

America

APRIL 15, 2019

THE JESUIT REVIEW OF FAITH AND CULTURE

CELEBRATING 110 YEARS

110

YEARS

1909-2019

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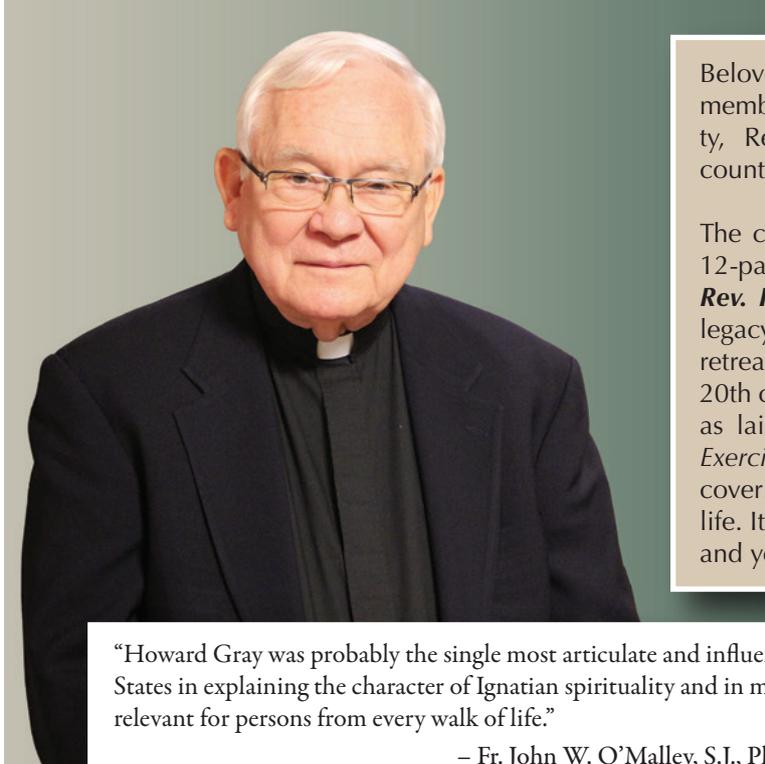
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110 and Counting

I am writing this column from Los Angeles, where I am visiting our West Coast readers and participating in a town hall forum **America** is sponsoring at Loyola Marymount University. This sort of travel was unimaginable for my pre-digital predecessors as editor in chief—they worked almost entirely on paper and had to oversee every part of weekly print production from our offices in Manhattan.

Thanks to modern technology, which keeps me constantly connected to **America's** intranet and the editorial process, I have been liberated from my desk (which, for the record, is itself 50 years old). As a result, I venture to say that in my six-plus years as editor in chief I have probably traveled more widely and met more of **America's** readers face to face than all of my predecessors combined.

Still, I notice that I am older than I used to be. My middle-aged self needs some time to adjust, so I came to L.A. a day early. This also gave me an opportunity to do something I've always wanted to do: go on a tour of a major movie studio. I was keen to avoid anything resembling a theme park, so I opted instead for the no-thrills, adults-only golf cart tour of Paramount Pictures.

Paramount Pictures is the only major movie studio still located in Hollywood proper. Entering through its iconic archway is like passing through a time portal leading to the golden age of Hollywood. I soon joined a small group of fellow time travelers, and we were led through the studio backlot by our Paramount page, a kind of uber-intern whose principal task is to guide folks like us

on a journey through motion picture history.

The first thing we were told was that Paramount Pictures was founded in 1912. Wow, I thought. **America** magazine is three years older than this studio. Think about it. The history of the magazine that you hold in your hands spans the entire life of Paramount Pictures, from the days of stars like Mary Pickford and Rudolph Valentino to Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, to Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hanks; from movies like “The Ten Commandments” and “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” to “Star Trek,” “Indiana Jones” and “Kung Fu Panda.”

That's a lot of history, almost half the history of the United States, in fact. And during that time, the Jesuits and our lay colleagues published more than 5,000 issues of **America** magazine. Bound by half-years into books and placed side by side, the whole corpus stretches almost 35 feet. Not only is that a lot of history, it is history-making, for **America** has never been content to be the aloof interpreter of events. As our founder, John Wynne, S.J., said in **America's** first editorial, while “we are a people who respect belief, we value action more.”

To my knowledge, **America** has never directly inspired a major political movement. We have championed many of them and even criticized a few. Yet Father Wynne was not really talking about movements in that sense. He meant that **America** would never only criticize or opine. Where possible, we would provide constructive, alternative proposals—ideas that are, in modern parlance, actionable.

Put another way, when Father Wynne wrote that first editorial, he was expressing a venerable teaching of St. Ignatius Loyola: “Love manifests itself more in deeds than in words.”

The men and women of **America** have always aspired to be contemplatives in action. Thurston N. Davis, S.J., editor in chief from 1955 to 1968, put it this way: **America** is “a raid on the City of God in order to publish, in the City of Man, a journal that talks common Christian sense about the world of human events.”

In the pages of this special 110th anniversary issue, I think you'll see that while accounting for what we have failed to do as well as what we have done, **America** has largely fulfilled that aspiration. We continue to lead the conversation about faith and culture, every hour on social media, every day on the web and every two weeks in print.

“The person who makes a success of living,” Cecil B. DeMille, a founding father of Paramount Pictures, once said, “is the one who sees his goal steadily and aims for it unswervingly.”

This could be said of the people whose writing we celebrate in this issue: The countless men and women, who, over the course of more than a century, have, in the words of Father Wynne, made “**America** worthy of its name.”

Deo Gratias.

Matt Malone, S.J.
Twitter: @americaeditor.



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AP Photo

Louis Bleriot, second left, is surrounded by well-wishers after landing his airplane near Dover, England, on Sunday, July 25, 1909. Bleriot was the first aviator to cross the English Channel. America began publishing three months before this historic event.

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Editor's Note: In November 1990, George W. Hunt, S.J., editor in chief, wrote a glowing Of Many Things column to mark the 75th birthday of Frank Sinatra. The singer responded with his "sincere thanks."

Of Many Things | Nov. 24, 1990

In the spirit of Ecclesiasticus (44:1), let us now praise famous men: specifically Frank Sinatra. In that same spirit, for the nonce let us overlook the many wives and extras, the coarser encounters, the shifting politics, the bad companions, the superannuated hipster slang, the mean vendettas, the many tacky movies. Instead, with W. B. Yeats, we celebrate not perfection of the life, but perfection of the work—that of the greatest popular singer of our century.

Francis Albert Sinatra (so named, instead of Martin Jr., because of the priest's confusion at his baptism) will be 75 years old on Dec. 12, 1990. The occasion has prompted a reissue of his finest albums by Columbia, Capitol and Reprise records and the start of a "diamond anniversary" tour. Not bad for a boy from Hoboken, N.J., who can't read music and whose image as legislator of sumptuary laws has mutated from bow-tie and wide-shouldered suits to the snap-brim hat, loose tie and coat tossed casually on shoulder and on to the tuxedo-clad, cuff-showing Chairman of the Board of today. No other singer has three-hour programs throughout the United States devoted entirely to his music; on a Sunday, for example, one can drive from Boston to Washington, D.C., and lap each mile with Sinatra along.

I know because I have done so countless times, and, like other aficionados, I never tire of the treat. In fact, I can honestly say that no other stranger has provided so much continual and renewable pleasure in my life as has he. That said, it remains difficult to describe to non-enthusiasts why Ol' Blue Eyes is so special, although John Rockwell, the music critic for The New York Times, in his book *Sinatra: An American Classic* (Random House-Rolling Stone), has succeeded best. But let us give it a try.

1) There is The Voice. Others (Bing Crosby, Dick Haymes, Vic Damone) perhaps had better "pipes"; others, too, can parody the style and vocal mannerisms, but no one possesses or captures his unique tonal quality. As Rockwell notes, his baritone has a distinctive vocal "edge" in that his voice rarely slips back in his throat; instead, his

vocal production is always forward, and he lets the tone resonate in his nasal cavities instead of becoming constricted in his throat and chest. As his voice darkened and his range shortened while he grew older, instead of straining, he exploited its frailty for expressive purposes. The songwriter Sammy Cahn put it another way: He moved "from being a violin to a viola to a cello."

2) Sinatra's musical phrasing is unique in its smoothness, sense of nuance and expressiveness. He admired Bing Crosby immensely, but he decided to try something different; as he said, "I wanted a certain type of voice phrasing without taking a breath at the end of a line or phrase." He listened to the violin-playing of Jascha Heifetz, noting how he moved his bow back and forth without seeming to pause, and he watched Tommy Dorsey's breath-control at the trombone. To personalize these techniques, he swam underwater and paced himself while running to increase lung power. The result: an ability to sustain a legato line, to sing six or even eight bars without a visible or audible breath.

3) His extraordinary care for the song's lyrics and his near-perfect diction (where the hard "d" and "t" consonants are effortlessly articulated) also make Sinatra unique. As a young man, he would always write out the lyrics long-hand to better concentrate on the words and shapes of phrases *sans* musical distraction. This fastidiousness, coupled with his innate acting talent, made each song a dramatic, intensely personal performance. Few singers so identify themselves with the song's lyrics (and story and setting) and so expose their "personal" feelings (whether jauntily and happy or vulnerably sad) as does he, and none so defiantly challenges us to *listen* with a reciprocal intimacy.

One could go on about his remarkable musicianship, the conversational naturalness of his singing, his dedication to the best in the pop tradition, but I hear you interrupt: What are *your* Sinatra favorites? As for individual songs, there are far too many to enumerate, but as for albums I lean toward "Songs for Young Lovers" (Capitol, 1954) and "Songs for Swingin' Lovers" (Capitol, 1956). Sinatra's own favorite album: "Only the Lonely" (Capitol, 1958).

Ol' Blue Eyes Responds | Letters, Feb. 2, 1991

A good friend of mine brought to my attention your "Of Many Things" column (11/24). I want you to know I thoroughly enjoyed the column, and I especially want to thank you for your many kind and wonderful words. I was

deeply touched that you took the time to write this lovely tribute in honor of my 75th birthday, and it truly made my day a very special one! Appreciate your love and support.

With all good wishes for the New Year, Father, and my sincere thanks again.

Frank Sinatra
Hollywood, CA

•••

*Editor's Note: In February 1948, J. Edgar Hoover, the first director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, wrote to **America** about his position on "loyalty tests" for federal employees.*

F.B.I. and Loyalty Tests | Letters, Feb. 14, 1948

I have read with considerable interest the article entitled "Loyalty tests for Federal employes," which appeared in the January 17, 1948 issue of **America**, and I wanted you to know that the conclusions it reached represent the position which I took when I appeared before the Loyalty Review Board on December 4, 1947.

When I appeared before the Loyalty Board and outlined the various problems with which the FBI was confronted under the Federal Employee Loyalty Program, I specifically emphasized that it was not the function of this Bureau to "make charges" against any governmental employe but it was our function to investigate charges and allegations made by other persons. I pointed out that the FBI is a fact-finding agency; that it is not our function to "clear" or convict anyone; that we do not draw any conclusions from or make any recommendations upon the information which we develop during the course of our inquiries. I explained that it is the function of the FBI merely to gather the facts and present them in report form to the agency for whom the employe works. I pointed this out very clearly to the members of the board because I feared that some of them might have the same impression which a portion of the public has, namely that the FBI is investigator, jury, prosecutor and judge in this project, which, of course, is absolutely untrue.

I then explained to the Loyalty Review Board that this Bureau could pursue one of two courses so far as identifying informants is concerned in handling loyalty investigations in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 9835. I stated that there are many persons who

come to this Bureau with information but impose upon the Bureau the requirement of not disclosing their identities; that many of these persons are professional men of good standing who are sincere and honest but who do not wish to become involved in any public hearings or examinations. I stated further that there are certain sources of information employed by the Bureau whose identities the Bureau would be precluded from disclosing because to do so might imperil the overall problem of security of the country.

The Bureau, upon interviewing any person incident to the loyalty program could first state to such an individual that anything he might say would have to be reduced to writing and sworn to and that that person should be prepared to publicly testify at a loyalty hearing, and unless such a person was willing to meet these conditions the Bureau was precluded from taking any information from that person. I then pointed out that the other alternative would be to incorporate in report form all information received by the Bureau from all sources, indicating those who were willing to be identified and, in those instances where a person interviewed did not desire to be so identified, to evaluate the reliability of the informant whose identity would remain anonymous. I told the members of the Loyalty Board that whichever alternative they decided to follow would be entirely agreeable to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The result was that the Loyalty Board adopted the second alternative, namely, having the Bureau incorporate all information from all sources in its reports in the loyalty cases, indicating those sources that were willing to be identified and evaluating those sources as to reliability who wished to remain anonymous. This seems to me in no way to place the Bureau in the category of a "secret police" or "Gestapo" or an organization which makes the charges and brings in the conviction.

J. Edgar Hoover
Washington. D.C.

Easter in Norilsk | March 28, 1964

Easter has suffered badly in the West. Liturgically, of course, it has remained the greatest of our feasts; the liturgy fairly shouts itself hoarse with alleluias at Easter. The family traditions, though, which the faithful of the Eastern churches have woven around the feast—the sort of thing we in the West have done so warmly and so well for Christmas—are missing from our customs and traditions at Eastertide.

Yet Easter, to the earliest Christians, was the feast above all others, the greatest day of the year. It was Easter that made up the core of the “good news” preached by the apostles. It was the joy of Easter that made them seem “full of new wine.” It so intoxicated them that Peter told the Sanhedrin they “could not refrain from speaking” of it, no matter what the threat of punishment. It was this same explosive joy of Easter that drove them like dervishes throughout the then known world to announce this victory over death, a victory awaited since the day Adam first brought death into the world.

Last October 12, Fr. Walter Ciszek, S. J., returned to the United

States after nearly 24 years in Siberia. Until 1955 he had been officially presumed dead. His fellow Jesuits had said Masses for the repose of his soul. If you can imagine the shock—and then the joy—relatives and friends felt when news came that he was still alive, you begin to get some pale inkling of the apostles’ joy and exultation that first Easter morning, when at last they dared to believe the news the women brought them from the tomb.

In 1958, Fr. Ciszek spent the days and nights of Holy Week without sleep, crisscrossing the town of Norilsk on foot to hear confessions and bless the traditional baskets of Easter foods. At midnight on Holy Saturday, he returned to the tiny, one-room *bolok* (a shack, really) that served as his “chapel” for the Easter Vigil Service. He found a crowd of the faithful surrounding it, so large and so obvious the MVD [secret police] were there already. The people simply ignored them and stood patiently in the midnight cold, waiting for the Easter Mass to begin.

The shanty chapel itself was so jammed it was impossible for Father

to put on the vestments; someone else pulled them over his head. The people inside the chapel had been there overnight, without food, just to have a place before the altar. “Finally,” he told us, “I began the solemn intonation of the Easter Mass, and I thought the chapel would explode with sound. I shall never forget their enthusiasm. Tired as I was, I felt elated and swept along. I forgot about the MVD, the cold and everything except the Mass and that exciting joy of Easter in their voices.”

The Easter Vigil lasted until 3 A.M. The crowds made it impossible to distribute Communion during Mass; so afterwards a constant stream of people approached the “altar” to receive under both species, and it was 9 A.M. before they finished. Those still inside the chapel could hear the joyous, shouted greetings of those outside returning home: “Khristos voskres!” (Christ is risen!) and the equally joyous shouts in answer: “Voistinu voskres!” (Indeed, He is risen!)

It is that spirit of Easter joy and gladness we would wish our readers, too, this Eastertide.

The End of Prohibition | Nov. 18, 1933

On November 7, Utah, the thirty-sixth State, adopted the Repeal Amendment, and Federal Prohibition came to an end. It has been a bitter experience, and a time of disaster. As the Archbishop of Cincinnati recently said, it gave rise to a long train of evils, “murder, dishonesty, hypocrisy, every form of bribery, the corruption of weak public officials, the increase of intemperance where it was almost unknown, contempt of law and, worst of all, the demoralization of our

youth.” This may seem to be a severe indictment, but every word of it is fully justified.

It was on August 1, 1917, when the country was at war, that this disastrous attack upon public and private peace and sobriety began. On that day, the Senate, to its shame be it spoken, submitted the Amendment to the States by a vote of 62 to 20. The late Vice-President Marshall, presiding on that day, later said that if the vote could have been taken in secret, the Amendment

would certainly have been rejected. On December 17, of the same year, the House followed suit by a vote of 282 to 138. On November 21, 1918, following a campaign by Bishop Cannon and the late Wayne Wheeler, the whip was cracked again, and ten days after the Armistice a servile Congress voted to continue war-time Prohibition through the period of demobilization. On January 16, 1919, the Eighteenth Amendment was adopted by the vote of the thirty-sixth State, Nebraska. By

October 27, 1919, the Volstead Act was adopted over the veto of President Wilson, and on January 16, 1920, the reign of lawlessness and corruption, private and official, began.

During the next five years, the Supreme Court upheld practically every point of legislation enacted to enforce the Amendment. During this same period, the criminal element, engaged up to 1920 in crimes against property and the person, organized the liquor trade, and the Government was never able to check it. To this day, it successfully defies the Government. Speakeasies and low dives took the place of the open saloon; gang leaders waxed fat in wealth and influence; and neither the Federal Government nor any of the States was able completely to withstand them. By 1925, the whole situation was not a national only, but an international disgrace.

The response of the fanatical dry party, under the control of Wayne Wheeler and Bishop Cannon, supported by practically all the Protestant churches in the country, was black persecuting legislation. By this time these groups controlled the political parties, and members of Congress were freely permitted to drink wet, provided that they continued to vote dry. As Senator Reed, of Missouri, truthfully said, many a Congressman had to be awakened in time to vote for a new dry-bill with a whiskey breath. Not one of the

alleged benefits of nation-wide Prohibition had come to pass. The poorhouses, the asylums, and the jails were not empty, but, on the contrary, for the first time in its history the Federal Government was obliged to build local jails, and the Federal courts were clogged, to the exclusion of far more important issues, with bootlegging cases. Meanwhile intemperance among the young and general disregard for authority grew to horrifying proportions.

Writing in the *New York Times* for November 5, Amos W. Woodcock, late Federal Director of Prohibition, states that in the eastern part of the country, the most populous, it soon became apparent that Prohibition was doomed. For this he assigns two reasons; first, public opinion was opposed to the Eighteenth Amendment and, second, “we had to combat politics and legal delays.” What was true of the East, soon became true of by far the greater part of the country. But each new difficulty was met, as it arose, with more stringent legislation, to be met in turn by even more open defiance. As late as 1928, the fanatics were able to defeat Alfred E. Smith, who had declared against Prohibition.

The downfall of Prohibition began, chronologically at least, with the Wickersham Report, January 20, 1931, juggled in its first publication, to please the dry faction. By

1932, the Prohibitionists had no standing with either party. “Prohibition is doomed,” said Franklin D. Roosevelt, in accepting the nomination for the Presidency. On April 7, 1933, the Collier bill, legalizing beer, was enacted by Congress, pending the complete overthrow of Prohibition. On February 16, 1933, fourteen years and one month after that fatal January 16, 1919, the Senate, by a vote of 63 to 23, submitted repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the States, and on February 20, the House concurred, voting 289 to 121.

For this relief, we thank God. It is now our work to draw what profit we can from the direful experience of the last sixteen years, fourteen of them under the Eighteenth Amendment, and to look to the future. We have learned the folly, please God, of vesting the Federal Government with duties which under this form of government belong to the respective States. We have learned that it is a crime against civilization to substitute violence for the benign influence of religion. We have learned many other valuable truths, and by pondering upon them we shall at last learn how the traffic in alcoholic beverages can be controlled for the welfare of the country, and not for the triumph of fanatics and the enrichment of criminals.

‘Peaceful Overthrow’ of the U.S. Presidency | May 22, 1954

The turn taken in the McCarthy-Stevens hearings beginning May 4 dramatized across the nation the grave constitutional issue posed by Senator McCarthy’s “methods.” This came when the Senator wanted to introduce as evidence what purported to be a

“carbon copy” of a “letter,” dated Jan. 26, 1951, from FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover to General Bolling of Army Intelligence. This “letter,” two and a quarter pages long, (which Mr. Hoover said, through subcommittee assistant counsel, he never wrote) was declared

by Mr. Hoover to contain seven paragraphs identical with paragraphs in a fifteen-page memorandum he had sent to General Bolling (and to Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Carroll of Air Force Intelligence) on the same day.

The memorandum was clear-

ly marked as classified information. Now Senator McCarthy has made a career of trying to discover and ferret out “subversives” in the Federal Government, i.e., people who might be in a position to transmit classified information to unauthorized individuals. His Democratic colleagues therefore inquired how he, who was never authorized, came into possession of classified data.

Mr. McCarthy’s reply should be of more than passing interest to all Americans who find in the “rule of law,” as opposed to the arbitrary “rule of men,” the hallmark of free government. The Senator said he had received the “letter” from a young Army Intelligence Officer, whom he repeatedly refused to identify. The mere fact that his informant had violated his oath of office, had violated Army Regulation 380-10, had violated an Executive Order of March 15, 1948 and had possibly even violated the Internal Security Act of 1950 meant nothing to the Senator. Worse still, pro tem chairman Mundt, on advice from subcommittee counsel Ray Jenkins, ruled that Senator

McCarthy, like all “law-enforcing officers,” had no duty to reveal the source of his information. Why they regarded the sub-committee as a “law-enforcing” agency they failed to reveal—perhaps because it is a law-making, not law-enforcing, body.

Establishing the U. S. President as “the man of the people” instead of “the minion of the Senate,” as James Wilson observed in the Constitutional Convention, was, “in truth, the most difficult [subject] of all on which we have had to decide.” During nearly the entire convention the framers tentatively agreed on having the President elected by the Senate—until they finally decided that only some kind of election by the people would give him the independence of Congress his functions required.

The American Presidency was set up on the principle of separation of powers. He alone (apart from the Vice President) is nationally chosen. He has directly from the Constitution the powers the American people have delegated to the nation’s Chief Executive. Whether or not the President is prop-

erly discharging the duties assigned him by the people through that charter and through national election is for the people as a whole to decide—not the junior Senator from Wisconsin, on whom the American people never have had a chance to vote.

In *The Idea of a University* Cardinal Newman warned against “a man of one idea...of the view, partly true, but subordinate, partly false, which is all that can proceed out of anything so partial.” Mr. McCarthy seems to think that all the operations of government boil down to one: eliminating people he judges subversive. The President, the Army, the State and Justice Departments all have a lot of other things to do.

The folly of the McCarthy formula is shown in Indo-China, where the fate of the free world is slowly, relentlessly being shaped, with conspicuously no help from Mr. McCarthy. If he insists on his piecemeal and “peaceful” overthrow of the Presidency, he may do great harm to U. S. policy by his so far very successful diversionary tactics.

Can the Council Succeed? | Oct. 6, 1962

To question the Second Vatican Council’s chances for success on the eve of its opening may seem to be inappropriate, at the very least, if not misguided or even disloyal. Yet the subject deserves airing precisely because it continues to be raised—for a variety of reasons—in some circles. What grounds exist, then, for reasonable confidence in the Council’s outcome?

Looking at the preparations made for it, even in purely human terms, there is ample reason to be hopeful about its deliberations. Despite fears expressed at the beginning, the preparatory stage of the Council’s history

proved to be unique for breadth and thoroughness. In reply to 2,812 individual requests sent from Rome for suggestions on conciliar agenda, 2,150 responses came from bishops and theologians all over the world. Their proposals ran to 9,424 pages of print in a set of 14 volumes.

As for the Council itself, certain doubts may have arisen out of sheer misconceptions. To begin with, it will not be a meeting exclusively of the aged. More than 60 percent of the bishops to attend it are men born in the 20th century, and 640 of them are less than 50 years of age. They come

from some ninety lands and from widely differing backgrounds as pastors, administrators, scholars, diplomats or missionaries. Moreover, as our American hierarchy observed in their joint statement on the Council, each group brings with it the riches of experience gained in a particular historical and cultural environment. Finally, each bishop comes prepared to speak in the name of all the faithful in his own diocese. This, in fact, prompted bishops in Austria, France, Germany, Poland, Holland and other countries to make formal inquiries about the views of both clergy and

Founded in 1909

laity as they prepared for the monumental task before them.

That task, it must be remembered, will not be simply to ratify decisions already formulated or to vote for items on a closed agenda. Free discussion and frank exchange of views will characterize all meetings. Of its nature, the Council will differ vastly from other gatherings such as the recent Roman synod. Above all, this will be because Catholic belief teaches that this assembly enjoys in an extraordinary way the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In it, each bishop freely deliberates and judges as an equal among his fellow successors to the apostles. A weighing of these and other aspects of the coming Council led Fr. Giovanni Caprile, S. J., in a rigorously documented and informed article appearing in the September 15 issue of the influential Roman fortnightly *Civiltà Cattolica*, to conclude that the soundest attitude to adopt toward its probable outcome is one of “healthy realism.”

For a Catholic, the proper mood at this moment when the Church communes with itself in the 21st Ecumenical Council must be one of serene confidence and of generous concern to support the bishops with continuing prayer. The result can, and indeed must, prove to be a Council for our times, a renewal of the Church, a new Pentecost.

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Ethics at the bomb shelter doorway | Sept. 30, 1961

The American people are burrowing underground in a grassroots movement for survival; the shelter business is booming. Civil defense officials have already noted that many citizens are very furtive about building a modest haven in the cellar or yard. The more secret the nuclear hideaway, the less likely they are to be troubled by panicky neighbors at the shelter door when the bombs start falling.

Some rugged householders are not banking on mere secrecy to insure their families a fair chance of survival. *Time*, on Aug. 18, cited a Chicago suburbanite who intended to mount a machine gun at his shelter in order to keep unwelcome strangers out, and it also quoted a Texas businessman who was ready to evict unbidden guests with tear gas if any occupied his shelter before his family did. Inevitably, *Time* raised the question: What do the guardians of the Christian ethic have to say about the pros and cons of gunning one's neighbor at the shelter door?...

What is your family shelter? It is more than a piece of property that should be secure against trespass. It is a property of a most vital kind. When the bombs start falling, it is likely to be the one material good in your family's environment which is equivalent to life itself. The shelter is your ultimate line of defense against fire, blast, radiation and residual fallout. Moreover, because of its strictly limited resources (space, food, medical supplies, etc.), its use must be carefully regulated if it is to guarantee even marginal opportunity for survival over a protracted period. If you go underground with just one occupant above the maximum number for which the shelter was designed,

the survival value of the shelter diminishes for all that take refuge in it.

If a man builds a shelter for his family, then it is the family that has the first right to use it. The right becomes empty if a misguided charity prompts a pitying householder to crowd his haven to the hatch in the hour of peril; for this conduct makes sure that no one will survive. And I consider it the height of nonsense to say that the Christian ethic demands or even permits a man to thrust his family into the rain of fallout when unsheltered neighbors plead for entrance....

I shall even go so far as to offer a partial code of essential shelter morality. This will offend those who dread to think that the points could conceivably have serious bearing on human survival within the next few months. I am more interested, however, in finding what response such a code might have among readers and "guardians of the Christian ethic."

1. If you are an unattached individual and wish to yield your shelter space to others, God bless you. You can show no greater love for your neighbors.

2. Think twice before you rashly give your family shelter space to friends and neighbors or to the passing stranger. Do your dependents go along with this heroic self-sacrifice? If they do, and you have not yet built a shelter, don't bother to do so. Go next door and build one for your neighbor. In an emergency, he can take refuge there more quickly if it is on his own property instead of yours.

3. When you have sheltered your family, you may make a prudent judgment as to whether you may admit any others to your sanctuary without undue risk to the essential welfare of those who are most closely bound to

you in justice and charity. It would be hard to prove that you have any grave obligation to do so.

4. If you are already secured in your shelter and others try to break in, they may be treated as unjust aggressors and repelled with whatever means will effectively deter their assault. If others steal your family shelter space before you get there, you may also use whatever means will recover your sanctuary intact.

5. The careful husbandman who has no heroic aspirations will take precautions now so that his shelter will be available for those for whose safety it was built. If it is marginally equipped, it would be a normal exercise of prudence to conceal the entrance, if feasible, or make it inaccessible except to the members of the family. Does prudence also dictate that you have some "protective devices" in your survival kit, e.g. a revolver for breaking up traffic jams at your shelter door? That's for you to decide, in the light of your personal circumstances. But as Civil Defense Coordinator Keith Dwyer said in the *Time* story: "There's nothing in the Christian ethic which denies one's right to protect oneself and one's family."

L. C. McHugh, S.J., who taught ethics at Georgetown University before becoming an associate editor at *America*, wrote a regular column on science. This essay was published in full in the issue of Sept. 30, 1961, and was widely criticized by religious leaders like Billy Graham. Thomas Merton responded in the November issue of *The Catholic Worker*, condemning the mentality of "every man for himself."

Historians like Arthur M. Schlesinger later wrote that Father McHugh's essay caused President Kennedy to reconsider urging citizens to construct backyard shelters, instead directing people to shelters in public buildings.

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GOODNEWS: What do you want with your coffee? Capeltic, a Chiapas-based cooperative, is serving up dignity

At first glance, Capeltic Nuestro Café seems like many of the other stylish coffee shops Mexico City is known for. Tucked away in a quiet corner on the campus of the Mexican capital's posh Iberoamericana University, it serves products now widely sought by the rapidly growing middle class in the metropolis: coffee, tea, honey and pastries.

But Capeltic serves up at least one difference from the other coffee haunts in the gentrifying neighborhoods of the Western Hemisphere's largest city. "It's not the cup of coffee itself that's interesting, it's the story behind it," said the barista Omar Salcedo, not without a hint of pride in his voice.

Capeltic's founders believe its business model can be part of the solution to the grinding poverty that has driven hundreds of thousands of people from the region to migrate to the United States. Capeltic is a member of Yomol A'tel, an umbrella group of cooperatives that aims to introduce a new way of doing business to indigenous farmers in Mexico. By bringing their product from field to coffee bar through these fair trade networks, coffee growers in one of

the poorest areas in Mexico are less vulnerable to volatile shifts in coffee market prices. That offers them a standard of economic security that may keep them on the land.

Capeltic began with a group of just 26 farmers in 2001. Local growers were seeking ways to sell more coffee and asked for help at the Jesuit mission in Bachajón, a small town in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. Some 600 miles southeast of Mexico City on the border with Guatemala, Chiapas is historically one of the poorest states in Mexico.

Since that first experiment the cooperative has grown to include more than 340 farming families. Capeltic added a coffee shop in Mexico City in 2010, a roasting facility in 2013 and most recently coffee shops in Guadalajara and Puebla. Last year, Capeltic sold 360,000 cups of coffee, according to Alberto Irezabal, director of Yomol A'tel.

"We managed to become profitable with the coffee shops since year one," said Mr. Irezabal. "With the roasting facility, we achieved [profitability] four or five years ago."

Capeltic is advised by Stephen Pitts, an American Jesuit

110 YEARS OF AMERICA

1909

U.S. Catholic population: 14.3 million

May 22: The average family in Greater New York spends \$907 a month, including about \$15 for rent, \$132 for clothes and \$405 for food.

June 12: The Port of New York admits 290,618 immigrants during the first four months of the year, up from 86,474 in 1908.

1918

Aug. 10: 1.3 million American soldiers are deployed in France, Belgium and Italy.

1919

April 19: The church begins raising money for the restoration of 3,500 churches in France destroyed in the war.

1928

June 28: Al Smith becomes the first Catholic nominated for president by a major U.S. party. ►

1929

April 20: The federal government requests an annual budget of \$50 million to enforce Prohibition.

1930

Nov. 8: The Census Bureau reports one divorce for every 6.1 marriages in 1929.

1936

U.S. Catholic population: 21.0 million

1937

Aug. 31: The F.B.I. estimates that there is a murder every 40 minutes in the United States.



1941

May 24: Seven states can boast of a Catholic population of one million or more.

1949

The Apostolic Tribunal of the Roman Rota receives 137 annulment requests from all over the world; 51 are granted and 86 are denied.

1955

Sept. 10: Since 1949, a stream of 2.3 million East Germans has fled to West Germany and West Berlin.

Dec. 24: "Everyone is beginning to suspect by now that television is here to stay," with 33 million U.S. homes owning sets (7.3 million sold in 1954 alone).

1960

Catholic elementary schools in the U.S. peak at 10,501. Catholic high schools peak at 2,392.



Photo courtesy of Capeltic

and associate pastor and religious director at Sacred Heart Parish in El Paso, Tex. He was first introduced to the cooperative several years ago when he was looking for a project to evaluate while pursuing graduate work in international development economics at the University of San Francisco.

Before his master's studies, he had spent four months as a Jesuit novice at a shelter for the poor in Tijuana. He explains that it was during his experience there that he was first exposed to the issue of migration, "which has been close to my heart ever since."

"Being involved with Capeltic is really neat for me be-

cause we deal with migrants every day," he said. "I can also be involved in a project that is addressing the root causes of migration."

The Jesuit mission in Bachajón, established in 1958, has been deeply involved in improving lives in the most marginalized communities in Chiapas. The largely rural population here survives on subsistence farming and the meager income it can derive through cash crops like coffee. Unfortunately, for almost three decades wholesale coffee prices have been experiencing a significant decline.

"The price of the green coffee beans is very volatile, but



DOJ-Capeltic

▲ Nov. 8: John F. Kennedy is narrowly elected as the first Catholic president of the United States. The voting-age turnout, 62.8 percent, remains the highest since women got the vote.

1962
Oct. 11: The Second Vatican Council opens with 2,860 bishops in attendance, including 404 from North America. ▶

1963
Oct. 26: Walter Ciszek, S.J., is released after 23 years of captivity in the Soviet Union.

1969
The U.S. pastoral workforce peaks at 238,542, including 37,454 diocesan priests, 22,166 religious priests, 11,755 religious brothers and 167,167 women religious.

1970
U.S. Catholic population: 47.9 million
Sept. 12: Early results of 1970 census depict flight from cities: St. Louis down 19%; Cleveland down 15%; Detroit and Boston down 10%.



CNS file photo

1973
The U.S. individual poverty rate hits a record low of 11.1 percent.

1975
Jan. 11: "When one thinks of irreconcilable differences, the mind fastens on the 25-year-long confrontation in the Middle East. Are Arab and Israeli so far apart that any thought of reconciliation would amount to a pipe dream?"

1980
June 7: 1.3 million Ethiopians have fled to Somalia to escape a drought and political upheavals in one of Africa's poorest nations.

1982
April 24: "The astonishing turnout [in El Salvador], estimated by some to be as high as 85 percent of the eligible voters, was before all else a vote against violence and intimidation.... But the coalition of right-wing parties that has emerged shows little willingness to allow the Christian Democrats...a significant role in the new government."

1986
July 26: In Ireland, 63 percent of voters reject a constitutional amendment legalizing divorce.

the price of lattes has steadily gone up over the years,” said Father Pitts. “It’s something we call the ‘coffee paradox.’ The producers are not going to win at this game, so we have to change the game.”

His research finds that joining the cooperative offers indigenous growers market access they never had before. In traditional commodity supply chains, their coffee crop would pass through intermediary purchasers who, in the end, would claim most of its value.

Beyond freeing farmers from commodity prices, the cooperative acknowledges and incorporates the spiritual and cultural characteristics of the local population into the coffee business. “There’s not a single person taking the decisions, it’s done collectively,” Mr. Irezabal explains. Collective decision making is a staple of local Mayan culture and central to the stability of local communities.

Capeltic’s business model is also distinguished by its attention to solidarity, incorporating strategies that connect growers and consumers. “We don’t walk alone,” said Mr. Irezabal. “We look for help from the Jesuits in the United States; we work very closely with universities in Mexico.

“Ultimately what’s moving us is the spirit, not only the money.”

The profits of the cooperative are invested in a common fund for people who need emergency financial assistance when they have to deal with food shortages or health issues. It also maintains a microloan entity, which allows the farmers to take out low-cost loans without the crushing interest rates they might otherwise have to accept.

Because of the cooperative’s efforts, farmers in the region have been able to sell up to 25 percent more coffee, while generational debt (burdens passed down from parents to children) and seasonal labor migration to tourist resorts like Cancún have become less prevalent.

Capeltic has also given the farmers the unique possibility to get to know their own country beyond their small community in Chiapas, according to Mr. Salcedo.

“When we opened the coffee shop here...we actually got the farmers to Mexico City to allow them to try the [finished] product,” he said. “They always drank their coffee without cream, but here they tasted it with cream for the first time.”

He smiled. “They were very surprised at the result; it motivated them.”

Jan-Albert Hootsen, *Mexico City correspondent.*
Twitter: @Jahootsen.

1987

Sept. 26: “Last year, 22 percent of all children under 6 years old were living in poverty. For white children, the poverty rate was 17.7 percent; for Hispanics, it was 40.7 percent, and for blacks it was 45.6 percent. Everyone knows that equal educational opportunity, the pathway out of poverty, does not exist for these children.”

1992

Sept. 26: “We hear that thousands have died of starvation in Somalia and 1.5 million others are on the edge of death; that Serbian armed forces in a campaign of ‘ethnic cleansing’ have turned 2.5 million Bosnians into refugees and that Hurricane Andrew has left 300,000 homeless in Florida.”

1998

May 2: Good Friday Agreement creates a 108-member Assembly with local autonomy in Northern Ireland, where an estimated 54 percent of the population want to maintain ties with Britain and 42 percent support unification with the Irish Republic.

2004

March 1: According to a report from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, roughly 4,450 members of the clergy have been accused of abusing a total of 11,000 minors between 1950 and 2002.



CNS photo/Larry Downing, Reuters

2009 ▲

Aug. 8: Sonia Maria Sotomayor becomes the first Catholic woman to serve on the Supreme Court.

2015

The U.S. pastoral workforce falls to 108,406, including 25,868 diocesan priests, 11,710

religious priests, 4,200 religious brothers and 45,605 women religious. The permanent diaconate, re-established after the Second Vatican Council, numbers 18,287.

2016

Sept. 4: 100,000 pilgrims attend the canonization in Rome of Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

2017

U.S. Catholic population: 68.5 million.

Jan. 3: The 115th U.S. Congress convenes with a record number of Catholic members—24 senators and 169 representatives, including Sen. Susan Collins of Maine. ▼



Some dates refer to America magazine publication dates, not the exact day of an event or an initial news report.

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Nigerian sisters bring the fight against human trafficking home

A migrant woman recovers after being rescued by the Libyan coast guard on March 19; 17 African undocumented migrants were saved but 10 others drowned.

CNS photo/Hani Amara, Reuters

When the offer to work as a babysitter in Italy came in 2013, Kpemesi Abu could not ignore the opportunity. Stories about young women sending remittances home, building posh homes for their families there and lifting them out of poverty were rife in her village in Edo State in southern Nigeria.

But after a journey through the neighboring Niger Republic and a weeks-long trek across the Sahara Desert, she discovered that her contact in Libya was a human trafficker. She was forced into sex work.

“In Libya, I worked for a madam for more than seven months as a prostitute,” Ms. Abu recalls. “When I was able to raise 2,500 Libyan dinar [around \$2,000 at that time], I was able to receive help to get on a boat going to Italy.”

She was ready to continue to work as a prostitute in Italy, where, she heard from others, “our girls made much more money.” But that plan was thwarted when she was transferred to a shelter run by Catholic sisters in the city of Caserta in southern Italy. A few days after her arrival, she discovered she was pregnant.

Fortunately for Ms. Abu, the sisters in Italy were able to arrange her passage back to Nigeria through the E.U. Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. The initiative offers migrants willing to return to their home countries free flights home, shelter on arrival, counseling, business training and support to start their own ventures.

That effort connected to a program begun back in Nigeria. Superiors of women religious congregations, who often travel to Europe, had become troubled by the growing number of Nigerian women they witnessed waiting for “clients” on Italy’s streets.

Determined to combat the rising rate of trafficking in women and forced prostitution, the Nigeria Conference of Women Religious formed the Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women (also called Cosudow) in 1999,

headquartered in Benin City, a major trafficking hub in Nigeria. With support from the Italian bishops conference, the sisters built a two-story apartment building in Benin City in 2007 to serve as a shelter for repatriated women and girls.

Almost every month, the sisters there conduct awareness-raising campaigns to inform people about the dangers of “irregular” migration and to share the harrowing experiences of trafficking survivors.

“It is better for [Nigerians] to know they have freedom to travel, but then they have to travel the right way,” the committee’s coordinator, Sister Bibiana Emenaha, D.C., said.

Residents can stay at the shelter for three to six months. It also serves as a referral center for a host of organizations seeking to combat human trafficking and modern slavery.

Cosudow also engages in family tracing and reunification, a kind of outreach Sister Emenaha describes as “very difficult and dangerous” because some families have sold almost everything they own to facilitate their child’s journey, and they can react with bitterness when their daughters return penniless.

So far, Cosudow has successfully reintegrated more than 450 trafficked women and girls, some of whom were reunited with their families. Others were offered assistance to start small-scale businesses or given scholarships to return to secondary schools and universities.

Today, Ms. Abu lives in a single room in Benin City with her 4-year-old son and works with Cosudow as a receptionist. “This country is hard: no electricity, no roads, no jobs for youth, no good salaries for those working; and our leaders are not doing well at all,” she says. Despite her experience, she still dreams of returning to Italy but, this time, in a safe way and with a passport.

Linus Unah contributes from Nigeria.
Twitter: @linusunah.

Gerhard Lohfink
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Trump's 'Remain in Mexico' policy ignores root causes of U.S. migration crisis

While border security continues to dominate the U.S. immigration debate, the root causes of migration to the United States are rarely discussed, according to Camilo Perez-Bustillo of the Hope Border Institute in El Paso, Tex.

"We're addressing symptoms," he told *America*, "not the causes."

The Trump administration's "Remain in Mexico" policy is an example of that, he said. Under the policy, immigration officials return asylum seekers to Mexico while their cases are decided by the U.S. immigration court system.

Most of the asylum seekers coming to the U.S.-Mexico border are from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, three Central American countries that have been plagued by poverty, violence and gangs. Border bishops from Texas and northern Mexico expressed their "total disagreement" with the "Remain in Mexico" policy in a statement issued on March 4.

"It will force Mexico to organize camps for tens of thousands of refugees, thus effectively undermining their right to seek asylum in the United States, and depriving them of the support of family members on U.S. soil," the bishops wrote of the policy. "It will effectively put out of their reach the exercise of their right to procure legal representation in their case before the court."

The bishops argued that the policy could lead immi-

grants and asylum seekers to circumvent legal means of entering the United States through ports of entry. They may instead attempt to enter "through high-risk locations in order to avoid the authorities."

Bishop Joe S. Vásquez, the chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, urged the administration to reverse the policy, "which needlessly increases the suffering of the most vulnerable and violates international protocols," he said. "We steadfastly affirm a person's right to seek asylum and find recent efforts to curtail and deter that right deeply troubling. We must look beyond our borders; families are escaping extreme violence and poverty at home and are fleeing for their lives."

The policy is part of a larger pattern of deterrence, according to Mr. Perez-Bustillo, which includes turning away asylum seekers, the separation of families and "metering," a process by which immigration officials limit the number of asylum seekers who enter the United States on any given day. Despite the efforts, Mr. Perez-Bustillo said, humanitarian workers in El Paso have noted an uptick in migrants arriving at the border, especially from Guatemala. An overwhelming number are coming from indigenous communities in that country, he said.

"Clearly something is going on in Guatemala," said Mr. Perez-Bustillo.



CNS photo/Jorge Duenes, Reuters

Ariel, 19, from Honduras, prays at a shelter in Tijuana, Mexico, on March 19.

Paul Townsend, the country representative for Catholic Relief Services in Guatemala, said the country is experiencing its fifth consecutive year of decreased rainfall. Families that work with C.R.S. are reporting a 30 percent to 80 percent decrease in the corn crop, and the bean crop has dropped by 67 percent, Mr. Townsend said.

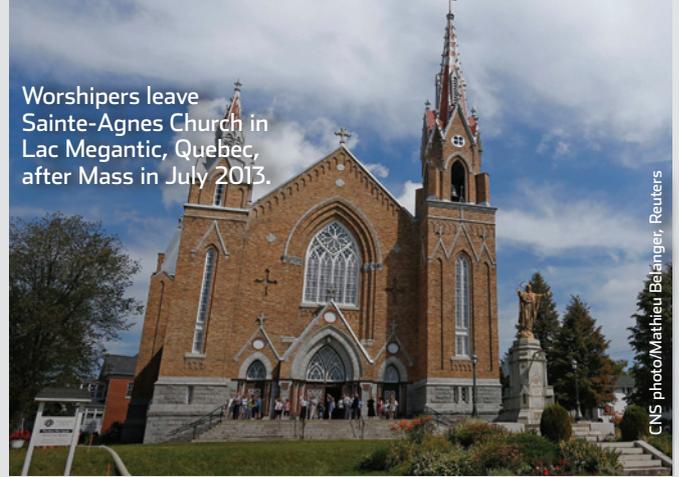
“Not only are people hungry in the moment, but they have also been destabilizing their assets,” he said in an interview with **America**. “They are selling anything they can to sustain themselves.”

The plant disease called coffee rust has decimated plantations in the region, Mr. Townsend said. The coffee crop is also affected by drought. Families that used to migrate within Guatemala to harvest coffee are now searching for jobs beyond its borders.

“People leave because of poverty, including health and education, food insecurity and violence,” he said. “There are lots of ways we can attack this,” Mr. Townsend said.

“How do we make Guatemala a place where they want to stay?” he said. “We want to encourage foreign assistance to address these push factors.”

J.D. Long-García, *senior editor*.
Twitter: @jdlonggarcia.



Worshippers leave Sainte-Agnes Church in Lac Megantic, Quebec, after Mass in July 2013.

CNS photo/Mathieu Belanger, Reuters

Canada confronts loss of thousands of Christian places of worship

A third of Canada’s Christian architecture may be lost over the next 10 years, according to the National Trust for Canada, a landmark and heritage preservation campaign. The trust predicts that 9,000 of Canada’s 27,000 places of worship will be sold, demolished or abandoned over the next decade.

But it is not all bad news. In the Archdiocese of Toronto, for example, no church closures are anticipated. “The Archdiocese of Toronto is blessed to have a large immigrant population engaged in their faith locally, part of the reason we celebrate Mass in more than 35 languages each week,” said Neil MacCarthy, archdiocesan spokesperson.

That is in stark contrast to rural and small-town Nova Scotia, where the Diocese of Antigonish has already closed 30 percent of its churches over the last dozen years. Father Don MacGillivray, a diocesan spokesperson, expects more closures are coming. “I’m not a demographer by any stretch of the imagination, but you know people have to mostly leave for work,” he said.

The story is similar in New Brunswick and Quebec, where large numbers of churches have been shuttered or are slated to close. Dozens of Catholic and Protestant churches in small towns across Western Canada and in southwestern Ontario also have been closing in recent years.

In places like Antigonish, the cause is not just the declining number of parishioners or their inability to pay for the repairs and maintenance an old church requires. The dwindling number of priests is also a problem, but Father MacGillivray disputes the idea that a priest shortage is driving decisions. “I think it can be argued we don’t have a shortage of personnel. We have an overabundance of infrastructure,” he said.

Michael Swan, *Catholic News Service*.

D-Day Prayer and the Peace

By Harold C. Gardiner

June 17, 1944

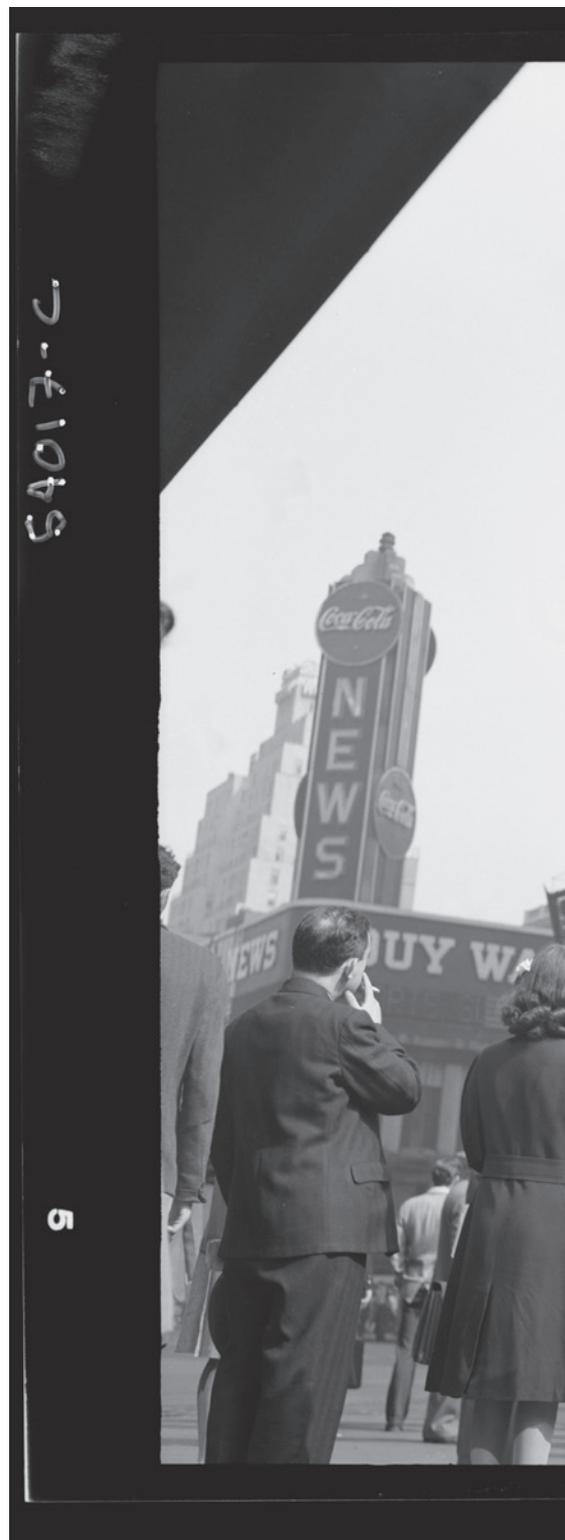
Editor's note: On June 6, 1944, Allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy, France. Harold C. Gardiner, S.J., and the editors reflected on the significance of this day in an issue that went to press just a few days later.

When President Roosevelt led the nation in prayer on D-Day's night, an event unique in modern history took place. Other leaders in centuries past have led their people in prayer, but never until radio could a head of state speak to all his people at once. Since radio, many a leader has urged his people to pray, but never has a head of state, to our knowledge, actually taken the lead in saying the prayer that millions of his people were simultaneously whispering in their homes.

These two elements in combination, the President's personal leadership and its nation-wide application, climaxed a day that was really something to make us proud—proud not only of the invasion itself, but even more important, proud of the spirit of the American people. We are told so often that we are a materialistic, far from spiritually-minded people, and perhaps we are in normal times. But here, at least, in this stupendous crisis, the Christian roots that still, thank God, lie semi-dormant in the depths of our national life wakened to a bloom that was lovely and fragrant this June 6.

For not only did the President officially and publicly put prayer in the first place among our reactions to the invasion; almost every city in the land had its meetings to beg God's guidance; the great radio chains broadcast throughout the day prayers by clergymen of the various denominations; small parish churches and cathedrals were thronged throughout the day with streams of praying Americans.

Kindred to this spirit and to a great extent inspired by it, was the renewed spirit of work and sacrifice to which the American people dedicated itself on receipt of the invasion news. Workers in the factories and arsenals paused for prayer, and then went





Credit: Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information photograph collection, Library of Congress

A crowd in New York City watches a news ticker on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Crowds gathered on D-Day for noon Mass at St. Vincent de Paul Church, New York, N.Y. That night President Franklin Delano Roosevelt led the nation in prayer.

back to their tasks determined to set new production records; Labor renewed its no-strike pledge; the sale of war bonds rocketed; in New York alone bookings of blood donors rose 300 per cent. Not since Pearl Harbor has the nation been so united in will and deed, and the spark that set it all off was prayer.

It is not too much to say that there was a wave of prayer that swept the land on D-Day. Nor dare we yield to the cynical thought that this was all a staged and synthetic bit of propaganda. That remark will doubtless be heard in some quarters; it is for us, above all, as Catholics, to damn it utterly by word and action; first because we must give and do give all men of good will, whether they belong to our Faith or not, credit for sincerity; second, because all the programs, all the meetings were quite obviously motivated by a humility and a seriousness that hall-marked them unmistakably not as emotional rallies, not as jingoistic flag-waving, but as real, sincere, trustful prayer.

Yes, our all too-subconscious Christian traditions paid dividends on D-Day. The only fear we may entertain, the only proviso we can suggest is that D-Day's prayers must not have been a bloom that fades over night. Every day, till the final victory, must continue to be a day of prayer—the same confident, humble prayer even through the dark days that may, in God's Providence, still come.

And beyond the day of victory, too, must that prayer extend. The temptation will be strong on the day the armistice is flashed around the world to give way first to cheering and carousing, and to pause to thank God only later at some less triumph-flushed day. But if we determine now that V-Day will be first and foremost a day of prayer, of sincere and sober thanks, we may hope that God's blessings that will crown our arms may be with us as we embark on the supreme campaign of planning a just and enduring peace.

There was, of course, a somber glamor about invasion day that caught the popular imagination. It was easy to picture the flaming beach-heads and to feel so small and ineffectual against that mighty back-drop of ships and tanks and barges and planes that the very immensity of the scene bore down on us and made us know that our help must come from some One stronger than ourselves.

The peace table will not be glamorous; it will not be so immediately personalized for us; the war then, we may feel, will have moved out of the sphere where we can do anything about it or should even continue to have a vivid interest in it.

But this peace will be *our* peace, if it is to be a peace at all. The United Nations' commissions that land on the shores of Europe or America to guide the future of the world will be braving a beach that bristles with booby-traps of distrust and suspicion and self-interest. Their invasion of the shores of nationalistic prejudice will be doomed to failure, unless we sweep them to triumph on wave after wave of prayer.

This Review offers the suggestion that on Armistice Day, on the day the American delegation sails for the peace table, on all the days that the negotiations are carried on, there be national prayer, so proclaimed by the Chief Executive, and observed as widely and sincerely as was our glorious tidal wave of prayer that made D-Day notable, not only in our military, but in our spiritual annals. We offer this suggestion in the humble confidence that we may ask it in the concluding words of the President's prayer: "Thy will be done, Almighty God."

Harold C. Gardiner, S.J., was literary editor of *America* from 1940 to 1962.

D-Day and Boniface Day

The Editors

June 17, 1944

Since Boniface Day, the fighting men of the United States and the Allied nations have been forcing their desperate way to Berlin. They were ferried from England on the feast day of the saintly Englishman who, twelve hundred years earlier, had embarked on the spiritual conquest of the German peoples. His end was martyrdom, but before he was killed he brought great numbers of the German pagans into the family of the Catholic nations, and after he had died he was acclaimed as the Apostle of Germany. May the English-born Saint Boniface, through his intercession with God, bring out of the battles of today the peace of tomorrow.

We have called it D-Day. For more than two years, we have been preparing for the great assault on the western shorelines of Europe. Here in the United States, as in England and in the other free countries, we have been driving our factories to maximum production, asking our workers to slave endlessly and enthusiastically, conveying across



the ocean the war machines and equipment they had made. D-Day began on the home front months and months ago. Credit, therefore, must be given to the American workers and industrialists for their victory in preparation for the European victory.

D-Day finally dawned. For more than two years, the preparation of millions of men for this war task had been proceeding according to schedule. The head strategists had been completing their precision plans of stupendous movements. They were sharpening the minds of the higher command and were hardening the bodies of the men who would cross the Channel. All of the United Kingdom was an armed camp. The tension rose higher and dug deeper into the souls of the fighters.

H-Hour came suddenly, though it had been awaited for weeks. 11,000 planes were in the skies. 4,000 larger vessels and innumerable smaller craft sailed away from the white cliffs of England. Hundreds of thousands of men, with millions of tons of matériel, were on their way to assault the fortress of Europe. This was the most multitudinous mass movement of armed men being guided by the most synchronized orders in the history of the human race. Science and engineering had reached the peak.

Since H-Hour and D-Day, the beachheads have extended to battlefields. From the strips of sands and the ocean rocks, our American and allied fighters have breached the Atlantic Wall which the Germans had been preparing against our coming. Our men must advance beyond that

Wall into the countryside of France, and then advance against other walls that have been regarded almost as invulnerable. Thus far, as we have been tersely told by the leaders of the invading forces, we have advanced according to plan.

We have the power in men and things and we have the determination in our souls to finish the ghastly job that we began on June 5 and 6. But we cannot cloak the fact that there are master minds directing the enemy operations, that there

are scientists and workers fabricating the enemy war machines, that there are seasoned and desperate fighting men intent on the death of our men and the destruction of our equipment. Furthermore, we must dearly understand that the German home front is still sturdy and strong. According to the best indications, it will not crack easily. The unconditional surrender of Germany will be made in God's good time, but until then we must prepare ourselves to live through some tragic and sad days.

The Allied invasion of Germany through France is more than the clash of armies on a new battle line. To the peoples of the Allied nations, it proves conclusively that we have dared to carry the offensive against the Nazis at their strongest point. It means that the power of the Nazis is being dominated by a superior power. It means the speedier ending of war. To the peoples of Europe who have lived under Nazi terror and tyranny, it means liberation. They are turning to us, not as to foreign conquerors who have the intent and the will to enslave them again, but as friends whom they may join in victory. D-Day was Boniface Day for those who believe. May we not suggest appropriately that Saint Boniface be thought of as the Patron Saint of all of those who are fighting and suffering and dying in the battle of Europe?

Englishing the New Liturgy

By G. B. Harrison | May 9, 1970



Photo Courtesy of Canons Regular of St. John Cantius

On April 3, 1969, Holy Thursday, Pope Paul VI issued the apostolic constitution “*Missale Romanum*,” on the new Roman Missal. Use of the new English translation of the Mass began on the First Sunday of Advent, Nov. 30, 1969. Just over one year after the pope’s announcement, G. B. Harrison, a leading Shakespearean scholar who participated in the work of translation, reflected in the May 9, 1970, issue of *America* on the process of rendering the Latin into English.

The Second Vatican Council first came together in Rome in October, 1962, and one of its first accomplishments was to approve a Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and its reforms. This document was promulgated in December, 1963. Few read it; fewer heed it.

The purpose of the reforms was to encourage the people to take an active part in the rites of the Church. To this end the old rigid uniformity was relaxed. Each Episcopal Conference can adapt the liturgy to the special gifts of the people, provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is preserved. The vernacular

language may be used, but no person, be it noted, not even a priest, may add, remove or change anything in the liturgy on his own responsibility.

It was not the intention of the Council that Latin should disappear from the liturgy; far from it. The people, it was urged, should be trained to sing or say in Latin those parts of the Ordinary that pertain to them.

In 1963, the concession that some parts might be in the vernacular was quite new. Less than five years earlier, in the new edition of Jungmann’s famous study of the Roman Mass, he wrote that changes could not be expected for many years, and as for the vernacular in the Mass, that would hardly be worth hoping for. Only five years.

Few in the Council had realized that when you open the gates to a large and impatient crowd, they rush in and are no longer controllable. Once the vernacular was admitted, the demand for its full use was general and quite irresistible.

Both the Council and the new Pope desired that when a common language is spoken by several coun-

The difficulties encountered by those who worked long and hard to give us a truly contemporary prayer language in English are here set forth by one who participated in the mammoth task.

tries, commissions should be established to make one text for all. As a result, the English-speaking bishops appointed the International Committee on English in the Liturgy, hereafter referred to as ICEL. This body consists of two committees, the Episcopal Committee of eleven representatives from different countries, a secretary and treasurer with offices in Washington, and seven other members of an Advisory Committee to assemble translators, coordinate their work and earn the rewards promised in the ninth Beatitude: “Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you.... Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven.” In this context, I still regard “blessed” as more accurate than “happy.”

ICEL first met in Rome in November, 1965. It took some time to settle down together, and there were great differences of opinion about the proper styles to be aimed at. More than a whole day was spent on whether “thou” or “you” should be used in the liturgy. In the end the vote was 7 to 1 for “you” but the difference inside and out was so fierce that deadlock could only be avoided when we compromised reluctantly that all texts should be in both forms. That decision seems to be passing into oblivion.

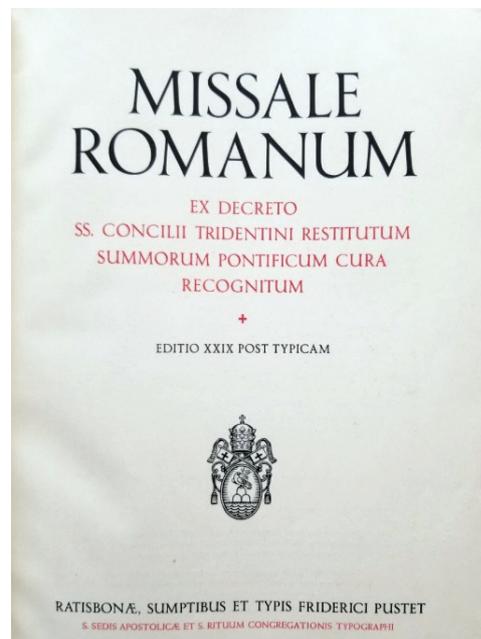
From this meeting, however, emerged our first publication—a pamphlet called *English for the Mass*. It set out different ways of translating such texts as the Gloria, the Credo and the Agnus Dei. And it asked for criticism and advice; we got it. Some 16,000 copies of the pamphlet were sent out; more than 4,000 replies came back, which revealed a great conflict of opinions strongly held and often violently expressed. Some wished the committee to rewrite the Mass. Others demanded that we keep as close as could be to the language of Cranmer’s Book of Common Prayer and all the ancient forms of liturgical language. Others again were as eager for the disappearance of the old familiar words, even “almighty,” “everlasting” and “amen.” We were urged to follow the vocabulary of the Beatles as that of the generation to come.

A second pamphlet was issued a year later: *English for*

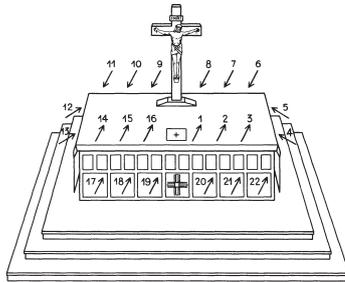
the Mass, Part 2. This was a large collection of translations of the prayers, prefaces, prayer endings and the like. In the introduction, we pointed out that it was not our task to remake the liturgy but to translate what might be provided by Rome, and we replied to those who demanded that we use the contemporary idiom that there is no such thing, for contemporary idiom changes from place to place; the idiom that is modern and contemporary to a liturgiologist in Chicago is very different from the idiom natural to a taxi driver in London. The final translation, we claimed, cannot be in any particular idiom—“it must aim at good, straight, simple English which brings understanding to the unlearned and delight to the literate.” *English for the Mass, Part 2* produced very few answers and no offers from those with the gift of writing good, straight, simple English.

The original intention of the Council Fathers was that only certain parts of the Mass should be translated into the vernacular, and for some months—it seems so long ago, but it is less than three years—the Mass was part English, part Latin. Pending official translations, different dioceses used what was available in existing missals for the Gloria, the Creed and other parts, but the offertory prayers and the Canon were still being said inaudibly in Latin. This hybrid was generally felt to be most unsatisfactory, and in the early Spring of 1967, the American bishops petitioned that the Canon might be said aloud in English. To their surprise, permission from Rome was given three weeks later; haste is not usual in such matters. The result was that ICEL was ordered to have the translation ready for use in the fall.

Fortunately, the Advisory Committee was not entirely caught by surprise. For several months individual trans-



ORDO INCENSATIONIS ALTARIS
QUOD COMMODE CIRCUIRI POTEST



Premissa crucis (et reliquiarum seu imaginum) incensatione, fiunt 22 ductus, quorum nn. 1-3 et 14-16 supra mensam altaris, nn. autem 4-13 et 17-22 infra et ex latere.

ORDO INCENSANDI OBLATA

IUXTA RUBRICAS MISSALIS ROMANI
(Ritus servandus in celebratione Missae, VII, 10)

In modum circuli



7 ET DESCENDAT SUPER NOS
8 MISERICORDIA
9 TUA

1088

e Pater,
Filius
ostrium,



supplices rogamus ac p̄t̄imus,
osculatur altare et, iunctis
manibus ante pectus, dicit:
uti accēpta hābeas et benedīcas signat ter su-
per hostiam et calicem simul, dicens: h̄ec ✠
dona, h̄ec ✠ m̄n̄era, h̄ec ✠ sancta sacrificia
illibāta, extensis manibus prosequitur: in pri-
mis, quā tibi offerimus pro Ecclēsia tua sancta
cathōlica: quam pacificāre, custodīre, adu-
nāre et régere dignēris toto orbe terrārum:
una cum famulo tuo Papa nostro N. et Antí-
stite nostro N. et ómnibus orthodoxis, atque
cathōlicā et apostōlicā fidei cultōribus.

Commemoratio pro vivis

Memento, Dómine, famulórum famula-
rúmque tuárum N. et N. iungit manus,
orat aliquantulum pro quibus orare intendit:

1089

lators—including some who were most insistent that new styles should be used—had been trying out English versions of the Canon. And again most fortunately, the demand for the translation of the Canon was made just before ICEL met in Washington at the end of May.

Three members of the Advisory Committee were detached to consider the translations and to prepare a version for the approval of the Episcopal Committee. One of the translations offered was by a group of modernizers in this country. It was incredibly drab, but it stirred the three translators to get away from the usual kind of “sacral” style. The result was the first breakthrough, something new in English liturgical language.

The Canon in English was published in October, 1967. It was greeted with startled screams by the conservatives. Long before it was ever heard in use, the London Tablet damned it in a harsh review and a harsher editorial, and for several weeks printed letters from priests and laity. After a few Sundays the tone altered. And one of my former graduate students wrote to me that he thought the new translation was commonplace—until he heard it, and then to his surprise, it became a thing of simple moving dignity. These words are his, not mine.

The Advisory Committee thus learned early that its work could not be carried on in any kind of cloistered serenity. Whenever a Latin text is published in Rome, there is immediate clamor for a translation. The practical difficulties are considerable. One of these is distance. Since ICEL is a truly international committee, translations and proposals must be considered by each member before they can be approved; and even with air mail, it takes three weeks for answers to be received. Moreover, the committee as a body cannot be assembled from all parts of the world more often than twice a year. We try therefore to anticipate demands.

In planning ahead, the officials of the Consilium in Rome are not too helpful. They are aloof, and even in Rome we never meet them. Latin texts are secretly prepared by expert committees, and usually they are altered and revised several times before the final official text is approved and published. There were at least five texts of the Order of the Mass, all differing quite considerably before the promulgation in April, 1969. Such tight security is (in theory) preserved that the ICEL was not allowed to see even an advance copy before it was published.

By this time the Advisory Committee has developed

a procedure for translating. For example, before the final version of the new Order of the Mass was published, it went through several stages. From the first we have experimented with such texts as the Gloria. After the 4,000 comments had been received in 1966, an editor was appointed to study some 200 of the best and come up with a draft text for the Advisory Committee to scrutinize when it met in Rome in the Fall of 1967. At this meeting a text was evolved which was then sent around to a large body of consultors. They commented at length.

Meanwhile the Latin text had been so drastically revised that most of the comments had ceased to be relevant. So the latest Latin text and the comments were tossed back to the original editor to produce another text for the Advisory Committee to consider in the fall of 1968. In April, 1969, the authorized Latin text was officially published in Rome, and at last we could get down to a final translation. By early summer last year, we reached what in our jargon is called the Green Book stage. The Green Book is the committee's semifinal—or, if you prefer the word, antepenultimate—version, issued in a green cover and sent to our own Bishops' Committee, the various Ecclesiastical Conferences, the English-speaking bishops (all 750 of them) and to other interested parties.

They responded with 300 pages of observations, some—but not all—most helpful. Personally I find it embarrassing when a most respected archbishop makes strong comments that are contradicted in equally strong comments by another highly respected archbishop. Either way we offend one if not both, but we get hardened to that risk.

The next stage is the White Book. The Advisory Committee having considered the comments sat together in London last September and produced the penultimate version. This was discussed two days later in a common meeting with our Bishops' Committee at the Strand Palace Hotel, of all surprising places. I found it most inspiring to sit with a cardinal and six archbishops and bishops, all stripped to their T-shirts (for it was very hot). I have had my share of committees, and I have never sat on a committee where the members showed such understanding of the problems, sympathy, common sense and relevance. It was a true taking of counsel together. The bishops suggested some changes—very few. Finally, next day we met again, tidied up the text, and the result is what is now in use—but with two exceptions, the new versions of the Our Father and the Apostles' Creed are not



TEMPUS NATIVITATIS
Die 25 decembris
IN NATIVITATE DOMINI
I classis cum octava II classis

† In festo Nativitatis Domini quivis sacerdos tres Missas celebrare potest. De agendis, si sacerdos eodem die duas vel tres Missas celebret, vide Riturum servandum in celebratione Missae, tit. XIV.

Ad primam Missam
in Nocte
Statio ad S. Mariam maiorem ad Presepe

108 **Ant. ad Introitum** Ps. 2, 7
Dominus dixit ad me: Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genui te. Ps. ibid., 1
Quare fremuerunt gentes: et populi meditati sunt insania? V. Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat.

ius lucis mysteria in terra cognovimus, eius quoque gaudiis in caelo perfruemur: Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate.

Lectio Epistolae beati Pauli Apostoli ad Titum. Tit. 2, 11-15
¶ **Carissime: Apparuit gratia Dei Sal-**

Sabbato sancto 185

109 **D**eus, qui in tempore clarissime
Tunc surgentibus omnibus, et stantibus, ut fit ad Evangelium, diaconus canit: proconium paschale, habens ante se cereum paschalem, a dextris altare, a sinistris aulam ecclesiae. Dum canitur proconium paschale, convenit, ut clerus et populus candelas accensas gestent.
13 n. Postea sacerdos vadit ad legem, strato alio coopertum, et ponit super eo librum, et incensat: deinde, circumiens cereum paschalem, orationem istam thurizat.
Tunc surgentibus omnibus, et stantibus, ut fit ad Evangelium, ipse sacerdos canit vel legit proconium paschale, habens ante se cereum paschalem, a dextris altare, a sinistris aulam ecclesiae. Dum canitur proconium paschale, convenit, ut clerus et populus candelas accensas gestent.

PRÆCONIUM PASCHALE

Ex-sil-tet iam Angé-li-ca turba cae-ló-rum: ex-sil-tent di-vi-na my-sté-ri-a: et pro-tan-ti Re-gis vic-tó-ri-a tu-ba in-so-net sa-lu-tá-ris. Gáude-at et tel-lus tantis ir-ra-di-á-ta ful-gó-ri-bus: et æ-térni Re-gis splendó-re il-lustrá-ta, to-tí-us orbis se-sé-nti-at a-mi-sísse ca-li-gi-nem. Læ-té-tur et ma-ter Ecclé-si-ae, tan-ti lú-mi-nis



DOMINICA RESURRECTIONIS
I classis cum octava I classis
Statio ad S. Mariam maiorem

1140 **Ant. ad Introitum** Ps. 138, 18 et 5-6
Resurrexisti, et adhuc tecum sum, allelúia: posuisti super me manum tuam, allelúia: mirábilis facta est scientia tua, allelúia, allelúia. Ps. ibid., 1-2 Dómine, probasti me, et cognovisti me: tu cognovisti sessionem meam et resurrectionem meam.
V. Glória Patri.

Oratio
Deus, qui hodierna die per Unigenitum tuum aeternitatis nobis áditum, devicta morte, reserásti: vota nostra, que preveniéndo aspiras, étiam adjuvándo prosequere. Per eúndem Dóminum nostrum.

Lectio Epistolae beati Pauli Apostoli ad Corinthios. 1 Cor. 5, 7-8
Fratres: Expurgáte vetus fermentum, ut sitis nova conspersio, sicut estis ázymi. Etenim Pascha nostrum immolátus est Christus. Itaque epulum: non in fermento vétéri, neque in fermento malitiae et nequitiae: sed in ázimis sinceritatis et veritatis.

Graduale Ps. 117, 24 et 1
Hec dies, quam fecit Dóminus: ex-sultémus, et letémur in ea. V. Confitémini Dómino, quóniam bonus: quóniam in séculum misericórdia eius.
Allelúia, allelúia. V. 1 Cor. 5, 7
Pascha nostrum immolátus est Christus.

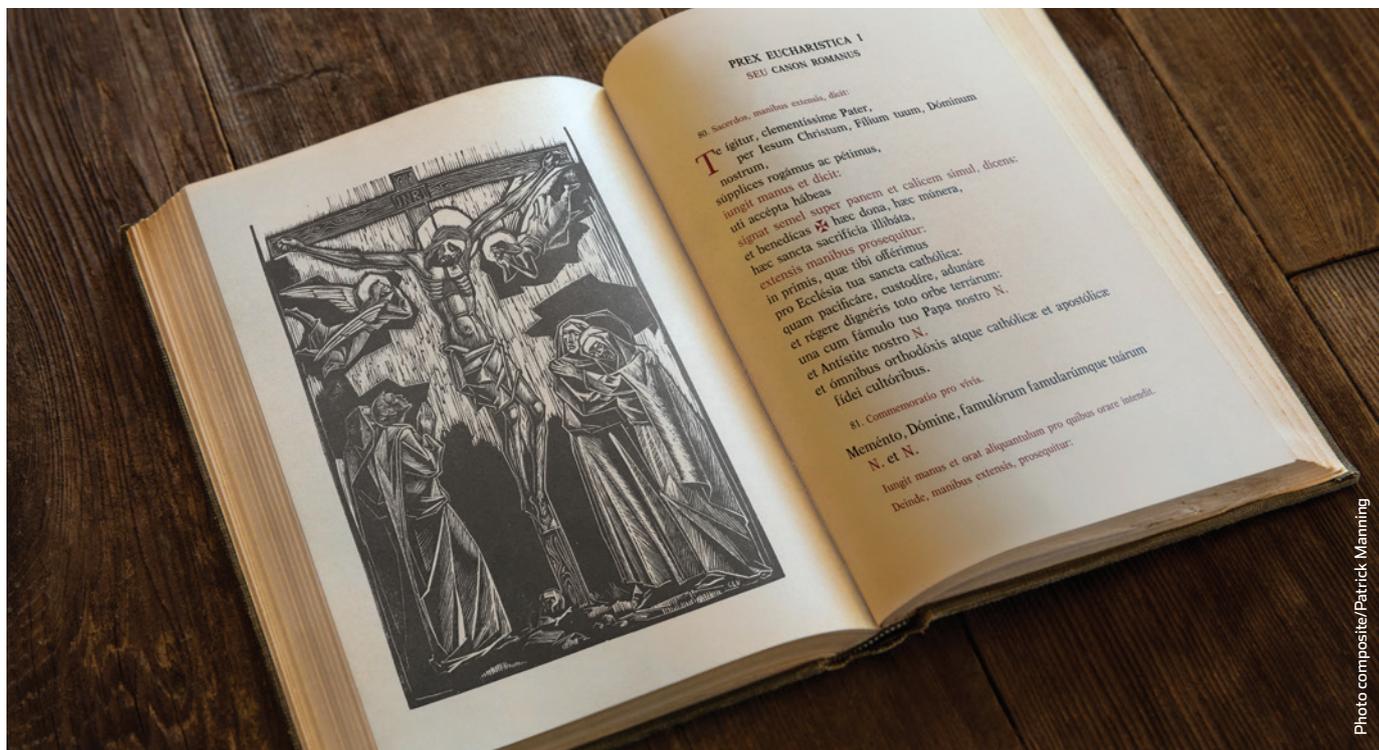


Photo composite/Patrick Manning

allowed in the United States...

Some who have not shared in this work say emphatically that the only right way to produce a good translation is to give it to one man, for “a committee can never produce a work of art.” As it happens, they are wrong. Experience in the work has shown that every time a text is scrutinized by the committee, it is in some ways improved. It also follows that no one can ever claim that any particular text is his own composition. And in passing, one may note that the famous King James version of the Bible was also the work of a committee.

ICEL is fortunate in that none of its members is a distinguished literary person. For some reason distinguished or well-known writers just cannot translate liturgical writing. We have tried all we could find, and not one has succeeded; they have been our greatest disappointments. And when their work is criticized, they seldom reveal the virtue of humility. Nor for that matter did St. Jerome.

Apart from the problems of time and place, the greatest difficulty is the Latin text. The traditions of liturgical Latin are almost, but not quite, as old as Christianity. Educated men in the second and later centuries received an elaborate training in rhetoric; and in the Imperial Court at Rome or Byzantium they addressed the sovereign with obsequious phrases and gestures.

Englishmen also in the 16th century, and later, endured the same kind of education in rhetoric and flattered the sovereign in the same way. Latin liturgical conventions were thus natural in Cranmer’s Book of Common Prayer,

and to those brought up on that book, its language seems the only proper respectful way of addressing God.

This hyperbolic tradition is still strong in Vatican City. Even members of ICEL receive letters addressed on the envelope “To the Most Reverend, Most Learned, Professor”—to the irreverent amusement of their families. It sounds much better in Italian.

Modern masters of prayer have entirely rejected that mode, masters such as Péguy, Caryll Houselander, Quoist, Oosterhuis. They no longer compose prayers in the style of a loyal address to the King of Kings by his abject slaves. Instead they prefer the direct speech of child to Father, as our Lord taught us in the Pater Noster.

The Gospels plainly show that in His prayers Christ used the simplest words. So too in his talk and his parables. “Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax collector.... The tax collector stood some distance away, not daring even to raise his eyes to heaven; but he beat his breast and said: ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’” Seven words.

The tax collector’s prayer is recast in the collect for the fourth Sunday after Epiphany thus: “God, who knowest that, set as we are amid such perils, our human weakness cannot stand fast, grant us health of mind and body, so that with thy help we may overcome the afflictions that our sins have brought upon us.” One sentence of 41 words. That is the difference between the sacral style and the Gospel style.

In our translations we try to be simple, comprehensible and, as far as grace inspires, dignified. In this we have been encouraged by a pamphlet issued by the Consilium in

January, 1969, which has been completely ignored in the Catholic press—partly, it may be, because it is in the usual shabby style of Vatican pronouncements. It lays down that a liturgical translation “must faithfully communicate to a given people and in their own language, that which the Church, by means of this given text, originally intended to communicate to another people in another time.” Moreover, it states: “The language chosen should be that in common usage, that is, suited to the greater number of the faithful who speak it in everyday use, even children and persons of small education.... Liturgical texts should normally be intelligible to all, even to the less educated.”

Most of the severest critics of the ICEL translations fail to realize the facts of life. The texts are not for their own community or parish, but for every community. There are about 70,000,000 English-speaking Catholics throughout the world. Of these, 82 per cent live on the North American Continent, 6 per cent in England and Wales. Most English-speaking Catholics, whatever their country, are simple people with small knowledge of the Bible, Church history or English literature. A translator must never forget he is providing words for public utterance to and by plain folk.

Hereupon the literate critic cries out in disgust: “What? Basic English?” The answer is: “Yes, Basic English,” just as the Gospels were written in a kind of Basic Greek (the learned call it *koiné*). They were intended not for educated Greek and Roman gentlemen, but for slaves, merchants, soldiers, shopkeepers, sailors and common people; and for that very reason, because the basic instincts of ordinary folk are more durable than the tastes of professional writers and critics, the Gospel narratives are still vivid and readable. Professional critics very seldom realize that simplicity is the supreme form of art—and the most difficult. Of the scores of translators who have contributed to this work, I have encountered only one to whom the gift of true simplicity has been given.

Simplicity is a matter not only of expression but of mind and heart.... Christ made few followers among the *periti*, the *illuminati* and the *litterati*; in his day they were called Pharisees and Scribes. I can never forget a remark I once found in the works of John Bunyan: “Among the multitudes of the damned, professors will make up a goodly party.”

Serving on the Advisory Committee has been a great experience, for one learns so much. One learns, or at least one tries to cultivate, the virtue that before Vatican II was known as “holy indifference”—to realize without peevish-

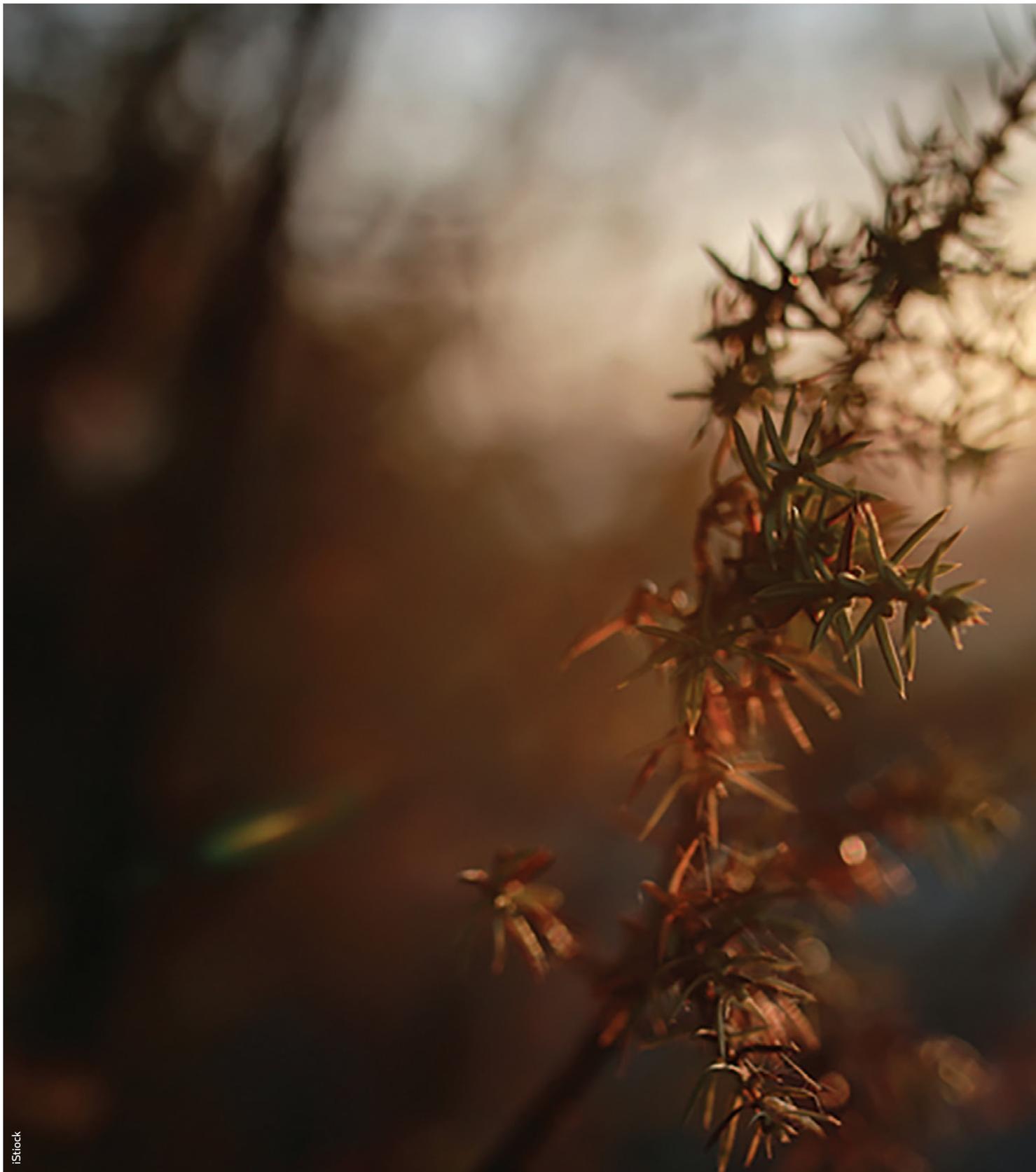
ness that one’s own translations are not always considered to be the best. One learns to accept, or at least endure, criticism and abuse that varies. In England it takes the form that the members of the ICEL are stupid people, ignorant of Greek, Latin, theology, liturgy, Scripture and English. In this country, we are denounced as heretics, cryptocommunists and cunning, sinister conspirators in a vast plot to undermine and destroy the Catholic Church. We can’t be both.

But let that pass.... One develops other sensitivities, at times a sobering sense of awe. Most Christians find God through public prayer. Commonplace prayers, tired words, meaningless pomposities, clog devotion; and there are 70,000,000 Catholics for whose faith we are in some ways directly responsible.

But the responsibility is shared. The liturgy is a tremendous drama; it means little unless the principal actor has rehearsed and studied his part. We shall lose more than we have gained if English in the Mass is marred by sloppy diction and impatient gabbling.

Manuals of devotion used to provide aids for the sacrament of penance, lists of sins that might have been overlooked since one’s last confession: “Have you committed murder? If so, how often? You need not mention names.” There should be similar aids for the clergy, including a section on performance as a celebrant. “Have I always and carefully read over the Mass of the day before entering the sanctuary? Have I chosen the second or third Eucharistic prayer because it is shorter than the first or the fourth? Have I been fully conscious that the response of the congregation depends on how skillfully I lead them?” I mention this matter because those who are interested in the liturgy in English are acutely conscious of the way it is said. With the completion of the Mass, the rites of baptism, marriage and burial, we have now reached the first stage in the reform of the liturgy. Much still remains to be done. There are about a thousand prayers of all kinds, and ICEL is still searching, not for critics, of whom we have almost enough, but for those masters of good, simple English who are seemingly too modest to offer help. For some years to come the ICEL will still need your prayers. And the Church also.

G. B. Harrison, 1970 recipient of the *Campion Award from America’s Catholic Book Club*, was a Shakespearean scholar. After retiring from his professorship at the University of Michigan, he dedicated his skills to the *International Commission on English in the Liturgy*.



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A Journey Home

Cancer returned my son to the God who comforts

By Tina D'Alessandro

Aug. 16, 1997

My eight-year-old son, Jamie, died of cancer on Feb. 8 of this year. He was the second of our four children, all of them boys. Some weeks later, I was asked to tell a group of our friends how my perception of heaven had been changed by the experience of Jamie's sickness and death. This is pretty much what I said.

When Jamie was diagnosed with Burkitt's lymphoma in August 1996, the prognosis was very good. That was a great help, because it would be nearly impossible for parents to put their child through chemotherapy and radiation treatments without trusting that the child would be cured by these procedures. Jamie's course of treatment also included a bone marrow transplant.

Throughout the six months of Jamie's illness I believed both that my son would be cured and that God's will controlled the ultimate outcome. When Jamie died, my perception of heaven remained one of peace, love and joy. But I believe that the depth of that peace, love and joy is beyond our ability to imagine while here



He was sitting in my lap, and his dad was holding his hand as he took his last breath and relaxed against me, letting go as he went home to be with the Lord. 🍯🍯

on earth. What has changed for me, since Jamie died, is my perception of death itself.

Jamie had been home from the bone marrow unit for 11 days when he died. The second or third of those nights—Jamie knew that his cancer had returned and a medical cure was no longer possible—he very patiently told me, “Mom, you don’t have to get up every time you hear me. Sometimes I’m just praying and talking to God. I’ll call you if I need you.” When his dad asked, “Does God talk back to you when you talk to him?” Jamie looked at him with a twinkle in his eye and very quietly explained, “Dad, I don’t hear God with my ears. He answers me in my heart and I feel better.”

My relationship with Jamie had always been one of honesty. Before his illness and certainly throughout his illness, he trusted that my answers to his questions would be honest. When the cancer returned for the second time, he looked at me and started crying. He simply said, “That means I’m going to die.”

I replied: “That means that the medicine can no longer help. Not one of us knows the exact moment that God will call us home to him. It means that it’s time to go home and be together for as long as God has planned. He will either cure you while you’re here with us or cure you when you go home to him.”

Jamie replied that he did not want to die, but if he had to die, he wanted me and his dad to go with him. My response was, “Daddy and I want you to be with us, too. God won’t take you home to be with him until you’re ready.” I then spent the last week of Jamie’s life praying that God would honor these words that I had spoken in love to my son. In Is. 51:12, God tells us, “I, even I, am he who comforts you....” I thought of this verse over and over again, asking God to comfort Jamie, his brothers, his father and me. Of course I prayed for the miracle of a cure, but I also prayed for comfort and grace—to accept God’s will regardless of what I felt to be best.

...

James was happy to be home. He was tired and could get cranky, especially with his exuberant younger brothers, but he was deeply content to be home. He spent hours building Legos with his dad, sorting sports cards and filing them in their books and following Duke’s basketball team, now that the football season had ended for his beloved Jaguars. It wasn’t until Friday, Feb. 7, that Jamie’s energy level declined drastically, and I started feeling that we were nearing the end. He still wanted me to read aloud to him. We were in the middle of the sixth book of C. S. Lewis’s *Chronicles of Narnia* and he also liked to hear selections from a book entitled *Someday Heaven*.

By three o’clock the following morning, Jamie’s breathing had become more labored. From that moment on, either my husband or I was with him throughout Saturday. Jamie dozed on and off. He didn’t talk a lot because he had difficulty breathing; but he was awake, aware of what was going on around him and able to make his needs known to us. In mid-afternoon, I was lying on the bed next to Jamie, and his dad was sitting at its foot. Jamie’s brother, Andy, and his Nana were close by. In a clear, loud and strong voice, Jamie looked up toward a corner of the ceiling and said, “But I want to stay.”

He said nothing else. I asked him if he was talking to me or some other one of us. He shook his head to tell me no. After this he closed his eyes to rest. We all looked at each other in wonderment and, I’ll admit, some disbelief. Could we really have heard and understood what we thought we heard? There is no doubt in my mind that Jamie was talking to an angel or to Jesus himself who was waiting nearby. Later in the afternoon, around 5 P.M., Jamie looked to the same corner of the ceiling and said emphatically and loudly, “Go away!” Then, he once again closed his eyes. Paul and I were the only ones in the room with him at that time, but he had not been talking to us. I guess I should say that we were the only ones visible in the room at that time.

...

Later that evening, when our house was quiet, Paul and I were discussing sleeping arrangements—who would sleep where. Jamie quietly watched. After I had showered and was sitting to put socks on my cold feet, my husband said, “Tina, Jamie wants you.” I could see both of them from where I was sitting, and since I hadn’t heard Jamie say a word, I wasn’t overly rushed or concerned. Paul said again: “Tina, Jamie wants you. He squeezed my hand and I know he wants you.” I calmly walked towards the door of his bedroom. As I entered his room, he looked at me with both

eyes wide open. (This was unusual, since the cancer had affected his right eye and he had been unable to open it.) Then he shakily lifted both arms open wide, palms up. My first reaction was that something was wrong, and I quickly went to him and scooped him up in my arms and held him close. He was sitting in my lap, and his dad was holding his hand as he took his last breath and relaxed against me, letting go as he went home to be with the Lord.

•••

I thank God every day for letting me be with Jamie when he died. As devastating as it is to have lost my son, not to have been present and to have held him as he died would have been more than I could have borne. God in his wisdom understood this. He also honored a promise that a mother had made to her son and did not take Jamie home until he was ready to go. God truly is a God who comforts. I do not pretend to understand his wisdom, nor do I pretend to be happy with his decision to take Jamie to himself. I do look forward, however, to being reunited with my son when God calls me home too.

Experiencing the death of my son has removed my fears and uncertainties surrounding death. Since I was a young child, I have believed in Jesus' promise of everlasting life, but that transition called death was always just a little bit scary to me. Watching Jamie die with such grace and complete trust in Paul, me and God has removed my fears. I now see death as a short journey. The Bible tells us that getting to heaven does not take longer than a day. Dying is simply a journey from our life on earth to our eternal home. While I am eager to live, I am also eager to take the journey when God calls me. I will go without fear, knowing that Jamie will be there along with Jesus and the angels that guided him into the life that is without tears and without end. Jamie was not perfect, but he had a kind and good heart. I pray that God will give me a heart for him, like the heart he gave my son, and I repeat a wise man's words:

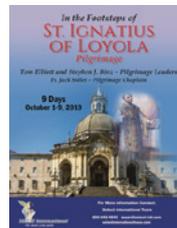
Give me a pure heart, that I may see Thee,
A humble heart, that I may hear Thee,
A heart of love, that I may serve Thee,
A heart of faith, that I may abide with Thee.
—Dag Hammarskjöld. *Markings*

Tina D'Alessandro is an advanced practice registered nurse and professor at the University of Florida.

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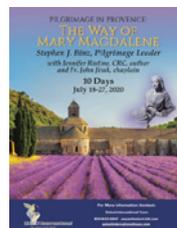
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AFTER COLUMBINE

The mothers who said 'never again' to school shootings

By Kathy Coffey

June 17, 2000

She leaves, and I feel the same twinge of fear I have felt every morning since April 20, 1999. She goes gladly. She likes her school, Littleton High, located about 15 miles from Columbine. Her hair is an auburn mantle as she runs into the morning, a clatter of keys, books and backpack. In the 15-year-old world of my youngest daughter, the details are pressing, the larger picture distant.

But Columbine has affected my world, as I suspect it has for many parents. We do not take lightly the hurried goodbye, the last “I love you” tossed across the quiet morning. It even changes my usual Mother’s Day pattern of lounging, planting flowers, enjoying the luxury of a dinner cooked by my four children. Instead, I drive with two daughters to Denver’s civic center, crowded with 12,000 other moms, children and dads. We imagine our gathering repeated around the country, and cheer the figures announced from Washington, D.C.: 500,000 in the Million Mom March there.

Many gathered here in Denver are veterans of other demonstrations: the civil rights marches, the protests against the war in Vietnam and the School of the Americas in Georgia. Graying liberals, we joke about introducing our kids to the fine subversion of the ’60s. But beneath the banner, we recognize that once again the underdogs are tackling the powerful status quo. For the umpteenth time we wonder what one can do against so many. Weakly, we boo the announcement that the N.R.A. will spend \$30 million to influence the fall elections.

N.R.A. members who encircle our protest hardly seem a threat. They accuse us of wanting slavery simply because we advocate gun locks. They shout freedom slogans, apparently unaware how un-nuanced and irrelevant they are to a discussion of background checks for gun buyers. The lettering on their T-shirts, “Tyranny Response Team,” stretches taut over bulging beer-guts. Their attempt to

drown out the music and dance of the demonstration with bullhorns sounds relentlessly dull. One tries not to think of gorillas thumping their chests. In true protest style, both sides wave the flag.

Yet we cannot dismiss them as thugs throwing testosterone tantrums. While these counter-protestors may not represent the cream of the crop, the gun lobby has a stranglehold on national and state legislatures. Because of their influence, no significant legislation has been passed in the year since Columbine to protect kids from gun violence.

And that makes their mothers mad. If catchy rhetoric is crucial to a cause, this one has some gems: “Woe to you who try to come between a mother and her child.” “Take your gun and go to your room!” “The gun lobby is no match for a million moms.” “We love our children more than they love their guns.” “Our kids are more protected from an aspirin bottle than from a semi-automatic.”

But all the slogans fade before the raw pain of Tom and Linda Mauser, whose son Daniel was killed at Columbine. “Honorary mom” for the day, Tom addresses the group gathered near the capitol where, 10 days after the slaughter, he spoke in public for the first time. His words now echo his words then: “I’m here because Daniel would expect me to be here.”

Such a simple statement, yet it snags the breath in the throat. I pause in the act of applying sunscreen to my daughter’s freckled shoulder. Suddenly the gesture is unbearably poignant. I think of all the moms who can no longer do this basic kindness for their children—12 a day murdered by guns. In Colorado, the litany of names has become a bracelet of memory: Cassie, Steven, Corey, Kelly, Matthew, Daniel, Rachel, Isaiah, John, Lauren, Dan, Kyle and their teacher Dave.

We know their stories and have memorized their faces. We saw the initial television footage, stunning and stark.



AP Photo/Eric Gray, File



A woman stands among 15 crosses posted on a hill above Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., in remembrance of the 15 people who died during a school shooting on April 20, 1999.

The stretchers, the IV's, the sirens, the long procession of ambulances. In shock we endured the irony of funerals where the mourners, the pallbearers and the deceased were all under 18. Now we see the aftereffects: the wheelchairs, the surgeries, the rehabilitation that never quite restores the ambling lope of a 15-year-old boy, the slender grace of a 16-year-old girl.

Perhaps the N.R.A. has met its match. All the money in the world cannot contend with the rage of a mother torn from her child. They have tampered with some deep and primal instinct, and they cannot win. An initiative in Colorado for the November ballot aims to require background checks and close "the gun-show loophole." If the legislature cannot accomplish it, the people will. Every mom at that march has a vote and, as we are frequently reminded, a vote is a terrible thing to waste. We may be political neophytes, but we will master any system we must to protect the vulnerable child.

I know with stinging clarity that Lauren or Daniel could have been my daughter or son. My stomach churned when

Dawn Anna, Lauren's mom, hugged her slain child's graduation cap and gown and called the valedictorian "a mother's dream." The gun that fired 11 bullets into Lauren was obtained as easily as "taking cereal off a grocery shelf." Despite a year of grieving, the stories remain heart-wrenching. I suspect we are ready to take the next step now, to make the transition from profound sorrow to vibrant action.

When people feel strongly about an issue, their language becomes direct and dramatic. "Enough," they say. "No more." The gun control measures proposed nationally and locally seem mild compared to those of other civilized nations. The statistics are clear, but the joined voice of the mothers roars even clearer. Listen intently and hear beneath them the tragic moans of students who thought a school library safe. Never again. Never another Columbine.

*Kathy Coffey is an award-winning Catholic author based in California. Her next book, *More Hidden Women of the Gospels*, will be published by Orbis in Spring 2020.*



There Is Goodness in 'The Exorcist'

By William Peter Blatty | Feb. 23, 1974



'The Exorcist' faced a barrage of criticism upon its theatrical release on Dec. 26, 1973.

In the Feb. 2, 1974, issue of *America*, the editors invited Richard A. Blake, S.J., the Rev. Robert E. Lauder, Robert Boyle, S.J., and the magazine's long-time film critic Moira Walsh to comment on the film "The Exorcist," which faced a barrage of criticism upon its theatrical release on Dec. 26, 1973. Father Blake said it "uses the symbols and images of Christianity without preserving their underlying meaning." Ms. Walsh, on the other hand, wrote, "I was not offended by the movie.... I was positively pleased with the way my Jesuit brothers were depicted."

In his *Of Many Things* column, Donald R. Campion, S.J., commented on the array of pundits who had emerged to analyze the film: "I would fiercely prefer to do without further comments on television or anywhere else, particularly from interested parties, about the 'real' meaning of the movie, the book or demons, possessions or exorcisms."

For the Feb. 23, 1974, issue, the editors invited William Peter Blatty, author of the novel *The Exorcist* and a producer of the film, to respond to *America's* critics.

Several years ago I set out to write a novel that would, not only excite and entertain (sermons that put one to sleep are useless), but would also make a positive statement about God, the human condition and the relationship between the two. On its crudest level it would argue for transcendence by presenting supernatural forces as real; but on the level that would stay with the reader long after he had closed the book, the theme was something other—and deeper. At the end of *The Exorcist*, the mother can believe in the devil because "he keeps doing all those commercials";

but Dyer responds: "Then how do you account for all of the good?" And that is the question that my novel and film implicitly ask: namely, if the universe is clockwork and man is no more than molecular structures, how is it there is love as a God would love and that a man like Jesuit Damien Karras would deliberately give up his life for a stranger, the alien corpus of Regan MacNeil? This is surely an enigma far more puzzling and far more worth pondering than the scandalous problem of evil; this is the mystery of goodness. It is the point all critics miss.

Your issue on *The Exorcist* was fine. Fr. Robert Boyle's insight into the fact that both novel and film derive much of their "harrowing impact from the refusal to analyze openly" is almost astounding in its penetration to the author's intent. Fr. Robert Lauder makes impeccable distinctions. And Moira Walsh, alas, is discerning when noting that critics of the film base their judgements on "mutually contradictory" reasons. Dominican Richard Woods, for example, attacked the film in *Time* because "The devil's true work is temptation.... That is almost entirely missing from the movie. The devil in the movie was an easy devil to handle." And the following week, Fr. Woods' colleague at Loyola of Chicago—Maryknoll psychologist Eugene Kennedy—put down the film because "the battle between good and evil is not fought out on the level of demonology. Being a Christian...means coming to terms with our own capacity for evil, not projecting it on an outside force that possesses us." Or tempts us, I presume.

Such contradictions, when taken alone, are a source of bemusement and



Nowhere in the novel or the film are we seriously led to believe that Regan is possessed by the prince of angels, who surely has far worse things to do. 🌊🌊

of wonder. But I am truly dismayed at the misconceptions held, not only by critics, but also defenders of the novel and film. And when I see that they are Jesuits, whom I thanked on the acknowledgement page of my novel for “teaching me to think,” I can only conclude that the fault must be mine, and that what I thought obvious, was not. The “fierce” opposition of **America’s** editor to explanations by “interested parties” has been duly noted; but perhaps his recognition of the “mystery of goodness” theme in the work has tamed him some. Perhaps just a bit. We do not ask miracles (not today). But may I clear up one or two of the misconceptions and make an occasional mild riposte?

1. The theme—the “mystery of goodness”—may fail because the ending of the novel and the film are misinterpreted (especially the film). What happens—at least as I intended it—is this: Fr. Karras invites the demon to take possession of him instead of the girl. The demon—having lost by dint of this very invitation, this act of love—accepts. Then the demon, using Fr. Karras’s body, reaches out his hand to strangle the girl. Fr. Karras fights to regain control; succeeds; and in the

few moments he has available before what he knows will be the inevitable and final repossession of his body by the demon, he does the only thing he can do that will save the girl’s life (and the lives of everyone else in the house): he leaps from the window to the street below and certain death. How Fr. Richard Blake gets from this to his opinion that “the conclusion is a fatalistic belief in the penultimate triumph of the dark powers” is truly a mystery impervious to the powers of a Charlie Chan. No less mysterious to me as a Christian are Fr. Blake’s moans at the number of deaths involved in the work and his conclusion that the deaths are a triumph of evil. I, for one, have been harboring the delusion these years that “better to lose the world” than suffer the loss of one’s immortal soul. In his act of love, Fr. Karras triumphs. And I believe him to be “saved.” But then, I graduated from Georgetown in 1950. That was the “old” Church. This is the new?

So, too, with Fr. Blake’s lamentation about the “total ineffectiveness of the Church and its rites.” I presume he thinks the exorcism failed. (In Scripture, and as practiced by Christ’s disciples, they sometimes did.) But missed is the fact that the “exorcist” of the

title is not Fr. Merrin but Fr. Karras; and his exorcism—through faith and love—*works*. So would Fr. Merrin’s have worked had he only lived. Successful applications of the ritual often take months. Fr. Merrin had an hour.

2. The possessing entity is not Satan. This is what is known in the entertainment business as a “showstopper”; and so I’ll repeat it: *Satan is not the possessing entity*. Rather, the entity is a demon—a devil, if you will. It is *his* likeness that Fr. Merrin finds on the amulet at the beginning; that he confronts amid the ruins of Nineveh; and that we see on the bed beside Regan in the course of the exorcism scene. In the book he has a name: Pazuzu, demon of the southwest wind. Nowhere in the novel or in the film are we seriously led to believe that Regan is possessed by the prince of angels, who surely has far worse things to do. True, Regan tells Fr. Karras, “And I’m the devil.” But what constrains us to believe her? Believe that and you perforce must believe *everything* the demon has to say, including the accusation that Fr. Merrin is a homosexual. The Roman Ritual’s instruction to exorcists has a caution against the “wiles and deceits” of evil spirits.

3. Inasmuch as **America’s** editor commends Fr. Richard Woods for his views on possession as set forth in *Catholic Mind*, I return for a moment to the alleged “failure” of *The Exorcist* to come to grips with evil, and to the “devil as tempter” point of view. Quite aside from the fact that I believe the latter to be naive, mistaken and an excuse for evasion of confrontation with personal guilt; quite aside from the fact that *I did not wish to examine this particular theme* any more than I wished to examine the

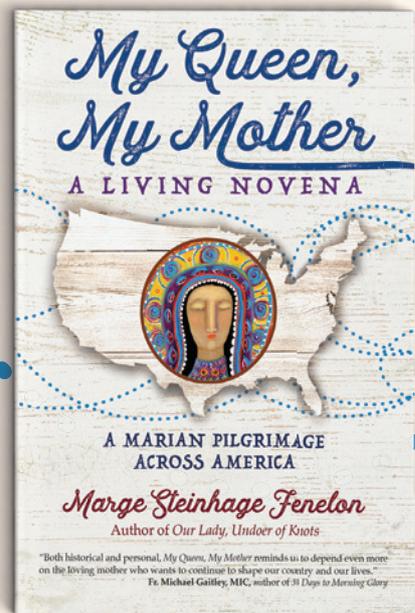
particular theme of Biafra *in this work*, instead preferring to focus on the neglected and far more positive, consoling and even joyous “mystery of goodness”; the fact of the matter is that the film deals *precisely* with Satan’s most potent attack on the race: the inducement of despair. It is aimed at those *around* the little girl, the *observers* of the possession, and particularly Fr. Karras, who is far more vulnerable to the attack. For Fr. Karras has rejected his own humanity: the animal side of his nature; the side that rends foods and chews and excretes; the side that kills over lust for a woman. The physical and seemingly spiritual degradation of the girl when possessed is aimed precisely at this vulnerability, stronger in Fr. Karras, but lurking in all of us (at least in the state of potency), and especially in those who, like Fr. Karras, have not lost but rather misplaced their faith because they have felt, “If there were a God, He could never love me”—or love a Regan MacNeil in the state of possession. From there to disbelief in God altogether is an easy and almost unconscious connection, but one that, at the last, Fr. Karras rejects along with despair. Thus, Fr. Blake, in my view, is mistaken when he observes that Fr. Karras “neither deepens nor loses his faith.” And when he complains that at the end of the film Chris MacNeil doesn’t seem to accept the faith as a consequence of witnessing the possession, he is looking for Disneyland, not life: for *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* instead of reality. When Jesus cured

the blind and raised the dead, there were many who saw and yet did not believe. Faith has more to do with love than with levitating beds. And this aside, would a fictional depiction of Chris’s conversion cause a movie audience—or anyone in it—to convert?

As you see, we all—myself included—have much to think about. Moira Walsh, though, is correct. In a matter of years it will all be forgotten. And yet, it has been frequently and widely reported that many viewers of the film are returning to the sacraments (originally instituted, perhaps, as armor in a very unequal struggle against “principalities and powers”?). It has also been reported that some viewers faint. Such reports were also made at the time of the first performance of the Orestes trilogy. In the case of *The Exorcist*, the fainting is occurring, I believe, because the viewer is making the unconscious connection between the hideous malevolence on the screen and the moral evil in his personal life; because he has recognized that the demon in all his putrescence is the ultimate father to stealing from one’s brother and calling it “business.” Perhaps the consequent return to the sacraments (factual phenomenon, whatever its cause) will be very short-lived. It probably will. Yet, finally, aren’t all of the quiddities and quibbles just so many angels on the head of a pin when compared to prompting even one soul, for even one moment, to once again be in touch with grace?

—William Peter Blatty

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Come Is the Love Song

By Jessica Powers | April 26, 1952

Come is the love song of our race and Come
Our basic word of individual wooing.
It lifts audacious arms of lowliness
To majesty's most amiable undoing,
To Godhead fleshed and cradled and made least.
It whispers through closed doors a hurry, hurry
To Tierce and fiery feast.
The liturgy of Advent plucks its buds
From the green shrub of love's compendium:
O Wisdom, Adonai, Root of Jesse
And Sign by which the mouths of kings are dumb,
O Key, O Orient, King and Cornerstone,
O our Emmanuel, come.
And Paschaltide prepares an upper room
Where burns the fuller bloom.
Come is the small sweet-smelling crib we carve
From fir, and bear across December frost.
It is the shaft of the flame-wishing Church
In public spring, or the thin javelin tossed
Privately at a cloud that splits in fire
And drowns us in the flood of some amazing
Personal Pentecost.

Jessica Powers (1905-88), a Discalced Carmelite nun and member of the Carmel of the Mother of God, Pewaukee, Wis., has been called one of America's finest religious poets. This poem was previously published in the Second America Book of Verse, 1930 to 1955.

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Reviewing the classics

Combing through the book reviews that *America* has published over 11 decades makes one realize how much the magazine's literary style has changed (and changed back again) over the years. The reviews are a study in contrasts and ironies. Some decades are full of short, snappy reviews, others of long and meandering reflections. Some years are marked by a particular snark (as seen in some of the selections below), others by perhaps overly generous allowances.

One editor in chief loved literary fiction, and his era shows it; another was a political animal, and there too it is possible to suss out his influence. Theology books were perennial favorites. In the early years of the magazine, the policy of the editors was that women could review books but could be identified by their initials alone. Many years later, the first lay member of *America's* editorial board was Patricia Kossmann, who served as literary editor for 13 years.

Below are some of the more memorable moments among the literally thou-

sands of possibilities—some excerpted from longer reviews, a few the full text.

—James T. Keane, senior editor

The Great Gatsby

F. Scott Fitzgerald's earlier books, unfortunately, ran into a large number of printings. "The Great Gatsby" will probably meet with like success, despite the fact that it is an inferior novel, considered from any angle whatsoever. It is feeble in theme, in portraiture and even in expression. It purports to picture society, as in New York and Long Island.

—May 30, 1925, unattributed

The Catcher in the Rye

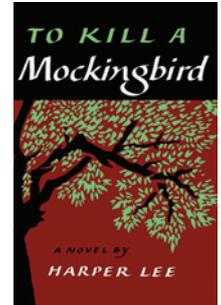
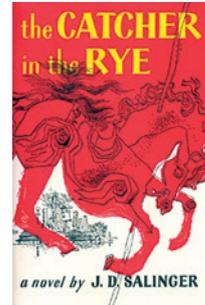
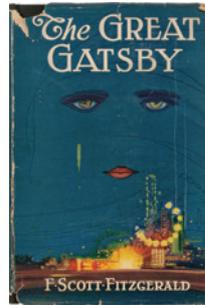
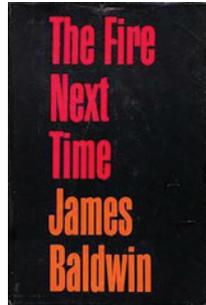
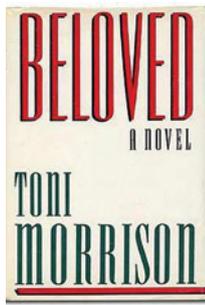
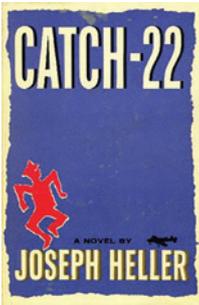
A novel should have substance, should be coherent, should contain vivid characterization; and it is the better for a well-constructed plot. This extended short story has none of these important attributes. In a word, it is not a novel. It is a story which becomes frightfully boring before one is halfway through the book. The story, or what there is

of a story, could easily have been told in 5,000 words or less, and told more effectively. The book is peppered with four-letter words. It purports to tell the story of Holden Caulfield, who leaves (by request) a semi-private school and returns to the caverns of New York for a three-day binge. His encounters with the problems of living are told in a flip (and sometimes ferocious) manner which is not in the best of taste. Good writers have given us the smells and tastes of the prize ring without benefit of four-letter words. Mr. Salinger would have written a much more enjoyable book if he had left them where they are usually found—on the walls of latrines where "little boys" write them. Perhaps the best thing to be said about *The Catcher in the Rye* is that Mr. Salinger would do well to remain in the field of the short story.

—Thomas Francis Ritt, Aug. 11, 1951

To Kill a Mockingbird

It's not usual for an author to win a Pulitzer Prize with his first novel, but



Harper Lee did just that with her *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It recounts the process of growing up in a small Southern town, as seen through the eyes of the young girl. The atmosphere is wonderfully caught and a nice note of racial justice adds substance, though perhaps it is stated too much as a thesis.

—May 13, 1961, unattributed

The Fire Next Time

In these pages there are flashes of truculence and bad humor, at times an over fervid moral passion that makes us remember that the author was once a boy-preacher in a storefront church in Harlem. But these false notes only serve to heighten the clean and honest quality of his writing. Baldwin's style, indeed, has been almost universally praised. He is justly considered one of the most powerful essayists on the contemporary scene. When he has been criticized, it has been for his pessimism, his bitterness.

I don't think the criticism is justified. I think it stems from the nervousness of those who, from the best motives in the world, have for too long been announcing the new era in race relations. They are afraid that Baldwin's insights will frighten off some "men of good will" who now seem to be climbing on the bandwagon in ever increasing numbers. These fears, in my opinion, are misplaced. I find it, instead, a good sign that we can now take the strong medicine which the literary artist administers.

—Thomas H. Clancy, S.J., March 16, 1963

Catch-22

Humor has been pushed beyond the conventional inhibitions of satire and farce, through the shades of "blue" jokes to "black." This new humor ridicules sex, mocks death, stages orgies in casket rooms, and relates man's rational mastering of the universe to his irrational tendency toward self-destruction. It specializes in social protest and moral criticism; and in this humor the rapier of sarcasm has been transcended by the laser beams of Stanley Kubrick, Terry Southern, Tony Richardson and—above all—their predecessor, Joseph Heller, author of *Catch-22*...

Catch-22 also seems to have anticipated the denunciations from the Student Left. It supports their charge that our political system consolidates the power of irresponsible military and business interests. It could even be freely interpreted as criticism of our policy in Vietnam. In *Catch-22*, however, the radical credo, "It's better to die on one's feet than live on one's knees," comes from the lips of a naïve boy, and die he does. Rather than a rebel's textbook, *Catch-22* is a pacifist novel in the tradition of *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Together the books imply that the leaders of any generation are liable to blunder away the youth and love of the next.

—Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., Nov. 6, 1965

Beloved

In this beautifully wrought novel the plot is fascinating, but the pacing,

the language, the characterizations and the descriptions of relationships outweigh the actual events. The story focuses on Sethe and Paul D. who were slaves on a plantation ironically named "Sweet Home." The irony is complex, since the Sweet Home men—Sethe was the only female slave—were allowed to own guns for hunting, to hire themselves out to earn money, and were never beaten or demeaned.

Eventually, the pregnant Sethe escapes with her three children, and Paul D. ends up in a Georgia prison camp. The novel begins nearly 20 years later, when Paul D. finds Sethe and Denver living in Ohio in a house called 124, bedeviled by an infant's ghost.

Contrary to the consensus of American individualism, Morrison suggests that love cannot thrive in the absence of community. This is made clear at the end of the novel. Only when Sethe's ties to the community are reestablished does her salvation become possible. In *Beloved* strong community is a precondition, not an impediment to personal fulfillment. For both its beautiful writing and its social insights, this brilliant novel is a joy to read.

—David L. Smith, Feb. 20, 1988



A legendary year in Hollywood

By Thomas J. Fitzmorris | 1939



The year 1939, many critics argue, was the best year Hollywood ever had, with the release of classics like “Gone With the Wind” and “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington.” It was a busy year, too, for America’s film reviewer, Thomas J. Fitzmorris, who wrote as many as four reviews a week. Here are a few highlights from that legendary year.

The Wizard of Oz

It may be the Chestertonian function of such fantasies as this to remind us that the sort of child who does not believe in fairies usually grows up to be the sort of person who disbelieves in angels. It will be difficult to find either child or grownup, however, who will not take this screening of L. Frank Baum’s hardy fairy tale as a pleasant excursion from prosaic reality. It manages beautifully to re-create the incidents of the book with trick and technicolor and

has done little violence to the story of Dorothy, who is whisked from a Kansas farm to incredible Oz by the whim of a cyclone. Her adventures in company with the Straw Man, the Tin Woodman and the Cowardly Lion on their way to petition the great wizard for what they wish most are zestfully reproduced. Director Victor Fleming has visualized the antics in such ways as to vivify rather than distort fond recollections and Judy Garland adds tuneful music to Dorothy’s original charms.... To say that this film will please all Oz readers may be overstating the case, but it leaves room only for carping by its imaginative production and infectious good humor.

—T.J.F., Sept. 2, 1939

Ninotchka

The sly thesis involved in this sparkling film makes the point

that the most difficult thing about the theory of Communism is its practice. It is a literate, satirical slap on the wrist for the comrades which, though coming at a time when the ideology is being heavily bombarded, is nevertheless encouraging as emanating from Hollywood, long a stronghold of nouveau riche radicalism. Under Ernst Lubitsch’s facile direction, it spins out a gay yarn of the Soviet’s attempt to raise ready money on some expropriated jewels through three emissaries in Paris. When the trio is demoralized by capitalist high life, a female agent is despatched to take over, but she, too, is lured from the path of duty to the proletariat by an agent of the duchess who formerly owned the gems. She returns to Russia but with a romantic entanglement which is subsequently confirmed



The films of 1939 included "The Wizard of Oz," "Ninotchka" and "Wuthering Heights."

man's, we see it unfold on a screen, straining to capture its authentic spirit as the natural product of a wild, solitary and enigmatic woman, whose knowledge of life and love was subjective and who identified the male of the species with a hurtful, Hardy-esque Nature, such as glowered over the north English moors surrounding Haworth parsonage. This film is a masterly re-creation, retaining the sensational plot, the Gothic characters and the essential naivete of the motivation, along with passages

and this breach, together with the morbid revenge motif, makes even adult recommendation precarious.

—T.J.F., April 22, 1939

Goodbye Mr. Chips

James Hilton's rediscovery of the novel of sentiment has conditioned a vast public for this masterly photoplay's quiet, yet insistent, charm. It is decidedly not just another play on the heartsstrings, being distinguished by the quality rather than the quantity of its pathos. Sam Wood has contrived to annotate an obscure destiny without allowing Mr. Chips to fall into his anecdote; the teacher remains a natural figure in a typical public-school scheme, but the man is a complete revelation of human nature's graces. The action is not noticeably episodic although it carries Chips from idealistic young manhood to aged wisdom through three generations of Brookfield boys. Out of touch with pupils and masters at first, he loves and loses a young wife by death and is subtly transformed by the happy interlude, emerging finally a gracious old man who carries on for the old school during the blighting days of the War. The good instinct which led the producers to do this film in England is justified by the authenticity of the academic backgrounds and the essential rightness of the casting. Robert Donat gives a remarkable demonstration of his splendid range of feeling and execution and is a Chips to satisfy even reverent readers. Greer Garson, as Kathie, plays admirably in key and the production is eminently worthy of a fine original. *This is obligatory entertainment for all.*

—T.J.M., May 27, 1939

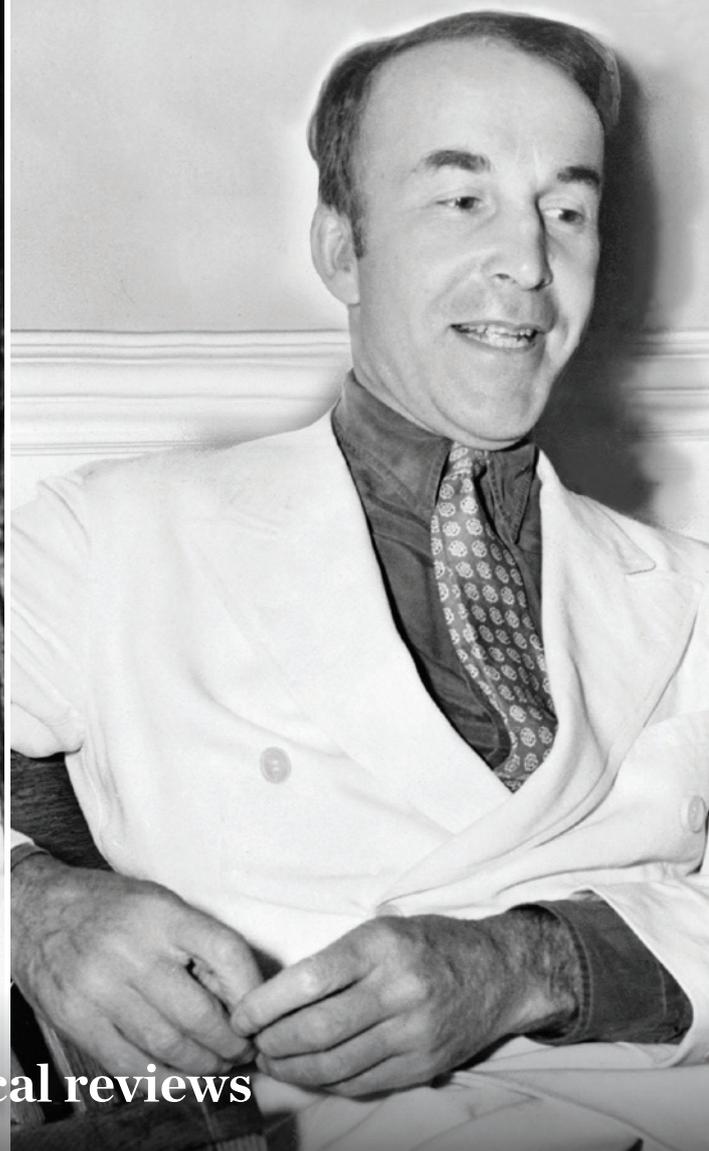
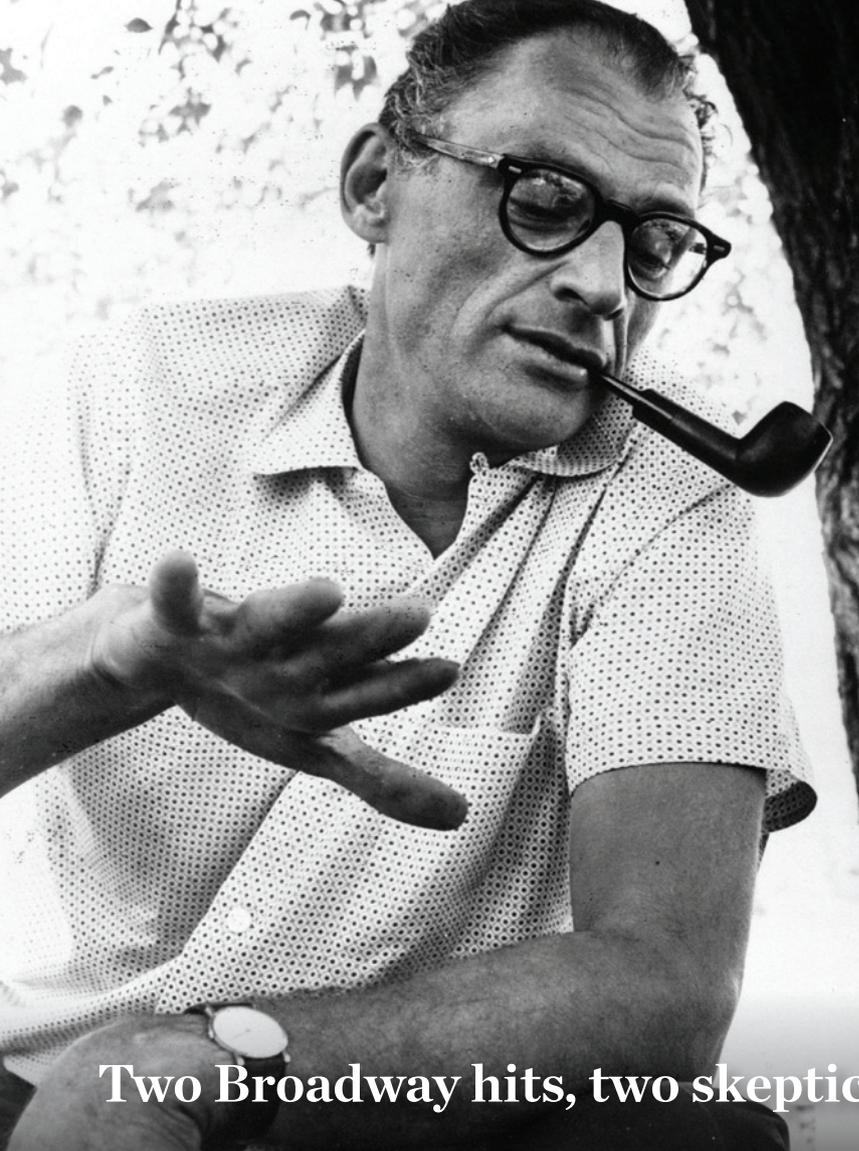
in Constantinople. Bourgeois courtship wins an easy victory since love, which laughs at locksmiths, is undone by Soviet openness, epitomized in the film by partitioned rooms and censored mail. By juxtaposing theory and practice, Lubitsch has provided a jesting moral which whittles down much of the solemn hokum about life in the workers' paradise. Greta Garbo essays the lighter form of drama with brilliant success and Ina Claire shares the expert handling of bright lines. This is excellent adult humor with a prime object for satire.

—T.J.F., Oct. 21, 1939

Wuthering Heights

Although Emily Brontë's contemporaries, used to reticence in women novelists, mistook this almost inhumanly imaginative work for a

of genuine, brooding emotion. The strange romance between the fanciful, irresolute Cathy and the gypsy Heathcliff, brutalized by condescension and abuse, is interrupted by her marriage without love. But years later, as a rich man, Heathcliff takes a stableboy's revenge on Cathy's sodden brother and harries her to death at the birth of her son. His mechanical torture of his own unloved wife and his nightmarish quest for Cathy, ending in his death, compose a psychopathic study which is as gripping as it is unsound. William Wyler has caught the moods brilliantly, and the impressiveness of the tale is enhanced by an equally imaginative production.... As Emily Brontë was unorthodox, so the film arranges a posthumous rendezvous for Heathcliff and Cathy, which apotheosizes their false fidelity in a flush of immoral sentimentality,



Two Broadway hits, two skeptical reviews

In 1949 and 1958, *America* reviewed two plays that were widely praised by critics. Our reviewers, however, were not enthusiastic. Theophilus Lewis found Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" to be mediocre. And for a young Jesuit dramatist and poet named Daniel Berrigan, Archibald MacLeish's "J.B." failed to match the power of the biblical story that inspired it. Their judgments may have missed the mark (or did they?), but their prose retains a spark these 70 years later.

'Death of a Salesman'

Since it is practically certain that *Death of a Salesman* will be elected

best of the season, its accolade warrants a re-appraisal of its dramatic and social importance. In either department, the play is no better than second class. *Edward, My Son* is superior drama, and *The Mad Woman of Chaillot* is more mature in social vision. In only one quality, its vigorous dialog, is Mr. Miller's play in any way distinguished.

While some of the author's admirers call the drama a criticism of our national values, it is never quite clear which popular fallacies are the targets of his censure. Are his strictures intended to debunk the myths and vainglory that have elevated salesmanship to the status of a per-

verted religion, like voodooism or the nudist sect, or is the salesman a symbol of the inadequacy of material success? If the former were his intention, he has done a good job; if the latter, his treatment of the subject is superficial, faltering and rather dated.

In dissipating the nimbus glowing around the salesman's cult, Mr. Miller achieves an excellent demolition job. The salesman, in a high-production economy like ours, has an important function. When production managers began to proliferate commodities in excess of normal demand, somebody had to move the goods out of the factory, out of the wholesaler's warehouse and out of the retail

America's reviewers were not enthusiastic about new plays from Arthur Miller and Archibald MacLeish.



store. The situation called for men of fluent speech, capable of persuading a buyer to order more than his firm could sell or cajoling a customer into purchasing something he didn't need. The salesman became the spark-plug of prosperity, and the elite of the profession, the road man, roved over the country in grand style. He was insouciant and glamorous, and in adult circles supplanted the cowboy as the most colorful of American characters. Mr. Miller's Willy Loman was a pukka salesman, and the color and insouciance of his calling eventually turned to dust and ashes.

When Willy Loman has outlived his usefulness to his firm, the current executive of the company casually cuts his name off the payroll, a suggestion that our capitalist society callously throws workers too old to produce on the rubbish pile, along with worn-out machines and discarded formulas. Twenty or thirty years ago that would have been valid social criticism. Today, with the indigence of old age relieved by various forms of social security, it is only a maudlin scene in an otherwise interesting drama.

As social drama, *Death of a Salesman* is a dud. It is a white-collar *Tobacco Road* without Jeeter Lester's hillbilly background. Willy Loman's crack-up is a personal rath-

er than a social tragedy. His story is good drama, however—the play most likely to succeed when various committees distribute their medals and blue ribbons.

—Theophilus Lewis, April 9, 1949

'J.B.'

The question arises: how much of the original Job material did the author truly understand and absorb? If the figure of Job is to be the basis of a new departure—and how dangerous a venture this is!—one would not be unreasonable in expecting that the Job of prosperity in the dramatic adaptation would be marked by depth of character, skill and command in giving point to thought. But this is simply not the case. The J.B. of MacLeish is a rather simple overdrawn Main Street type, so pale as to be invisible at noon...

But it is in such a man, we are told, that the great *metanoia* occurs. Adversity is to fashion him into a gentle, unwearying heart, against which ill-fortune will beat in vain. He will perceive the hand of the living God in every setback, and tell, again and again as ruin accumulates, of the struggle that shakes his heart, and of the vivid, virile faith that creates its dawn at the end of pilgrimage.

Now in the Book of Job this process is dramatically credible. The formula is from life: simply, radical greatness will achieve its stature in adversity. And so it happens. There is no phony seeking after "answers"; the mystery of suffering is inviolate at the end as it was at the beginning. It has, however, been assimilated again to the

greatness of man's faith; and assimilated precisely *qua* mystery: "even though he should destroy me, yet will I trust in him." It is for this the Book of Job will always be relevant, as long as man's life deserves the name human. It traces in the darkness, with a groping, anguished love, the outlines of man's plight; and in darkness it concludes in the presence of the same mystery that appears in the theophany of the burning bush....

To say that the height and breadth of this theme is foreign to the play of MacLeish is to choose merciful understatement. Here the protagonist is transformed, without so much as a footnote to explain how, from a publican of suburbia to a preacher of the word; but of evidence that his word proceeds by way of a human being, there is little. And the last section, abandoning the noble original structure of debate and nightlong wrestling with God, succumbs to the fatal temptation of every dramatist who has failed to distinguish form from matter: he has untied the knot. In forcing what God has joined, the whole tense, close fabric of argument and action rots away in his hands.

But score one for MacLeish for his courage, ingenuity and sense of his time—and now and then, for a dazzling peripheral success. The chorus of women who surround Job in the darkness is raffish and real; and with what astounding rightness, sometimes, a line or sentence will issue as though from the heroic lips of the Great Book. One is teased out of thought: almost, he heard the summons of creation.

—Daniel Berrigan, S.J., Oct. 4, 1958

Remember What He Said

Readings: Acts 10:34-43, Ps 118, Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6-8, Lk 24:1-12 or Jn 20:1-9

Luke wrote his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, in part, to encourage his readers to find evidence that Christ was still alive and at work in the world. Jesus' own ministry reached its climax in the resurrection. It continued after his ascension in the explosive growth that the apostles led with boldness in the Spirit. In Luke's thinking, God had sent the Son specifically to reveal the resurrection so that humanity could live without fear of death.

This message was sorely needed in Jesus' day. Although no one would call Jesus' world secular in the modern sense, the Greco-Roman world had some of the same "disenchanted" aspects as does our own contemporary life. Although religious belief was widespread, Hellenistic thought also produced more atheistic literature than any other Western culture before our own. For many at that time, belief in and service to the gods was a requirement of holidays and sacred seasons or the ceremonies of family and nation. Very little literature of the day speaks of religious obligations arising from personal piety or spiritual development.

Jews were an obvious exception to this. One of their responses to the corrosive influence of Greco-Roman culture was the development of intense devotion. Many Jews recognized in each fulfillment of the Mosaic law an opportunity to encounter God's own wisdom. Each commandment was an invitation to divine communion. Christians with backgrounds in this kind of Jewish piety had a comparatively easy time finding Christ's presence. The implications of the resurrection made intuitive sense to them.

Greco-Roman converts in Luke's community, lacking such piety, experienced greater difficulty. Luke's account in this Sunday's Gospel passage shows one way he taught them to find Christ. A moment of wonder for the women—seeing the empty tomb—led to a moment of interpretation by the men in dazzling garments, who reminded the women of Jesus' own teaching. The combination of their experience at the tomb with their recollection of the message of Jesus stirred belief in the women, who then went and announced what they had seen. The wonder would have made no sense

'Then they returned from the tomb and announced all these things.' (Lk 24:9)

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

How has the risen Christ appeared to you?

How can you help others understand Christ's presence?

without Jesus' own words to interpret it. The angels first, and then the women, played a critical role in bringing the apostles, and every subsequent Christian, to belief. This is the lesson Luke taught his Greco-Roman readers.

We are those messengers today. We bring the good news that Christ is alive and still at work in the life of every person. So many of our brothers and sisters have become numb to the evidence all around them that Christ is alive and active. With no interpreters to help make sense of the signs of Christ's presence, the significance of these moments slips by, and the anxieties of everyday life eventually drown them out.

One of Luke's favorite motifs is the arrival of the divine in the midst of the everyday. Angels sing to shepherds tending their flocks, a miraculous catch turns fishermen into apostles, and a tax collector meets Jesus at his customs post. A messenger is always necessary to bring transformation out of a moment of wonder. We must be that voice, showing all that Jesus Christ is still alive and at work among us.

Michael Simone, S.J., teaches Scripture at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.

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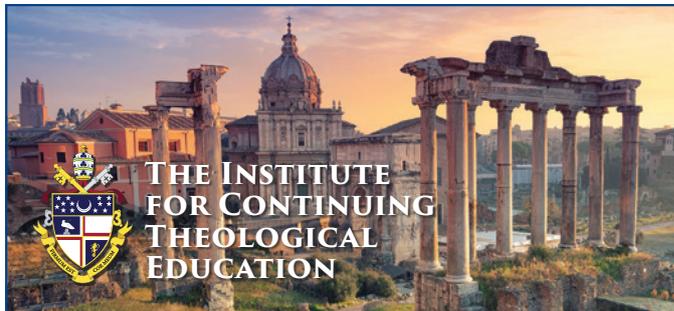
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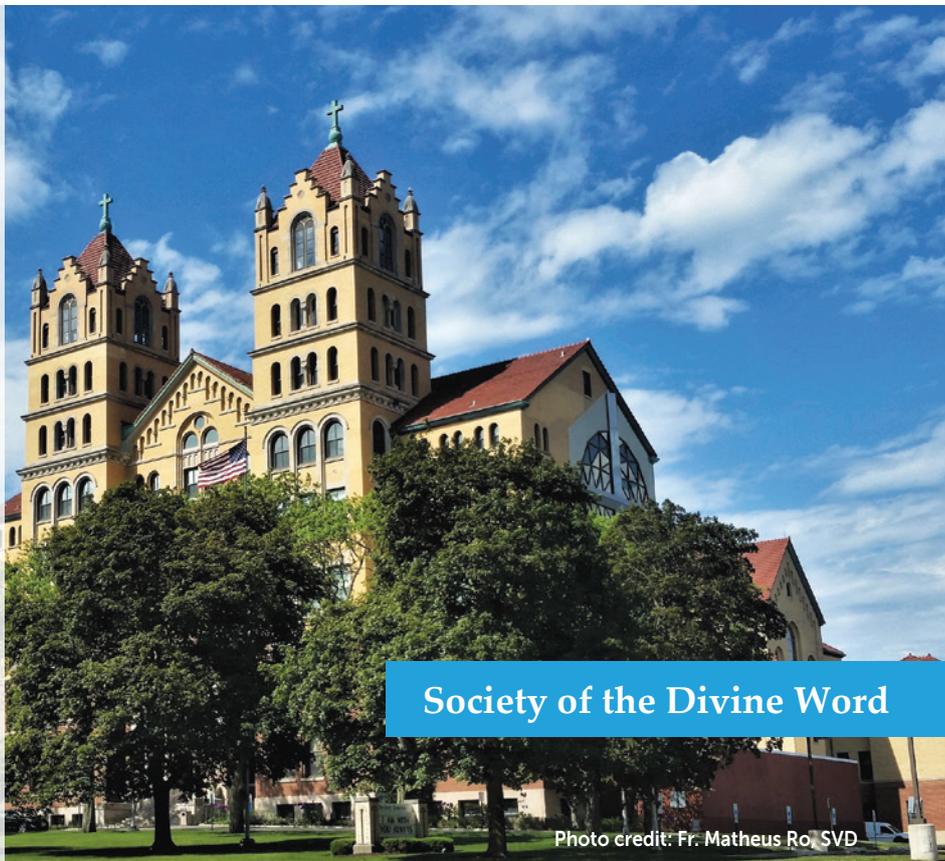
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The Power of Mercy

Readings: Acts 5:12-16, Ps 118, Rev 1:9-19, Jn 20:19-31

I remember as a child watching the Super Bowl on television with my grandfather. The camera panned the crowd, and we saw a man with a poster reading “John 3:16.” When we looked up the passage, we read, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.” My grandfather thought it odd that someone would bring such a poster to the Super Bowl, and at the time I agreed with him. Why that verse?

I now realize the importance of that passage. John 3:16 is the thesis statement of John’s entire Gospel, explaining in one brief phrase the whole of salvation history. For John, the incarnate Son was God’s greatest act of mercy. God had forgiven humanity many times, but in Jesus, the human race received a complete and unmerited reconciliation to the divine. Those who believed in Jesus, and lived as he lived, received a portion of the very Spirit he shared with the Father. The Spirit would carry them past death and bring them to eternal life with God.

The church celebrates divine mercy on the Second Sunday of Easter in part because this Sunday’s Gospel re-

‘As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ (Jn 20:21)

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

How has God shown mercy to you?

How has that mercy healed the damage caused by sin in your life?

To whom has God sent you with the gift of mercy?

What evil can you fight in the power of Christ’s Spirit?

counts Jesus’ gift of the Spirit to his disciples. He gave it along with a mission to forgive sins. The church exercises this gift especially in the sacraments of baptism and reconciliation, but these sacraments are not the only source of divine mercy. God’s forgiveness has cosmic scope, as an insight from Raymond Brown, S.S., reminds us: “These [baptism and penance] are but partial manifestations of a much larger power, namely, the power to isolate, repel and negate evil and sin” (*The Gospel of John, XIII-XXI*). The gift and mission Jesus gave in this Sunday’s Gospel entails a struggle to isolate, repel and negate evil and sin.

Every act of forgiveness is thus a battle against evil, a battle that one can hope to engage and win only in the power of the Spirit. Christ also warned his disciples that they held the authority to “retain” sins. Although his precise meaning remains unclear, his words might have been intended to warn them against withholding forgiveness. Vengeance, retribution and pitiless justice only amplify the power of sin, as the bearer of each new grudge acts in ways that inspire ever more hate. In the very act of offering this warning, Jesus forgave his disciples for abandoning him and sent them out into the world not to avenge his death but to preach divine mercy, even to his killers. What sins could his disciple “retain” in the light of such an example?

Christ’s disciples today continue the Father’s mission of mercy. Too many of our brothers and sisters have lost themselves to hate, evil and sin. Our commitment to forgiveness and mercy is part of God’s plan to save them. “For God so loved the world that he sent his Son’s disciples so that whoever should believe in Jesus Christ through them might not perish but have eternal life.”

Michael Simone, S.J., teaches Scripture at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.

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The Press and Editorial Policy

What is the role of the Catholic journalist?

By Thurston N. Davis | Nov. 19, 1955



Thurston N. Davis, S.J., was the eighth editor in chief of America (1955–68). During his tenure the magazine covered the Second Vatican Council and the cultural earthquakes of the 1960s, among many other events and subjects.

“Often the utterance is made that we are a bound people, that we are dictated to. Only the truth dictates to us. There is no greater power than that.” James Francis Cardinal McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles, said this to a Pacific Coast regional meeting of the Catholic Press Association on Oct. 31 in Los Angeles.

The Cardinal encouraged Catholic editors to exercise greater fortitude in their editorial policies. The Catholic press, he said, “cannot be neutral.” Editors “must have a policy. We do not admit of neutrality.” That policy, he continued, must invoke the virtue of fortitude and couple it with temperance and charity.

Bishop Robert J. Dwyer of Reno, himself a columnist in the Nevada Register, spoke on the same occasion of the responsibilities of Catholic editors. If an editor is by nature a liberal, he said, he must strive to penetrate the illiberality of much that passes for liberalism. If, on the other hand, an editor is by bent a conservative, he should school himself to identify what is faulty and ex-

traneous in conservative programs. “Liberalism pursued and defended at all costs, as well as conservatism glorified into a permanent thesis of Christian dogma,” are equally to be avoided.

How wide should the concerns of the Catholic journalist be? Bishop Joseph McShea, Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia, answered this in an address he gave Nov. 4 in Philadelphia to the Eastern regional meeting of the same association. The Church, he said, has “at least a potential interest in everything that affects or touches the human personality and the salvation of souls.” The Catholic press should mirror these world-ranging interests.

At times there is a wide diversity of views reflected in the Catholic press—not, of course, in matters of faith or morality—but in questions of opinion that come within the wide area of the Church’s solicitude for man. Sometimes the reader of the Catholic press is puzzled by the fact that the editorial opinions he reads are expressed in very tentative, not final and infallible, form. Sometimes one paper contradicts another.

It is well to remember that today’s problems are varied and complicated. Those who look for simple, unqualified answers from the papers they read could profitably recall what Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop

of Chicago, said to the Catholic Press Association in May, 1954 in Chicago:

We don’t want to make every statement in a Catholic newspaper, even in the so-called official diocesan newspaper, an authoritative statement. Always we leave a lot of liberty to the press in expressing its opinions and convictions, and always we are ready to present both sides of a debatable question.

In fact, the Chicago Cardinal went on to say, there is no question but that the Catholic press would be more effective “if it engaged a little more in controversy on debatable subjects.”

By a mandate from the successors of the apostles, Catholic editors share in the teaching mission of the Church. It is a sacred trust, carrying many responsibilities. It would certainly be out of place for them to insist on what Cardinal Stritch has called an “unfortunate uniformity” in matters which the Church herself considers to be still under debate.

These directions from the hierarchy are valuable guidelines for Catholic editors. It would do no harm for all of us frequently to repeat to ourselves the words of Cardinal McIntyre: “You have a potential power that I fear is not being realized.”

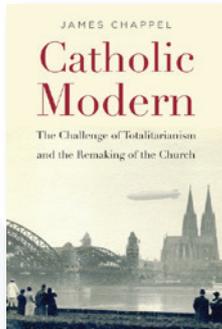
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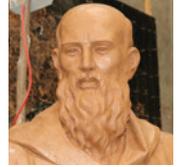
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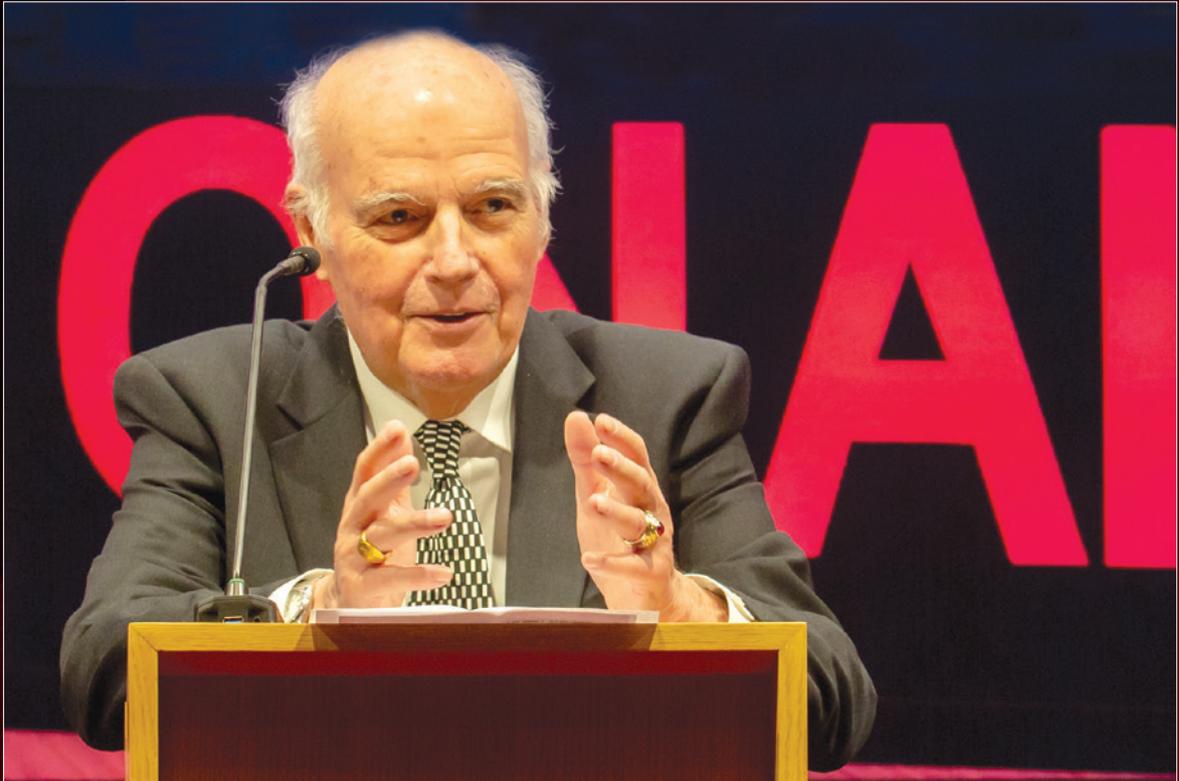
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On March 24th, 2019 the directors, benefactors, editors and friends of America Media gathered to recognize William J. Loschert, a director of America Media and alumnus of Fordham University's Gabelli School of Business (Class of 1961) and to dedicate the production studio in honor of his generous support of America Media.

With millions of video views and hundreds of thousands of podcast downloads each year, now more than ever Mr. Loschert's generosity supports the ministry of America Media as we lead the conversation about faith and culture. In addition,

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