores how critical study of the Old Testament, along with current trends in biblical scholarship, can assist readers today in understanding what may appear to be difficult and problematic scriptural texts in ways that are beneficial to modern faith and do not endanger it. His motto is "Go, think!"

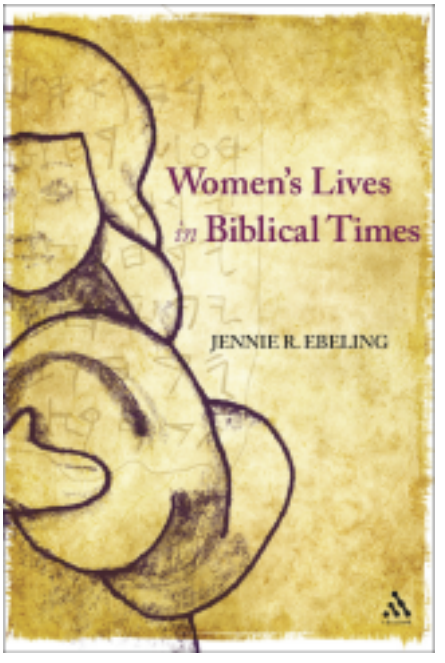
Campbell first treats Israel's traditions in the Pentateuch about humanity (creation, the garden, Cain, the flood, Babel), Israel's ancestors (Abraham and Sarah; Isaac and Rebekah; Jacob, Leah and Rachel; Joseph) and Mount Sinai (the law, the sanctuary). Then he considers issues regarding Joshua and the land (Israel's doing, God's doing, the absolutely appalling—with an appendix on archaeology and the book of Joshua)



and King David (his climb to power and his middle years). Campbell contends that while we can no longer do what our forebears did with these texts, when we now see what we can do with them we can and should be encouraged.

Campbell regards Genesis 1, for example, not as an account about how God created the world but rather as a grand portrayal of Israel's longing for an ideal and ordered world and a fitting preface to the book's dour reflections on human limit (the garden), human violence (Cain), human existence (the flood) and human ambition (Babel). Bible readers who find themselves puzzled or even embarrassed by certain Old Testament texts will discover here many fresh and stimulating insights for today.

Among the enduring (and questionable) legacies of the Bible over the centuries have been the model of the patriarchal family and the complementarity of the sexes (as in "women's work"). In *Women's Lives in Biblical Times* (T&T Clark), Jennie R. Ebeling, associate professor of archaeology at the University of Evansville, presents a reconstruction of the life of



a fictional woman named "Orah"—Hebrew for "light"—in a small village in the central highlands of Iron Age I Israel (1200-1000 B.C.). She works on the basis of archaeology, the Hebrew Bible, other ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian texts, iconography and ethnography.

In seven chapters Ebeling chronicles Orah's life "from cradle to grave": birth and background, childhood, womanhood, marriage, childbirth, motherhood, and old age and death. She focuses on the events, customs, crafts and technologies, and other activities in which Israelite women would have participated daily according to the agricultural calendar by which they lived. She gives particular attention to women's control of such diverse crafts and technologies as pottery production, spinning, weaving, basketry and hide-working, along with women's essential contributions in the

realms of midwifery, birth, breastfeeding, child rearing and household religious rituals, as well as their participation in supposedly male activities like harvesting and processing grain, grapes, olives and other crops.

The Iron Age I archaeological period in ancient Israel correlates with events described in the book of Judges and leading up to the formation of the monarchy under Saul and David. It was a decisive period in the formation of the various peoples in the central highlands into what came to be understood as Israel. Ebeling has a great story to tell, and she does so quite effectively by correlating each chapter not only with an age in Orah's life but also with the various festivals on the ancient agricultural calendar (Passover, Weeks, Tabernacles, etc.). In each chapter she develops four topics pertaining to women's life. For example, with regard to Orah's childhood (at age 8) she treats education and literacy, baking and brewing, pottery production and spinning and weaving. Thus she brings to life the day-to-day existence of characters about whom the Bible says relatively very little.

Most introductions to the Old Testament these days are written with an eye to the large secular university textbook market. Thus they tend to concentrate on historical and literary matters and avoid theology and spirituality. Michael W. Duggan's *The Consuming Fire: A Christian Guide to the Old Testament* (Our Sunday Visitor) is different in that it treats the Old Testament explicitly as part of the Christian Bible and makes many connections with the New Testament and Christian piety.

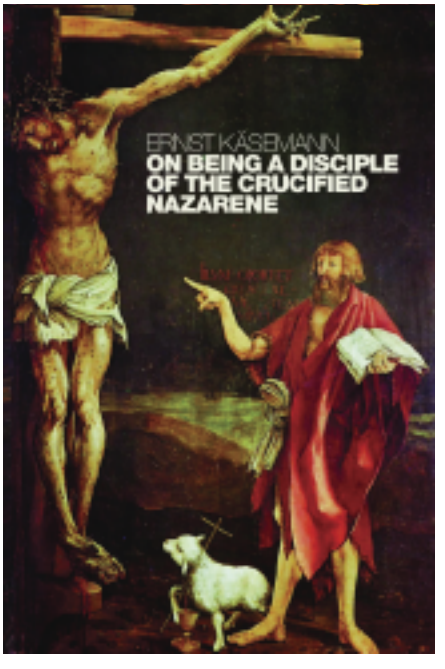
Duggan, who teaches at St. Mary's University College in Calgary, takes his title from the biblical image of God's glory or word as "like a consuming fire" (Ex 24:17; Dt 4:24; etc.). After setting the stage with almost 100 pages of introductory material, he treats each book in the Pentateuch, Historical Books, Prophets, Writings and Deuterocanonical Books. He sets the individual books in their historical contexts, explains their content, notes some of their major themes or topics and provides a detailed outline. His discussions are solidly based on the biblical texts, conversant with modern scholarship, objective and fair in judgment and expressed in a clear and concise manner.

What sets his work apart are the sections on the legacy of the Old Testament books in the New Testament and the invitations to the meditative reading of specific passages. While most obviously a textbook, this volume can be kept as a reference work and a stimulus to serious discussion and prayerful reading of Scripture.

The enduring legacy of Jesus and his first followers has resided primarily in the four Gospels attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In *Who Chose the Gospels? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy* (Oxford University Press), Charles E. Hill, professor of New Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, takes issue with some prominent scholars (and their followers in the popular media) who claim that the choice of those four Gospels represents merely the political victory of one "proto-orthodox" party supported by the emperor Constantine. This development supposedly had its roots in the polemical writing of Irenaeus around A.D. 200. On the contrary, Hill traces the idea of just four canonical Gospels and their authority in the churches back to around A.D. 100 and argues that their content and protagonist (Jesus) made them self-attesting and self-authenticating.

The second century of the Christian era was pivotal, according to Hill, in the development of the four-Gospel canon and the church's faith. By all accounts it was a wild and woolly time in church history. Having published widely about this period, Hill culls the evidence for his thesis from ancient manuscripts as well as the earliest Christian writings outside the canon (Irenaeus, Justin, Apologists, Apostolic Fathers, apocryphal Gospels and even the enemies of Christianity). The trail ends with Papias and the mysterious John the Elder in the early second century. Hill's learned, careful and sensible readings of the ancient texts provide a healthy antidote to the skeptical and sensationalist treatments they have too often received in recent years.

Ernst Käsemann (1906–98) was one of the most famous biblical scholars of the 20th century. He served as a Lutheran pastor in the early years of Nazi oppression, and after World War II he was a professor on the Protestant theological faculties at Mainz, Göttingen and Tübingen. While he



wrote important monographs on Hebrews and on the theme of the body of Christ, as well as a full-scale commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans, he is perhaps best known

from his provocative essays on such topics as the quest for the historical Jesus, justification as the center of Pauline theology, and unity and diversity in the New Testament.

On Being a Disciple of the Crucified Nazarene (Eerdmans) is the English version of the 2005 German collection of 28 previously unpublished lectures and sermons delivered by Käsemann between 1975 and 1996. They treat many of his favorite topics: the kingdom of God, discipleship and faith, the righteousness of God according to Paul, the body and Christ's body, justification and gospel freedom, Paul's letter to the Galatians, the Sermon on the Mount, possession and healing, and so on. Käsemann was always both an exegete and a preacher, and his challenging (and sometimes cantankerous) statements keep alive the theological legacies of both Paul and Luther. His essays are full of theological passion and will surely stimulate all who read them today.

The Pauline Year observed in 2008-9 produced many excellent studies of Paul's life, missionary activity, letters and theology (see **America,** 3/9/09, pp. 22-25). A somewhat overlooked topic, however, was the legacy of Paul in early Christian circles. In *The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity* (Fortress), Richard I. Pervo, the author of the massive and learned commentary on the Acts of the Apostles (2009) for the Hermeneia series, seeks to provide a survey of how Paul was remembered, honored and vilified in the early churches. His goal is to describe how Paul became the pillar and founder of catholic Christianity, that is, the emerging "great church" of the period from A.D. 150 to A.D. 250. His focus is on how Paul's undisputed letters and the figure of Paul the Apostle were used to carry on the Pauline tradition and were adapted to speak to the needs of Christians long after Paul's death.

Pervo first describes how Paul's undisputed letters (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon) were gathered, edited and circulated in the form of a collection around A.D. 100. Then he considers how the pseudepigraphical Pauline letters (Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians, Pastorals, etc.) carried on and developed the Pauline tradition in various ways and how the figure of Paul appears in other early Christian letters (such as Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, etc.) and in narratives (Acts of the Apostles, *Acts of Paul*, *Epistula Apostolorum*, etc.). Next he deals with possible examples of opposition to Paul in Matthew's Gospel and with the silences about Paul in other early writings. Finally he discusses how Paul was interpreted and used by Marcion, the Gnostics and Irenaeus.

This volume is immensely learned, full of fresh insights and connections and written in a lively and engaging style. Pervo plays very well the role of the historian as detective, always in search of loose ends, inconsistencies and contradictions, and other clues in the ancient sources. He defines the legacy of Paul as an inspiration to generate fresh understandings of his message for the service of the church and the world. He observes ironically that although Paul gave his life in pursuit of unity, he has often been the apostle of disunity; but that the complexity of his legacy is a fitting tribute to his memory.

The year 2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Version, the British Protestant translation that has functioned as "the Bible" for English-speaking Christians for many centuries. In *Pen of Iron: American Prose and the King James Bible* (Princeton University Press), Robert Alter, who has taught Hebrew and comparative literature at the University of California at Berkeley since 1967 and has for many years been a pioneer in the literary study of the Old Testament, contends that it is in America that the potential of the 1611 KJV to determine the foundational language and symbolic imagery of a whole culture has been most fully realized. Taking his title from its translation of Jer 17:1, Alter explores the role of this translation in the shaping of style in the American novel, and so seeks to reanimate the sense of the importance of literary style in the novel.

After a seven-page prelude, he discusses literary style in the United States and the King James Version, and then considers various aspects of its stylistic influence in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*—polyphony; William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*—lexicon; Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day*—American amalgam; Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*—the world through parataxis; and other American novels, including Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead* and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*. Alter concludes that the resonant language and the arresting vision of the King James Version, however old fashioned they may seem, continue to ring in our cultural memory. For those who love the Bible, the English language, literary stylistics and great American novels, this will be an engaging and stimulating book.

The legacy of the Bible can be found in many different forms and places. Tracking its influence is a fascinating enterprise in itself. It is yet another indication that the word of God is "living and active" (Heb 4:12).

DANIEL J. HARRINGTON, S.J., *professor of New Testament and editor of New Testament Abstracts at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, has contributed an annual survey of new books on the Bible to* ***America*** *for over 25 years.*

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LETTERS

The Man's 'Ideal' Role?

Contrary to M. Cathleen Kaveny, in "Defining Feminism" (2/28), it does not seem that Pope John Paul II truly respected women—not real women. Instead, he valued his personal image of what he perceived as the "ideal" woman, Mary. Perhaps the loss of his own mother at a young age led to his idealization of motherhood and his desire to limit women to that role. The all-male officialdom of the church seeks to define women according to its male preferences. So women in parishes can arrange flowers, iron altar cloths, teach the children and support the male clergy as office managers and housekeepers. They may not preach, however. They may serve in high administrative roles in chanceries but not have decision-making authority.

Rome says motherhood is the ideal role, but it does not speak similarly to men about fatherhood. It does not tell men they can be doctors, lawyers, teachers, nurses and fathers but not priests. Women hold the family together in crisis when men have abandoned them either for war or because they don't want the responsibilities of husband and father. Is the church abandoning its responsibility for telling men their most important role is that of husband and father? You don't often hear that from the men who run the church outside the Father's Day homily.

ANNE CHAPMAN
Los Angeles, Calif.

Motherhood Not for All

Feminism is a difficult issue to deal with in society at large and in the Catholic tradition. M. Cathleen

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Kaveny, in "Defining Feminism" (2/28), presents both sides of the issue but falls short in pointing out the uniqueness of each person regardless of gender. No one will argue against the anatomical differences between male and female. But I, a woman, would argue that motherhood is not a call for all women who have been gifts to the world and even to Catholicism. Were not St. Teresa of Avila, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Joan of Arc—and many like them who were not Catholic saints—feminists acceptable to the church and secular society? Limiting the role of women in society to motherhood ignores their inner strengths that go far beyond nurturing. A career woman who studies how to serve the marginalized and poor and gives up motherhood is responding to God's call too.

CODY SERRA
Plano, Tex.

Cover Girls

I almost didn't read M. Cathleen Kaveny's "Defining Feminism" because I was so transfixed by the cover art. If we take a statistical approach toward the semiotics of the illustration, the following can be said of the 51 female figures. Thirty-one wear high heels (61 percent), 14 seem to be doing a runway catwalk (27 percent), and 12 are wearing miniskirts (24 percent). Women wear eye-popping colors of clothing, but have no other distinguishing characteristics, nor do they seem engaged in any activity other than gesticulating or modeling fashions. Talk about objects rather than subjects! Is this **America**'s picture of feminists, anti-feminists or women in general, or just a lapse?

RUTH RUSSO
Walla Walla, Wash.

No Free Pass

After reading Cardinal Donald Wuerl's "Pass It On" (2/28), I was surprised—and, truth be told, disappointed—by the free pass the cardinal awards himself and his fellow members of the hierarchy in accounting for the widespread failure to "embrace discipleship and become active followers of Christ." As has been made so painfully and patently clear by the appalling facts of the sexual abuse crisis, the crisis of discipleship rests, at least in part, on the tragic and pervasive failure of leadership. At some point, the bishops will either start hearing and considering the concerns of present-day Catholics—women and gays among them—or they will end up talking to themselves.

PETER QUINN
Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y.

Which Gospel Message?

Cardinal Donald Wuerl ("Passing It On," 2/28) either does not understand the Gospel message or does not understand our youth, when he states that the majority consider prayer and spirituality important, but the message of the Gospel has been eclipsed. Many of our youth are deeply concerned with the Gospel message. They care about social justice; they are against war and the killing of innocent victims of war; they are for equality for all humans; they are concerned about the plight of the poor in the United States and across the globe; they are concerned about gun violence. Perhaps if these Gospel messages were not eclipsed by the church, the youth would find their way back to the pews.

CATHERINE WILLIAMS
Everett, Wash..

Coming to a Boil

In Of Many Things (2/21), Drew Christiansen, S.J., concludes that in the Arab world popular resistance may offer an alternative to despots but that there seems no alternative in sub-Saharan Africa. I disagree. The southern African alternative will come from the same quarter as in Tunis and Cairo.

I teach media, reportage and filmmaking in Eastern Congo to talented young men and women from all social strata. My former students now work in international news and aid organizations; they have set up businesses and run charities and are contributing members of the middle-class intelligentsia. When they reach critical mass, their percolation will bubble up unavoidably. The lava in the volcano never stays down long.

CARLTON ANTHONY CHASE
Brentwood, Tenn.

Water From Another's Well

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT (A), MARCH 27, 2011

Readings: Ex 17:3-7; Ps 95:1-9; Rom 5:1-2, 5-8; Jn 4:5-42

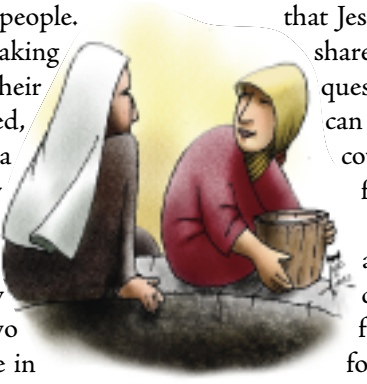
"The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life" (Jn 4:14)

It is said that the next major wars will be fought over water, not oil. There are growing concerns over the increasing demand for fresh, clean water as the supply is decreasing. Today's challenges about ensuring access to safe water for every human being is one entry point to reflection on today's Gospel, which centers on thirst for living water that is eternally replenished.

The account opens with a tired and thirsty Jesus asking a woman of Samaria for water. Like millions of women who even today spend hours of their day collecting water, the Samaritan woman comes, perhaps for a second time that day, to draw water. Most women would come to the well early in the morning, not at the hottest part of the day.

Most likely the Fourth Evangelist intends the noontime detail to be taken symbolically. In this Gospel, light signifies coming to belief, while darkness corresponds to unbelief. In contrast with the preceding story of Nicodemus, who came to Jesus at night and is unable to believe, the woman of Samaria comes at the brightest part of the day and will come to full belief.

Jesus and the woman enter into a deep theological conversation, laden with symbolism. As often happens in the Fourth Gospel, the two are cast as representative characters for the whole of their people. They begin by speaking of their thirsts, their shared human need, and this enables a conversation by which they can begin to break down the enmity between their two peoples. Elsewhere in the Gospel, Jesus speaks of his thirst to draw all people to God through himself (12:32) and of his desire for all to be one (17:21).



Step by step Jesus and the woman reveal themselves more deeply to each other. They speak of some of their deepest thirsts: for worship, salvation and the search for truth. They listen intently and allow their perceptions of the other to shift, just as we may need to change our former impressions of the Samaritan woman. The focus of the dialogue is not on her marital history, nor is she said to be a sinner. Jesus does not tell her to go and sin no more, as he does to the man at the pool of Bethesda who had been paralyzed (Jn 5:14) or to the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:11).

The woman's understanding of Jesus progresses from the simple observation that he is a Jew to pondering whether he is greater than Jacob. Another step is her recognition of him as a prophet when he uses the marital metaphor favored by Hosea to speak of the peoples' relationship with God. Finally, she arrives at the conclusion that Jesus is the Messiah, which she shares with her townspeople in question form, so that they too can enter into the process of discovery that will culminate in faith.

This encounter illustrates a process by which enmity can be transformed into friendship. The two start by focusing on common thirsts that spring from their shared humanity. They had to let go of their ingrained stereotypes of the other, and they had to stop avoiding each other. They had to be willing to stay in the conversation for a good deal of time and not give up when they stumbled over their differences. They had to be willing to overcome the objections of some of their own people. They had to be willing to stay with each other. As the waters of understanding wash away ignorance and fear, the gift of living water wells up within them, making each one a spring from which others who thirst may drink.

BARBARA E. REID

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Pray for the courage to discover the gift of living water in another's well.
- Ask Jesus to deepen in you the desire to be one with all people, with whom you share a common thirst.
- How do you conserve and share our precious water resources?

ART: TAD DUNNE

BARBARA E. REID, O.P., *a member of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Mich., is a professor of New Testament studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Ill., where she is vice president and academic dean.*

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