

America

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The Battle's O'er

Brother Joe Hoover, S.J., offers something in this issue that Jesuit brothers (but not always Jesuit fathers) are well-known for: truly helpful, practical information. He avoids the cliché “I hate to burst your bubble,” mainly because he so obviously doesn't. Instead, he's happy to tell us that the church is not in the midst of a civil war, unless you count the enervating toxicity that sometimes passes for discourse among the chattering elites on social media.

But the church is more than those folks, though it includes them; more than the bishops, theologians and the Catholic twitterazzi. A great deal more, in fact; on a magnitude of millions more. Not to beat a dead horse, but as I've often said in this column, the most important question we face today is not ethical, as our debate might suggest, but ecclesiological. Who do we mean when we say “the church”?

I ventured a response to that question in a recent column, which was well received, even if it was a tad esoteric. So I thought I'd try again, this time working from the bottom up, rather than the top down. Another reason it makes sense to talk about it this way is that in our hierarchical church, it is frequently, though not always or exclusively, the folks in the lower end of the hierarchy who appear closest to the Lord, as far as this can be discerned by outward appearances. (At the same time, it's hard to fake holiness or joy, so outward appearances do count for something.)

To wit: As I write this column, I am on a bus escorting 30 or so of your fellow **America** readers on a pilgrimage through northern Spain in the footsteps of St. Ignatius Loyola, the lead

singer and driver of the Winnebago that was the 16th-century Society of Jesus. I love this annual trip. Ignatius is one of the great saints of all time and the experience of walking in his footsteps, in one of the most beautiful places on earth, never gets old.

But another part of what makes this place so special is the people you meet along the way, folks like the Franciscan brother who is the keeper of the keys at the ancient mountaintop shrine of Our Lady of Arantzazu in Guipuzcoa. Brother Antonio has the keys to the basilica. Well, he has one key, to be precise, for it opens every door.

Every day Brother Antonio leads pilgrims like us up 46 steps to a turnstile situated behind the main altar. Once there, he presses a button and the turnstile swivels and reveals the statue of our lady, about eight inches high, which mysteriously appeared amid the thorns on the mountainside some 500 years ago and has been an object of veneration ever since. St. Ignatius, Brother Antonio tells us, climbed this mountain and venerated Our Lady's statue, choosing the occasion to renew his vow of chastity.

That's impressive, but equally impressive is the figure of Brother Antonio himself. As the turnstile creaks round and exposes the statue, a broad smile comes to his face, as if he is seeing it for the first time. His eyes then quickly scan our faces, eager to see our reactions. All of this is really remarkable when one considers that Brother Antonio has been doing this same exact thing several times a day for 68 years. He arrived here at the age of 18 and has never left. Now, at the age of 86, he ascends the stairs at a slower clip, but with just as much pi-

ous humility and joy as if he were still a young man. When I asked yesterday what his favorite part of the statue was, he simply answered in Basque: “I could never choose. All of it is beautiful. She is beautiful. Like our mother, the church.”

Beautiful. Like Brother Antonio too. What is the church? Wrong question. Who is the church? The right question. And the answer is that the church is people like him, whose quiet faithfulness is, in fact, the silent though determined and constant shuffle of the church in her earthly pilgrimage.

Another way of putting this? When Jesus promised us that the gates of hell would not prevail against us, he wasn't just saying that his life, death and resurrection were the guarantee of that promise (though they are). He was also saying that the gates of hell will not prevail because he would send us people like Brother Antonio, through whom, in a special way, the Lord is with us to the end of the age.

Thus, hope still lives. In the end, there is no civil war in the church because Jesus Christ has already won the only war worth fighting, the final battle between good and evil. That's important to remember, especially now. And Brother Antonio, the keeper of the keys of our Lady of Arantzazu, is a testament to that joy-filled, hopeful, simple fact.

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



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CNS photo/José Cabezas, Reuters

A ceremony at Gerardo Barrios Square in San Salvador, El Salvador, Oct. 14, held as Pope Francis celebrated the canonization Mass for St. Oscar Romero and six other new saints at the Vatican.

Cover image: iStock/ America

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What should the church do to reach out to young people (ages 16 to 29)?

When asked what the church can do to reach out to young people, respondents told us that faith sharing groups and service opportunities should be priorities for the church.

In support of service opportunities, Jennifer Snider of Richmond, Va., told **America**: “The church should provide opportunities for young people to live out their faith in the world, not just keep it in a building during class or Mass.”

Marcus Mescher of Cincinnati, Ohio advocated for faith sharing groups. “Masses for young people divide the body of Christ. But faith sharing groups bring young people together to share their hopes and dreams, their questions and insights,” wrote Mr. Mescher. In faith sharing groups, he said, young people “can discover they are not alone in what they most deeply desire and find others to foster communities of agreement and accountability. They can be empowered to take responsibility for bringing others into the group and lead it forward in making connections with liturgy, service and other outreach efforts.”

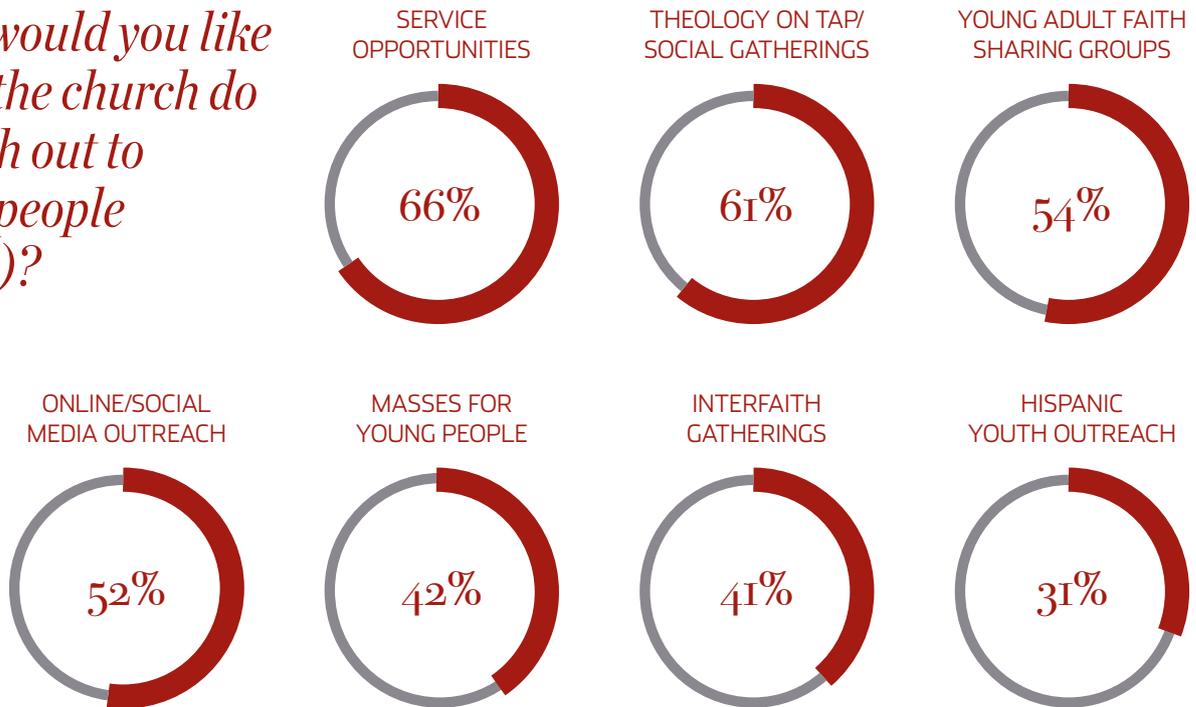
Some respondents specified that they would like efforts directed at people in their 20s. “In my experience, if

a parish has any sort of faith sharing or outreach that isn’t geared toward people age 35 or older, it’s geared toward kids and teenagers,” wrote Erik Raessler of Maybrook, N.Y. “There’s a gaping hole in the church where young adults should be. I’m 26, and there’s no one active in my parish near my age in either direction.”

Hannah Beeler of Eagle River, Wis., told **America** that her diocese’s Theology on Tap events had been a constructive space to build community. “I look forward to our Theology on Tap events every month. It is great to know there are others like me in the area who face similar challenges, and it’s nice to discuss the topics that we choose. I’ve met some wonderful people!”

On the other hand, some respondents felt that when events were the only outreach to young people, they could, in fact, be excluded from the rest of the church community. “Enough with the young adult events,” said Robert Shine of Boston, Mass. “Some space apart is good and healthy for every group, but parishes need to mainstream young adults. We’re not the future of the church; we are the church today.”

What would you like to see the church do to reach out to young people (16-29)?



These results are based on reader responses to a poll promoted on Facebook, Twitter and in our email newsletter. Because of rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Leaving After Five Decades

Re “The Republican Divide,” by John P. Langan, S.J. (10/15): My husband and I were G.O.P. voters for five decades, but once the Republicans nominated and supported a candidate as amoral, vulgar, vindictive and bigoted as Donald J. Trump, we were out. We are not the only people in our circle who left the G.O.P. over their sudden veer to the extreme right. We are still registered as Republicans but will never vote for them in a general election. Instead, we will vote in the G.O.P. primaries for the least amoral, far-right G.O.P. candidate.
Dolores Pap

Mary’s Youth

Re “The First Disciple,” by Leonard DeLorenzo (10/15): This article provides beautiful and rich insights on Mary’s relevance to youth. I would also mention the connection between Mary’s own youth at the time of the annunciation. She accepted her responsibility for bringing Christ to the world when she was at the age of the youth attending the synod. With her help, they can bring the Lord to others, too.
Rhett Segall

The Power to Change

Re “He Worked With Law, McCarrick and Viganò. Here’s What He Learned,” by John Carr (10/15): With Mr. Carr’s eighth point about silence, he hit the nail on the head. Everywhere the sexual abuse crisis was characterized by silence: the silence of those who abused, the silence of those who knew but said nothing, the silence of the laity who refused to believe their own sons and daughters because they could not handle the truth. Everyone has the power to listen, to learn, to change.

Sheila Gray

Involve Parents, Involve Women

Involve parents, yes. And not just fathers who have connections to those in power. Mothers need to be heard. Whatever the gender ratio is of those attending Mass, that should be represented on any committee deciding matters of abuse. We tried addressing this crisis with celibate men making decisions. Now it is time to let the women of the church decide who has access to their children and to their pulpits.

Joan Knothe

A Deserving Saint

Re “The Making of ‘Romero,’ by Jim McDermott. S.J. (10/15): I saw this movie in my social justice class at my Catholic high school. It left a profound impression on me, and I remember wondering at the end why Romero was not yet a saint. I was so happy to learn that he would finally be canonized. I’ve said it before, and I’ll say it again: If anyone deserves to be a saint, it is Óscar Romero. His legacy lives on in more ways than one.

Sarah Dee

Arrive as Tourists, Leave as Pilgrims

While catching up on my reading, I was happily surprised to see the article “San Xavier del Bac: A Shrine Without Borders,” by Gina Franco and Christopher Poore (10/1). The married conservators interviewed, Tim and Matilde, are friends and give great care to the mission and the people who visit.

The authors captured the spirit of a sacred place with 300 years of history. In this era of contemplating walls or bridges, the arms-wide-open hospitality at San Xavier every day of the year is refreshing. Folks from all over the United States and all over the world come to visit. Many people come as tourists but leave as pilgrims after encountering the beauty of the mission and its artwork.

David Buer, O.F.M.

Elfrida, Ariz.

Living the Gospel

Re “Why Stay?” by Matt Malone, S.J. (Of Many Things 9/17): Thank you for your news coverage and editorial responses to this crisis of abuse in our church. The U.S. church and U.S. political parties have never looked or behaved more alike than they have at this moment. The church’s scandals are mirrored sharply in the scandal that is the American government. They share precisely the same values: power, fear and self-protection over service to the people.

What if we began a conversation with the question: How are men living out the Gospel message? What do those behaviors look like? If we can know a little more, we might discover what it means for us to serve men and contribute to the desperately needed change.

Karen Kelly

San Francisco, Calif.

Comments drawn from our website, americamagazine.org, and America Media’s social media platforms.

Letters to the editor can be sent to letters@americamedia.org. Please include the article title, author and issue date, as well as your name and where you are writing from.

Global Warming, Here and Now

On Oct. 7, a United Nations panel studying global warming abandoned the idea that we still have time to talk about the issue in cautious, “What if?” language. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a grim report projecting food shortages, frequent wildfires, the extinction of coral reefs and other forms of environmental catastrophe by 2040, as the atmosphere warms up to 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit above what it was at the start of the Industrial Revolution. The only way to prevent such a scenario, the authors write, is to sharply reduce greenhouse gas emissions—cutting 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030—through a transformation of human society that has “no documented historic precedent.”

A deputy press secretary for the White House responded by telling *The New York Times* that the United States is “leading the world” in cutting greenhouse gas emissions—by 14 percent between 2005 and 2017—as they rose by 21 percent globally during the same period.

This is the wrong way to talk about the problem. We are beyond the point where doing better than other nations is enough, and the United States should not shift the blame for climate change to countries that are trying to raise their standards of living to what Americans would still define as poverty level. International cooperation is needed now, beyond the provisions of the Paris climate accord that the new

report reveals as inadequate.

Moralizing and shaming have not spurred behavior change at the scale needed to make a significant difference. The global community must instead develop a positive agenda, based on discernment of “the meaning of the economy and its goals with an eye to correcting its malfunctions and misapplications,” as Pope Benedict said in his World Day of Peace address in 2010 (No. 5).

A massive shift from fossil fuels to sustainable energy sources needs to be driven as much by innovation and opportunity as by policies that penalize carbon emissions. It should also include intensive reforestation and the investigation of technology to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, even if that technology is not yet viable; we cannot predict where serious research will take us.

The advances made in wind energy over the last decades—it now produces 43 percent of all electricity in Denmark and 37 percent of all electricity in the state of Iowa—suggest how much potential remains to be realized in finding new ways to power the world.

This agenda is not a certain drag on the economy, as some who benefit from current fuel-burning practices would have us believe. The Global Commission on Economy and Climate, an international partnership of research institutes, estimates in its recent report “The New Climate Econ-

omy” that a “low-carbon, sustainable growth path could deliver a direct economic gain of \$26 trillion through to 2030,” compared with current practices. A shift to sustainability that would include new economic activity in developing nations, rather than a strategy that simply rests on a sudden deceleration of energy consumption, would also fit what Francis calls “an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature” (“*Laudato Si*,” No. 139).

A positive approach may initially seem naïve. But one precedent is the Green Revolution that dramatically increased crop yields and food production beginning in the 1960s. The Green Revolution caused social upheaval and had its negative effects—such as an increased use of pesticides—but it put an end to doomsday predictions that a growing population was fast sending the planet into a period of mass starvation. A fatalistic attitude, which led many to embrace population-control policies that turned out to be counterproductive to economic growth, was unwarranted then, and it is not the proper response to climate change now.

Political reality demands something to work toward, not only a horror to avoid. The world needs to invest in a sustainable future—with new technologies and economic incentives for them—just as much as it needs to reduce the causes of climate change.

Walking Together at the Synod

It is fitting that the canonization of Pope Paul VI was celebrated in Rome, in the midst of the meeting of the

Synod of Bishops on young people, because Paul VI was known as the “pope of synodality.” He established

the consultative body in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, so that the pope and the ever-sclerotic Roman

Curia could “make ever greater use of the bishops’ assistance in providing for the good of the universal Church.”

For U.S. Catholics, every synod is also a valuable reminder—and corrective—that it is not all about us: The universal church is not always focused on our particular concerns, burdens or joys. For example, a number of U.S. bishops had called last month for the synod, a worldwide gathering, to be canceled because of further revelations of the depths of our own sex abuse crisis. Presumably the actual workings of the synod since then have been a sharp reminder that we are but a small part of a larger body and that we can learn much if we are willing to stop talking. As Pope Francis noted in his opening address on Oct. 3, courage in speaking is needed—but so is “humility in listening.”

While some of the working practices of this synod—for example, the unnecessary exclusion of women delegates from voting—have come in for much-deserved criticism, a number of public interventions have focused on issues the U.S. church would do well to consider: the disinterest of huge swaths of Catholic youth; the alienation of large numbers of women; a vocations crisis now entering its fifth decade; suffocating clerical cultures and all the sins they harbor and promote. In the face of these realities, the global participants in the synod clearly seek to establish a culture of encounter rather than one of retreat, one of invitation rather than rebuke. St. Paul VI, pray for them and for us.

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Five ways to safeguard children everywhere

In 2002 I assisted the U.S. bishops' committee on the drafting of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," also known as the Dallas Charter. Data from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University suggests that the number of abuse cases in the Catholic Church in the United States has plummeted. The church's prevention efforts, including the Dallas Charter, are working.

Nevertheless, other grand juries investigating sexual abuse claims will be impaneled like the one in Pennsylvania. They will spend millions and also come up with lists of dead and defrocked priests. Wouldn't it be better for the protection of children if this money were spent on the education and prevention of child abuse throughout the United States?

If we make protecting children our most important priority, we must emphasize the following:

- Require all Americans who work with minors to go through a child safety program. This program would define proper boundaries with minors, as well as how to identify grooming behaviors that signal possible problems to other adults. In the Catholic Church, over six million Americans have undergone such training. But what about the other 240 million adults? A U.S. Department of Education study in 2004 suggested that "more than 4.5 million students are subject to sexual misconduct by an employee of a school sometime between kindergarten and 12th grade." Those working in schools and day care centers, as well as health care workers and others, ought to be required to attend child safety training.

- Require background checks and human formation of all child care workers. A study from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice found that seminaries with strong human formation programs had fewer graduate priests who molested minors. In addition, the Dallas Charter requires all who minister to minors to go through background checks. Learning from this, U.S. states should also come up with a list of jobs that require background checks and more intensive personal training.

- Adopt a zero-tolerance policy for all jobs directly involving minors. Once someone has sexually abused a minor, he or she should permanently lose the privilege of working with minors in any capacity, anywhere in the United States. In 2002 the U.S. bishops committed themselves to a zero-tolerance policy, and no one, including a priest, who has abused a minor will ever minister again.

- Abolish any statute of limitations on the criminal prosecution of offenders and invest more money in resources to investigate and prosecute these crimes. Because civil authorities prosecute so few of them, the Catholic Church is obliged to investigate and determine the guilt or innocence of its own members. The church is not equipped nor is it appropriate for a religious organization to prosecute these crimes. A civil court should determine if a priest is guilty. The government is shirking its duty in this regard.

- Catholic dioceses and any organizations where abuse has occurred should financially compensate victims. While statutes of limitations for civil suits have typically expired by the time victims come forward, all

child care organizations should come up with a just compensation package for the victims under their care. If the government opens a window for civil suits no matter how long ago the abuse occurred, that window should apply to all organizations. Better still are the Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Programs implemented by some New York dioceses that gives all financial compensation directly to victims (instead of 40 percent going to attorneys in civil suits).

Pope Benedict called sexual abuse of children "filth," and Pope Francis likened a priest abusing a minor to a "black Mass." But words are not enough. We know essentially what works in protecting children, including mandatory reporting (also included in the Dallas Charter) and the steps outlined above. These steps must be implemented wherever children are cared for.

The frozen narrative since 2002 is that the bishops in the United States have done nothing but move perpetrators from one ministry to another. In reality, the Catholic Church in the United States is far ahead of most other organizations.

But most abuse takes place in homes and in our neighborhoods. It is time that these steps be adopted everywhere. The Lord, who declared that his kingdom belonged to little ones, expects this of us. And it is a deep truth lodged in the heart of every parent: "Who are we if we can't protect them?"

Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti, a licensed psychologist, teaches pastoral studies at the Catholic University of America. He is a priest of the Diocese of Syracuse and in 2016 was named a consultant to the Holy See's Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.



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Cardinal Wuerl resigns, stresses church unity

By Gerard O'Connell

Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Cardinal Donald Wuerl, the archbishop of Washington, D.C., the Vatican announced on Oct. 12. The Archdiocese of Washington later released a letter from the pope to the cardinal in which he asked him to remain as “apostolic administrator” until his successor is appointed.

Pope Francis wrote that the cardinal’s request on Sept. 21 that his resignation be accepted “rests on two pillars that have marked and continue to mark your ministry: to seek in all things the glory of God and to procure the good of the people entrusted to your care.”

Pope Francis said he recognized in the cardinal’s request “the heart of the shepherd who, by widening his vision to recognize a greater good that can benefit the whole body, prioritizes actions that support, stimulate and make the unity and the mission of the church grow above every kind of sterile division sown by the father of lies who, trying to hurt the shepherd, wants nothing more than the sheep to be dispersed (cf. Matt. 26-31).”

Then in what appears to be a reference to the Pennsylvania grand jury report that faulted Cardinal Wuerl’s handling of some sexual abuse cases when he was bishop of Pittsburgh from 1988 to 2006, Pope Francis told the cardinal, “You have sufficient elements to ‘justify’ your actions and distinguish between what it means to cover up crimes or not to deal with problems, and to commit some mistakes.”

In an interview with **America** on Oct. 11, Cardinal Wuerl said, “What is important now is to be able to move beyond the questions of doubt, fallibility and not concentrating on myself but helping this church to get to a new place.”

Commenting on the pope’s letter, Cardinal Wuerl said that it “highlights what is so important to me, namely that the shepherd’s first responsibility is to his flock, is to the people entrusted to his pastoral care, and that the unity of the flock is so important.”

“I felt that my ability to serve that unity would have required concentrating on a defense of myself and of my ac-

◀ Cardinal Donald Wuerl speaks with Pope Francis after Mass in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on Sept. 23, 2015.

tions, and that would, I believe, have taken us in the wrong direction rather than trying to do the healing and unity as quickly as possible. That's why I asked the Holy Father to accept my resignation so that a new and fresh leadership did not have to deal with these other issues."

In his letter, Pope Francis appeared to believe that while the cardinal committed "some mistakes," he did not engage in "cover-up."

When asked if that was how he saw it, too, the cardinal said that he made "errors of judgment" that he regrets "when we were dealing with all those cases before the Dallas Charter." He said, "Some of those errors in judgment were based on professional psychological evaluations, some of the errors were based on moving too slowly as we tried to find some verification of the allegations."

He added, "I think it is also worth noting that all those priests who were faced with allegations in my time there, if there was any substantiation for them, they were removed from any ministry that would put them in contact with young people."

He said that "a careful reading of the [Pennsylvania grand jury] report and the Diocese of Pittsburgh's response...shows that I acted in a very responsible way to remove predator priests."

But the pope's letter also drew strong criticism from some for failing to appreciate the level of anger in the United States around the sexual abuse crisis. Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro told The Associated Press that it was "unacceptable" that then-Bishop Wuerl "oversaw and participated in the systematic cover-up that he did when leading the Pittsburgh Diocese and that he is now able to retire seemingly with no consequences for his actions." Mr. Shapiro added, "We can't rely on the church to fix itself."

Cardinal Wuerl also discussed his career in Pittsburgh and Washington, the scandal surrounding the treatment of former cardinal Theodore McCarrick and the accusations leveled against him and the pope by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò and Cardinal Marc Ouellet's response to them.

In his letter of Aug. 25, Archbishop Viganò attacked Pope Francis for allegedly covering up allegations of abuse against Archbishop McCarrick and accused him of lifting

sanctions that Benedict XVI had imposed on the former cardinal. Archbishop Viganò also accused Cardinal Wuerl of not enforcing those sanctions.

On Oct. 7, Cardinal Marc Ouellet, the prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, responded in an open letter to Archbishop Viganò and, addressing the question of sanctions, wrote, "I conclude that the accusation is a political plot devoid of real foundation that could incriminate the pope and has profoundly wounded the communion of the church."

Speaking about Archbishop Viganò's letter, Cardinal Wuerl commented: "In my read of [the] testimony, particularly the part that touches me, it is not faithful to the facts. There can be reasons for that, and I think Cardinal Ouellet is touching on what may be the primary one. In his testimony, Archbishop Viganò clearly says that there were secret sanctions in some form.

"But he also says himself that he never communicated them to me. Yet this should have been his duty. I find it difficult to accept his version that holds me responsible for implementing something he never passed on or his gratuitous insult that I must be a liar when I say that I never received these secret sanctions."

He added: "Certainly I would never have guessed that there were sanctions against Cardinal McCarrick from all the times I encountered him at receptions and events hosted by Archbishop Viganò at the Apostolic Nunciature. The gap between what he says and what he did and his easy calumny call into question for me the real intent and purpose of his letter."

Despite its many recent troubles, Cardinal Wuerl said he still sees signs of hope in the church in the United States. "What I am seeing is the awakening of the commitment of everybody to look at [the abuse scandal], to do what is necessary to heal it and to root it out," he said.

"Remember we have made big progress," he added. "Now take a look at how we, as a hierarchy, are ensuring accountability for our actions."

Gerard O'Connell, *Vatican correspondent.*

Twitter: @gerryrome.

With additional reporting from *The Associated Press.*

Catholics cite God, not homilies, as reason for attending church

Compared with other Christians in the United States, Catholics are more likely to attend church to please other family members—and are significantly less likely to go because they “find the sermons valuable.” Those were among the findings of a Pew Research Center poll released in August. Pew interviewed 4,729 U.S. adults, including 844 self-identified Catholics, last December to find out why they regularly attended church or stayed away.

Among those who rarely attend church, 37 percent of all adults and 47 percent of Catholics chose “I practice my faith in other ways” as a “very important” reason they did not attend church. Only 28 percent cited a lack of belief in religion as an important reason; nonbelievers were disproportionately young, male and highly educated, and they identified more with the Democratic Party. Protestants were more likely than Catholics to say, “I haven’t found a church I like,” and people under 30 were most likely to say they “don’t have the time” to attend.

Most adults who attended church at least monthly chose “to become closer to God” as an important reason, but Catholics were much less likely than other Christian groups to say, “I find the sermons valuable.” Men were more likely than women to say they attended church to please spouses or family members (22 percent versus 12 percent). Among age groups, those under 30 were most likely to say they attended church to “socialize” (30 percent) and least likely to say they went to be part of a community of faith (52 percent).

Adults under 30 who regularly attended church were also the least likely to say they often experienced “a sense of God’s presence” there (63 percent versus more than 80 percent for other age groups). However, older groups were more likely to say they attend “for comfort in times of trouble”; it may be the case that life experience strengthens belief and creates an openness to spirituality.

Robert Sullivan, *associate editor*. Twitter: @robertdsullivan.

WHY STAY HOME? WHY GO TO CHURCH?

“Very important” reasons for not attending church, among U.S. adults who attend religious services a few times a year or less ▶▶

Among Christian groups, Catholics are most likely to cite:

- ▶ Practice faith in other ways
- ▶ Don’t like the sermons
- ▶ Don’t have the time
- ▶ Health or difficulty getting around

	All U.S. Adults	Catholic	Evangelical Protestant	Mainline Protestant	Unaffiliated
I practice my faith in other ways	37	47	46	39	26
I am not a believer	28	12	11	5	46
I haven't found a house of worship I like	23	19	33	33	16
I don't like the sermons	18	17	12	10	20
I don't feel welcome	14	14	11	17	14
I don't have the time	12	19	13	12	9
Difficulty getting around	9	16	13	9	4
No church for my religion in my area	7	10	10	3	3

“Very important” reasons for attending church, among U.S. adults who attend religious services at least once a month ▶▶▶

Among Christian groups, Catholics are most likely to cite:

- ▶ To continue family traditions
- ▶ To please family/spouse/partner

Among Christian groups, Catholics are least likely to cite:

- ▶ To become closer to God
- ▶ Valuable sermons
- ▶ To be part of a community of faith

	Catholic	Evangelical Protestant	Mainline Protestant	Historically Black
To become closer to God	75	90	77	89
To make me a better person	63	70	56	85
For comfort in times of trouble	60	69	58	79
I find the sermons valuable	36	76	54	72
Feel religious obligation	35	30	17	42
So my children will have moral foundation	69	75	59	75
To continue family traditions	44	36	32	36
To please family/spouse/partner	22	13	13	15
To be part of community of faith	46	67	54	65
To meet new people/socialize	19	20	15	18

Source: “Why Americans Go (and Don’t Go) to Religious Services,” Aug. 1, Pew Research Center. The margin of error was 3.7 points among non-attenders, 3.0 points among regular church attenders and 7.8 points among Catholics. Both non-attenders and attenders were divided into religious groups, including Protestant denominations that have historically had mostly black congregations, by self-identification. Because respondents could give multiple answers, column totals in the above charts add up to more than 100.



Kevin Clarke

In Iraq, Yazidi suffering continues years after ISIS attack

Four years after escaping ISIS, the struggle continues for this Yazidi family in northern Iraq.

It did not take long for me to feel the eyes of this exhausted father of eight boring through me as he endured the usual introductions when I entered what has been his thoroughly makeshift home, a place of stifling refuge since he and his family escaped from ISIS into the Sinjar Mountains in Kurdistan in August 2014.

More than four years later he smolders in this camp, fed up with answering questions. He is a Yazidi, and most of the world seems to have moved on from his personal suffering and his people's collective tragedy. Surveying his meager surroundings, his eyes return unblinking to my face. "Look at this place....Wouldn't you rather be anywhere but here? Would you want to live here?"

While significant numbers of Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Catholic and Chaldean Catholic families have returned to villages in the Nineveh Plains they fled during the awful ISIS onslaught of 2014, very few Yazidi families have been able to escape from I.D.P. camps and other temporary shelters they have inhabited. Their villages have not been swept for mines and booby traps left behind by ISIS; they are not receiving assistance in rebuilding; and as regional powers vie for control, the security situation in their native Sinjar region is arguably worse today than it was when ISIS was the only threat.

This father cannot understand why no one will step forward to help the Yazidi people—not the United States nor the Iraqi central government nor the United Nations. His personal burdens have also become unendurable: Five of his eight children were born with congenital blindness, and he has pleaded in vain for assistance for their disability from a succession of Western humanitarian agents. Some make promises, never to be heard from again; others listen with sympathy but offer no help. He is fed up with talking and begging for assistance.

He and his wife pulled these children across the Sinjar Mountains to escape the Daesh, he tells me. "Can you imagine what that was like? Stopping every 20 meters to go back for each child?" His blind children, of course, could not navigate across the rocky mountains on their own.

After the family's rescue, they were brought to this place, Sharya, in Kurdistan, along with hundreds of other Yazidi families who still live here, waiting. For some that wait has become unbearable. Jesuit Refugee Service team members who work with the Yazidi here say that suicide, especially among teenagers, has been an increasingly worrisome problem as the community loses hope.

"I don't want resettlement; I don't want to live in Europe," the father tells me. "I just want someone to give treatment to my children." And he wants one day to go home to the Sinjar region—if his family could be safe there again, if someone could help them rebuild.

"What do you think it is like, living here?" he asks. "Watching my two sons walk into each other in this place because they cannot see each other." There is no work; there is no school for his blind children.

"I think now it would have been better if we all died on that mountain than to see my children like this and know I can't do anything for them," he says.

His eyes grow slightly frantic as he sees that I am preparing to leave. We are saying our goodbyes; he is nodding politely. Then he gestures to his youngest daughter, perhaps 5 or 6, her rolling, unfocused eyes an obvious sign of her blindness. "Could you take her? Could you take my daughter [for treatment]?"

The question chases me out of the shelter.

Kevin Clarke, *chief correspondent.*
Twitter: @ClarkeAtAmerica.



Anglophones in Cameroon fear an increase in violence after election

Shortly before midnight on Sept. 26, Yahweh Phillip cut down the trunk of a tree, pushed it into a gently ebbing river that flows to meet the Cross River and held onto it for life as he drifted down toward a rural community on the Nigerian side of the river. He was fleeing the wrath of military men who had invaded Akwen, his village in southern Cameroon. The uniformed men randomly shot at and killed dozens of villagers just that afternoon, he said, arresting the young and old and even entire households.

Mr. Phillip, 23, is one of thousands of people who have fled English-speaking regions of Cameroon to Nigeria's Cross River State in recent months. In Agbokim, the small farming community to which where Mr. Phillip escaped, there are over 2,000 refugees. Some have been here for over a year. Many have no means of employment and have to rely on the kindness of locals. In a poor village where resources are already stretched, refugees who manage to find menial farm labor earn a little over \$1 a day.

Back in Cameroon, 85-year-old President Paul Biya had been running for a seventh consecutive term in a national election on Oct. 7. Though official results had not been released at press time, the Cameroon Renaissance Movement party candidate, Maurice Kamto, claimed victory on Oct. 8, calling on Mr. Biya "to ensure a peaceful transition and avoid

situations that may be ugly for Cameroon."

Fear of post-election violence has already led to an influx in refugees streaming over the border. In the space of a month, 300 more people have arrived in Agbokim alone, according to Fred Assam, a 25-year-old refugee coordinator in the village and a Caritas Nigeria volunteer.

Unrest has been growing in Cameroon since October 2016, after English speakers who live in the Northwest and Southwest regions began to protest cultural and economic marginalization by the Francophone-dominated central government. The English speakers, who make up one-fifth of the country's 23 million people, say their rights are often trampled. The protests, also fueled by rising levels of unemployment and mass poverty in the two Anglophone regions, have been violently suppressed. The western and southern parts of Cameroon were French and British colonies until they merged into a single entity in 1961 and gained independence. But English speakers have agitated for autonomy since the 1980s.

Since the recent fighting began, armed secessionist factions, labeled terrorists by officials in the capital in Yaounde, have boycotted schools and promoted general strikes, or "ghost towns." Attacks have been launched on the Cameroonian army, leaving at least 44 dead, according



The voting line in Briqueterie, Cameroon, on Oct. 7.

AP Photo/Sunday Alamba



Cardinal Marc Ouellet leaves a session of the Synod of Bishops on young people at the Vatican on Oct 5.

CNS photo/Paul Haring

Cardinal Ouellet responds to Viganò charges, accuses him of blasphemy

Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, in an open letter to Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, released a detailed response on Oct. 7 to the former nuncio's accusations against Pope Francis regarding the case of Archbishop Theodore McCarrick. He charged Archbishop Viganò with "blasphemy" and called on him to repent and reconcile with the pope.

In his letter the cardinal tells Archbishop Viganò, "your present position appears to me an incomprehensible [one]... not only because of the confusion that it sows in the People of God, but also because of the accusations that seriously damage the good name of the Successors of the Apostles."

He acknowledged that Archbishop McCarrick, who went into retirement in May 2006, had been "strongly exhorted not to travel and not to appear in public" because of reports of his past acts of abuse but added that it was "false to present the measures taken against him as 'sanctions' that were decreed by Pope Benedict XVI and annulled by Pope Francis."

The cardinal expressed his own astonishment that Archbishop McCarrick had reached such a position of authority in the church and admits "the defects of the system" in the selection of the former cardinal.

But he told Archbishop Viganò: "to accuse Pope Francis of having covered up [for Archbishop McCarrick] and to be therefore an accomplice of the corruption that is spread in the church, to the point of holding him unworthy to continue his reform as first pastor of the church, is for me incredible and unbelievable from all points of view."

Cardinal Ouellet accused Archbishop Viganò of exploiting the sexual abuse crisis in the United States "to hit at the moral authority of your superior, the Supreme Pontiff, with an unheard of and unmerited blow."

Gerard O'Connell, *Vatican correspondent*.
Twitter: @gerryrome.

to Amnesty International. Catholic priests seeking to broker peace between the warring factions have been caught in the middle, sometimes fatally. Two priests have died, and a third was shot at earlier this year.

At least 400 overall have died in the fighting; 160,000 have been displaced in Cameroon; and 21,000 registered refugees have fled to Nigeria, although the real count may be much higher. Others are caught in the forests dividing the two West African countries and have no access to aid.

Caritas Nigeria, the development arm of the Catholic Church here, has been a main source of aid for the refugees in Agbokim. Back home in southern Cameroon, the atmosphere has become even tenser. A declaration of independence on Oct. 1 by the rebel fighters came only a few days before the presidential election.

The situation remains uncertain, but the refugees here are hopeful. There are talks of a church-brokered peace conference in November, so refugees and separatists can return home.

"I am here to pray for my nation," Mr. Phillip says. "And I surely believe there will be peace."

Shola Lawal reports from Nigeria.
Twitter: @Shollytupe.

EVANGELICALS AND CATHOLICS AFTER TRUMP

The decline of the religious right is an opportunity for the next generation of believers.

By Matthew Lee Anderson

“Stand up and be counted.” In the lead-up to the 2018 mid-term elections, one might find this pithy phrase in the voter guides produced by the Christian Coalition, American Family Association or other evangelical political action groups that compose the “religious right.” These days, such guides do not assess candidates purely on their religious convictions; they are as likely to endorse a Catholic candidate as an evangelical, provided the politician is a reliable vote against abortion.

It has not always been so. “Stand up and be counted” was the slogan the National Association of Evangelicals adopted in its effort to defeat John F. Kennedy in 1960. Letters to constituents were forthright about the place of religion in the dispute: “If a Roman Catholic is elected President—what then?” they wrote. The answer: The United States would “no longer be recognized as a Protestant nation.”

There has been a revolution in Catholic-evangelical relations since Mr. Kennedy was compelled to defend his faith to Baptist pastors that year—a change mostly for the better. By making common cause on religious liberty, marriage and, above all, abortion, evangelicals have become familiar with Catholic ways of thinking and arguing. That familiarity has diminished evangelical contempt for the church of Rome, even if significant theological differences remain.

This revolution, however, has mainly happened among evangelicalism’s “elite,” the middle- and upper-middle-class evangelicals who have sought a respectability the traditional religious right never cared much for. The grassroots consortium of pastors and believers who make up the religious right blur distinctions between church and state, faith and politics. But they do so in a distinctively populist way. Having been jilted, in their view, by the elites on the Supreme Court on issues like abortion and school prayer,

A photograph of President Donald Trump seated at a desk in the Oval Office, surrounded by several religious leaders. They are all dressed in suits and have their eyes closed, suggesting a prayer or a solemn moment. The room features large windows with yellow curtains and the American flag is visible in the background.

Religious leaders pray with
President Trump in the Oval
Office of the White House on
Sept. 1, 2017.

the religious right has sought to animate ordinary believers to change politics through democratic means.

By contrast, the visible manifestations of the Catholic-evangelical alliance have taken a more high-brow form. The influence of Evangelicals and Catholics Together, a working-group of Catholic and evangelical theologians who produced a number of statements, remained cloistered in the halls of evangelical universities and seminaries. The now-forgotten Manhattan Declaration, a sophisticated defense of broadly conservative positions on life, marriage and religious liberty issued by Catholic, Orthodox and evangelical Christians in 2009, gave this alliance a public form many suburban evangelicals could happily endorse.

THE 81 PERCENT

It is those suburban, middle-class conservative evangelicals who were most likely to oppose the election of Donald J. Trump. Fifteen days before the 2016 presidential election, the Southern Baptist leader Russell Moore—the most prominent evangelical anti-Trumper—delivered the Erasmus Lecture, sponsored by First Things, aptly titled “Can the Religious Right Be Saved?” The lecture

was everything “elite” evangelicals could have asked for. It was a bracing challenge to the “old guard” religious right establishment, who normalized Mr. Trump by either silently acquiescing to him or fervently endorsing him, combined with a substantive articulation of a positive evangelical vision for politics.

“The religious right,” Dr. Moore quipped, “turns out to be the people the religious right warned us about.” He repudiated the possibility of finding a “comprehensive common theology” to unite conservatives, rejecting the “least common denominator” approach that often guides political alliances. While Catholics have tied their social action to a distinctively Catholic outlook, Dr. Moore suggested that the problems with the religious right stem from its evangelical wing, which has failed to be properly evangelical; the religious right has pursued a path of entrepreneurial political activism, with at best tenuous theological commitments. The pursuit of power, in short, has eviscerated the movement’s faith.

The Union Club audience in New York City gave Dr. Moore a standing ovation. Sixteen days later, Mr. Trump was the president-elect.

The morning after the election, the so-called old guard leaders of the religious right awoke gleeful at their newfound influence. They had stood with Mr. Trump through scandal after scandal and would now reap their reward. Figures like Robert Jeffress and Jerry Falwell Jr.—“court evangelicals,” as John Fea, an evangelical scholar and history professor, calls them—carried the mantle of the vaunted 81 percent, an unprecedented percentage of evangelicals who turned out for the president on Nov. 6. President Trump and evangelicalism became inseparable.

Eager to find a scapegoat for Mr. Trump’s unexpected victory, many in the media were happy to draw a connection between the White House and white evangelicals. But the link was there to be made. Evangelicals have long been both a media-savvy and a media-hungry group, who have given politics a central position in their self-consciousness—as the 1968 flyers from the N.A.E. indicate. According to the Pew Research Center, a higher percentage of white Catholics than of evangelicals voted for the Republican nominee in presidential contests since at least the 2000 election. But few Catholic leaders were as visible in their criticisms of Mr. Trump as Russell Moore or in their defenses as Jerry Falwell Jr. Few Catholic leaders were

tasked with speaking for or turning out the “Catholic vote.” Dr. Moore and Mr. Falwell spoke not only as evangelicals but for them, jockeying for position as the standard bearers for the movement’s political witness.

The scandalously visible evangelical support for Mr. Trump coupled with the headline number of 81 percent meant evangelicals “owned” the president in a unique way. And they continue to own him or to be owned by him. In August of this year, evangelicals were given what they described as a “state dinner” honoring their contribution to American life. Distinctions among the types of evangelicals—the level of their enthusiasm, their class or racial composition, their reasons for voting for Mr. Trump (or, just as often, against Hillary Clinton)—were all eclipsed in the media maelstrom after Mr. Trump’s election and are still overlooked today. But such distinctions matter for how evangelicals understand themselves—and for how Catholic-evangelical relations might take shape when President Trump no longer dominates our national discourse and consciousness.

THEOLOGICAL DIVISION

The election of Donald J. Trump did not throw evangelicalism into a crisis so much as expose pre-existing divisions within the movement that had been ignored by most everyone. Over the past 20 years, the evangelical commentariat has been locked in a seemingly endless effort to disentangle itself from the pervasively politicized faith of the “old guard” religious right. Much of this effort has been linked to generational differences and, as such, has been tied to education and class. Younger, college-educated evangelicals have either left the movement or sought to promote alternative, less anxious ways of speaking about faith and politics. No figure represents this trend better than Russell Moore.

Such alternatives are partially cultural and aesthetic. Many middle-class evangelicals find the flag-waving, God-and-country ethos of the religious right off-putting. But the discomfort also represents a genuine attempt to ground political engagement on a different theological foundation from the nationalist anxiety that animates much of the old guard religious right. By recovering an emphasis on what they call “Gospel centrality,” middle-class evangelicals have subordinated partisan political expression to other forms of public witness—from rallying in support of undocumented immigrants to protesting abortion and same-sex marriage. Even before the 2016 election, Dr. Moore broke with many



Russell Moore has broken with many on the religious right by criticizing their politicization of the faith.

on the religious right by criticizing their politicization of the faith and drawing attention to the structural racism evidenced by police shootings of young African-American men.

Practically, this new theological foundation for political engagement has led to the repudiation of the practices that have made religious right institutions so politically effective. Many suburban evangelical churches would resist the idea of allowing voter guides to be handed out during election season, and their sermons rarely tip the scales toward one party or another. In terms of policy, many of the middle-class, suburban evangelicals align with the religious right's prioritization of the issue of abortion—and therefore begrudgingly voted for Mr. Trump—but are less nationalistic and considerably less anxious about Islam and immigration than many leaders on the religious right.

But this cultural and aesthetic divide has not shown up meaningfully at the ballot box. The enthusiasm for urban ministry that has grown over the past decade in some evangelical circles has frequently been aligned with a focus on racial justice—but this has often taken a localist form and has not often worked its way into these churches' political engagement. Moreover, despite reacting against the religious right, many more social-justice-oriented evangelicals still prioritize abortion as the decisive issue in elections.

The upshot of this is that while many suburban evangelicals find Mr. Trump repugnant, when push comes to shove they are likely to vote as evangelicals have often vot-

ed in a national election—that is, for Republicans. A political advocacy that is suspicious of the religious right's conflation of politics and theology has left suburban churches without the institutional means of expressing their political witness as evangelicals. As such, they are routinely defined by that which is easiest to measure: their votes. There is a kind of political impotence within the new form of evangelicalism. Russell Moore appeared on thousands of TV spots leading up to 2016. But Ralph Reed, as the head of the Faith and Freedom Coalition, distributed millions of voter guides, and those proved the more effective.

'EMBATTLED AND THRIVING'

The old guard, meanwhile, has soldiered on with the same attitudes and practices that have made them such a force in American public life. They have not changed their playbook or their theology, which has been described as everything from blatantly theocratic to a civil religion all but denuded of Christian morals. The latter is closer to the truth: The intense anti-Catholicism of 1968 evangelicalism has morphed into a political movement uninterested in the details of theology for the sake of keeping alive the American spirit. While some members of the religious right tried to persuade voters in 2016 that Mr. Trump was a “baby Christian,” in reality, what the candidate believed did not matter: Evangelicals would have fawned over anyone who so blatantly fawned over them, provided that he gave them the access to power they craved.

Such a politicized evangelicalism makes effective use of the urgency that has so profoundly marked the evangelical temperament. Billy Graham traveled the world urging people to make a “decision for Christ” in that very hour. In 2016, his son Franklin Graham recreated these evangelistic rallies in his “Decision America” tour—which was curiously timed around the political cycle, raising questions about which decision was being made by attendees. Despite nearly 20 years of claims by hopeful members of the media and younger evangelicals that the religious right has died, it is difficult to think of a movement in the United States right now that is more effective at harnessing religious vitality for political ends.

The political fervor of the religious right goes hand in hand with a chronic anxiety about being under assault by, well, practically everyone. This has remained true despite the fact that leaders of the movement enjoy unparalleled



access to the White House. Mr. Trump told evangelicals at their “state dinner” that they were “one election away from losing everything”—and they doubtlessly agreed with him. For the leaders of the religious right, politics is the concrete point at which a grand cultural struggle takes shape. But this political victory might very well mean cultural losses. The stain of President Trump’s toxicity and vices may be less easy to wash from their hands than evangelicals realize, which will undermine their standing in future elections. Because of this, such leaders cannot enjoy their triumph but have to remain, in Christian Smith’s memorable phrase, perpetually “embattled and thriving.”

Racial anxieties have their place as well: Evangelicalism has at best a troubled history of incorporating minorities. Mr. Trump’s election seems to have motivated many black evangelicals to give up on the label and movement altogether—understandably so. It was not simply Russell Moore’s anti-Trump stance that made him a lightning rod in Southern Baptist circles but also his previous support for immigration reform and his willingness to adopt language about racial justice that is unacceptable to many old guard evangelicals. A movement that had a less divided racial history than evangelicalism and that was less intertwined with its political identity—like Catholicism—might survive being associated with a figure like the 45th president. But Mr. Trump’s election exposed evangelicalism’s own failures when it comes to race relations and seriously imperiled whatever small progress evangelicals have made toward expunging our racial problems.

Yet to the extent that religious enthusiasm intertwines with politics for many of President Trump’s most ardent evangelical admirers, it also tends to overlap with an-

ti-Catholic sentiment. Consider the Southern Baptist pastor Robert Jeffress, whose 10,000-person church brought the world the “Make America Great Again” hymn. Mr. Jeffress has distinguished himself by standing ready to offer justifications for nearly anything Mr. Trump says or does. When he was rewarded for his loyalty by praying before the opening of the Jerusalem embassy, audio resurfaced of him claiming that the Roman Catholic Church is a counterfeit religion that expresses the “genius of Satan.” The ecumenical disinfectant of political respectability quickly went to work on Mr. Jeffress. He made the Fox News apology tour, announcing that he (now) loves his “Catholic brothers and sisters in Christ.”

Still, the evangelicals most worried about the purportedly Marxist underpinnings of social justice, about the tyranny of global governance and about the withering away of white American culture also tend to be the most suspicious of Catholicism. It is a distinctively Protestant America many of President Trump’s most ardent evangelical supporters are aiming to promote—perhaps everywhere except on the Supreme Court.

Many outside observers of evangelicalism presumed these tensions and dynamics had been settled in favor of the Russell Moore crowd. Yet institutions die hard, and while it is possible, because of shifting cultural dynamics, to seek common ground with Catholics and other groups, the old guard has maintained their hold on the movement’s public reputation. Mr. Trump’s election was simply the most vivid reminder of that fact. It was a revelation that changed nothing within evangelicalism. The sorts of churches and communities that Robert Jeffress and Jerry Falwell Jr. lead are getting older and not replacing their numbers with

◀ Middle-class evangelicals are considerably less anxious about immigration than many leaders on the religious right.

like-minded younger members. A renewed evangelicalism is still a long way off, and the exodus of many faithful black Christians from its midst has made it farther away than before. But the new crop of evangelicals has always been too eager to believe their own good press and too willing to believe that the hold of the religious right over evangelicalism's inner life would be easier to break than it has been.

A NEW COALITION

Still, insofar as evangelical-Catholic relations over the past 50 years have been warmed by political collaboration, the public conflation of evangelicalism with President Trump presents an opportunity to reconfigure such ties and form new bonds. In some ways, traditional allies in the conservative Catholic and elite evangelical worlds seem to be moving in two different directions. Russell Moore remains a steadfast never-Trumper. Meanwhile, Dr. Moore's host at the Union Club, R. R. Reno, the Catholic editor of *First Things*, has expressed his support for the president as a nationalist disruptor of the postwar consensus of globalization, free trade and mass immigration.

The divide between Catholics like Mr. Reno and anti-Trump evangelicals, though, means there is an opening for a kind of dialogue between two constituencies that may have more in common than they have ever realized—politically progressive Catholics and middle-class evangelicals. The vast majority of evangelicalism's life is intertwined in issues and places that have nothing to do with the religious right or the tumult of our politics. Ten thousand evangelicals will gather for a conference about living faithfully as Christians, and nary a religion reporter will appear; 1,500 will gather in Washington, D.C., at the Values Voter Summit and be given the lead story on Fox News. The vast and diverse network of evangelical social relief agencies, like World Vision and Compassion International, provides a practical point of contact with Catholicism that is often overlooked.

In April 2014, Robert Jones of the Public Religion Research Institute suggested Pope Francis might rupture the evangelical-Catholic alliance that the religious right had forged because he would require them to consider issues beyond the narrow scope of culture-war politics. While that might be true, Francis' election was met with optimism in the pages of *Christianity Today*, a centrist evangelical publication. In an interview with the magazine, the evangelist



The morning after the election, the so-called old-guard leaders of the religious right awoke gleeful at their newfound influence. ●●

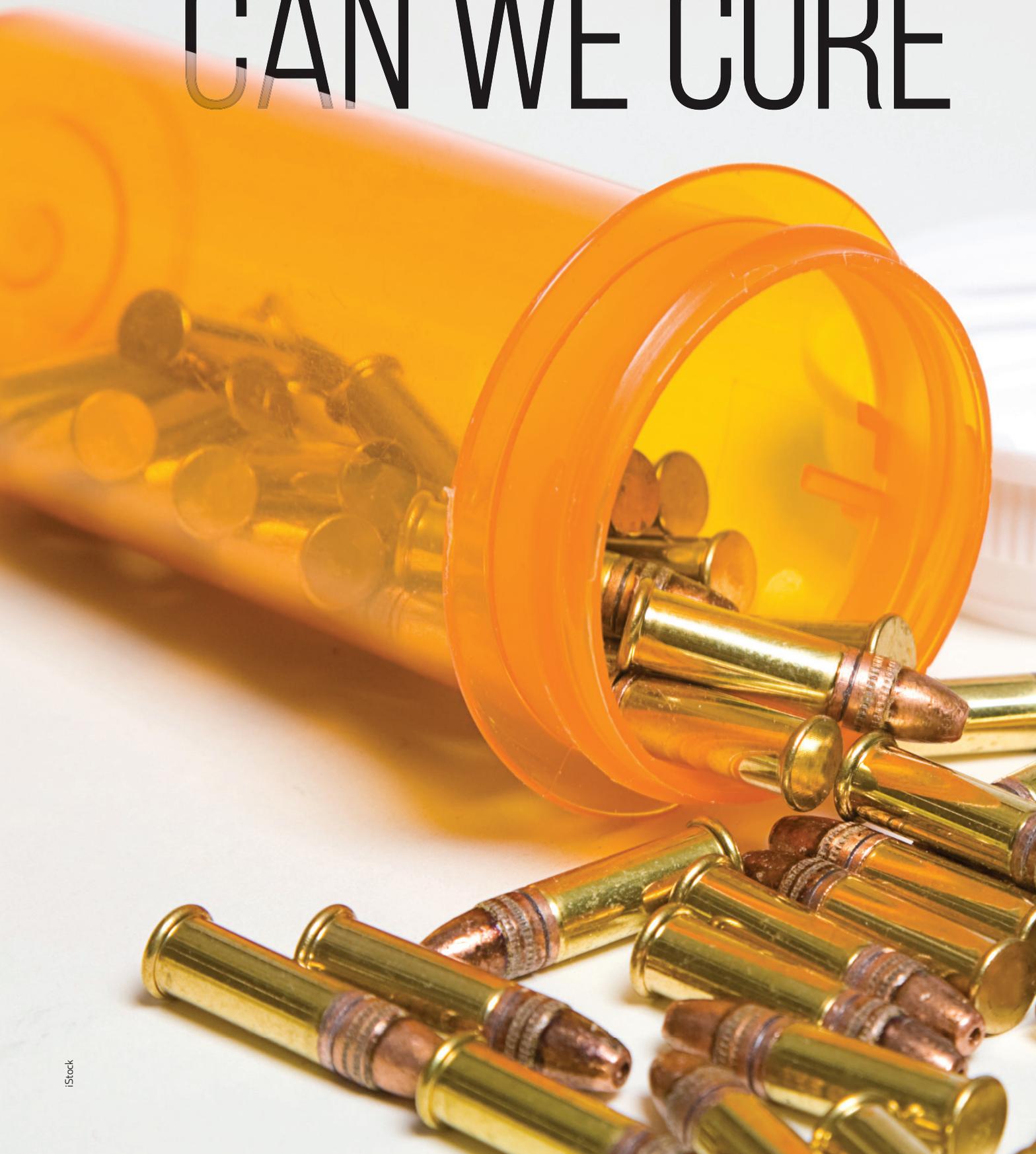
Luis Palau lauded Francis for cultivating friendship with evangelicals. The enthusiasm for the pope has permeated many sectors of evangelicalism, especially those actively engaged in the work of poverty relief, which has long marked institutional evangelicalism but may be less visible to the commentariat. As with anything in the movement, the theoretical reflection about such work is scattered in bits and pieces amid the winds of a vast number of institutions. There is no codified “evangelical social teaching” comparable to what Catholics have. But in some ways, the practical theology at work provides a plausible opportunity for dialogue all the same.

In one way, then, nothing has changed in the evangelical landscape—except that the long-expected transformation is now further off than it once was. Whether evangelicalism survives Donald J. Trump depends upon whether it has leaders who are able to disentangle its political witness from the dimensions of Mr. Trump's presidency that have so clearly scandalized the Gospel witness. Such a task is for conservative evangelicals in a way that it is not for Roman Catholics. Whether Catholics will be up to it remains an open question.

Even so, Mr. Trump's degeneracy and the old-guard religious right's defense of it provide younger conservative evangelicals an opportunity to clarify the nature of their witness in the political realm. In the coming years, they will need to look for new avenues to proclaim the truth of God's word in a fractured and broken world. Necessity, as we have long known, is the mother of invention. Thankfully, few movements have been as adaptable or as willing to reinvent themselves as those who call themselves evangelicals.

Matthew Lee Anderson is a doctoral candidate in Christian ethics at Oxford University and a research associate at the Institute for the Study of Religion at Baylor University in Waco, Tex.

CAN WE CURE



THE DISEASE OF GUN VIOLENCE?

From the streets of Chicago to hospital halls in the Bronx, these people are trying to end a national scourge.

By Eileen Markey

The shrines appear every few blocks. It is a small piety to bless oneself, a habit to read the notes: “Always Remember,” “Forever in Our Hearts.” They grow overnight, started with a votive candle in a 10-inch glass holder purchased from the bottom shelf at the back of a bodega. One candle is met by another and then another until there are 15 or 20 to arrange in the shape of a heart, or the victim’s initials or the form of a cross, on the sidewalk before the apartment building of the young man who was shot.

Acrylic images are painted on the glass, like characters on jelly jars: St. Jude, patron of the hopeless; Lazarus, looking surprised, his shroud unraveling behind him; Mary, her heart pierced; or the Sacred Heart himself, bleeding out in sympathy. Above the candles someone affixes to the brick wall a photo of the handsome young man, smiling or defiant, sweet or trying to look hard, captured at a party or in cap and gown. A story ended. He is honored here for a few weeks, until rain soaks the cardboard someone erected like an awning over the candles





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and dissolves the poem chalked onto the concrete. But with what seems like inevitability, another little grotto will soon sprout on a nearby corner.

There are murders in the United States that make the country stop—briefly—to wring hands and argue about gun laws. These tend to be the killings of many people at once, often in mostly white suburbs. They shock because, however many times we lose our innocence seeing covered bodies in a movie theater or a shopping mall or a schoolyard, we are surprised that these people would be killed.

Then there are the other killings, the ones that create a low hum month after month, the ones for whom the candles accumulate.

The violent crime rate has declined in major U.S. cities to levels that would have been unimaginable a generation ago, when residents installed multiple door locks and saw heavy traffic at funeral homes—in New York a drop of 83 percent between 1993 and 2016, according to the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice. There were 2,262 murders in New York in 1990 and 292 in 2017, according to the New York Police Department. This decline translates into thousands of people walking the streets today who would not be alive had homicides continued at their early ’90s pace.

But in certain neighborhoods in New York and in cities like Chicago, St. Louis and New Orleans, the murders can still be measured by the candles. The death toll may be near zero elsewhere, but it is still not low enough for the handsome boys who stare out from the photos above the candles.

The neighborhoods in New York City with the most gun violence in 2017 are mostly the same that topped a much grimmer list in 1990, explained Liz Glazer of the New York City Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice. Ms. Glazer was speaking at a forum in June on reducing gun violence hosted by John Jay College for

Criminal Justice of the City University of New York and the news publication. (Full disclosure: My husband is executive editor of the publication *City Limits*.) They are the neighborhoods, Ms. Glazer pointed out, that also rank highest for a different kind of violence: poverty and racism: “If I were to show you maps of where high asthma, high unemployment, low educational achievement is, it would be those very same neighborhoods.”

None of these young men died naturally, but neither was the violence random. It can be the result of a dispute involving illegal drugs, or it can come from adherence to a code of strictly regulated social expectations, “organized around a desperate search for respect,” that operate as a means of imposing order, according to an extensive body of research conducted by Elijah Anderson, the William K. Lanman Professor of Sociology at Yale University. It’s pride. An injured ego and a sense of honor. Recompense for a slight or retaliation for an injury. At the root is fear. A chain of choreographed behaviors spreads among a small number of young men, and one attack creates the next.

Treating an Epidemic

Policy makers, police and neighborhood activists wrestle with the persistence of violent crime, trying out new strategies to keep homicides down. Fashions in crime prevention emerge in cycles, from military-style tactics to the much-touted “broken windows” approach (cracking down on nuisance offenses on the idea that chaos leads to more criminality). Other methods counsel data-driven, precision-targeted patrols or relationship building, with officers walking the beat and striking up conversations. All are focused on police and on control.

But what if the focus were on the people most affected by the violence and therefore most likely to carry it on? What if the chain of violence that can change

Continued on Page 30

Preparing the Leaders of Tomorrow

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Chicago

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School was founded by the Midwest Jesuits in 1996 to serve the immigrant Latino communities on the near Southwest Side of Chicago. Our mission is to provide a Catholic, college preparatory education and professional work experience to students from Spanish speaking families with limited financial means.

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CRISTINA GARCIA CHAMBERS, CLASS OF 2007

“Cristo Rey prepared me for both the classroom and the workplace. I am grateful for the wonderful teachers I had, the supportive staff, and the great friendships.”

Cristina graduated from Marquette University in 2012 where she received her Bachelor’s in International Affairs. Cristina earned her JD from Chicago-Kent College of Law, dedicating her time as a law student to working on matters affecting children, families, and persons with disabilities. Cristina is currently an associate attorney with Joseph W. Pieper, Attorney at Law, LLC in Chicago.



EDWIN FLORES, CLASS OF 2008

“Cristo Rey gave me various opportunities to grow as a person and see that a brighter future is achievable despite one’s socioeconomic background.”

Edwin graduated from Stanford University in 2012 with a Bachelor’s in Civil Engineering and earned a Master’s in Energy Engineering from University of Illinois at Chicago. He is currently a civil engineer consultant to Chicago’s Department of Transportation - Quality Assurance team. Edwin now gives back to the Cristo Rey community as a member of our Leadership Advisory Council and as a mentor for Cristo Rey’s FIRST Robotics team, the Reybots.

Perpetrator and victim trade roles of infected and infector until the disease becomes epidemic within a population. 🍊

Continued from Page 27

a victim into a new perpetrator could be broken? Dr. Gary Slutkin, a public health expert at the University of Illinois at Chicago, is the founder of Cure Violence, a nonprofit group that uses public health methodologies to stop the transmission of violence. Dr. Slutkin has written that incidents of physical violence are best understood as disease, as a contagion that “is spread from one person to another,” with perpetrator and victim trading roles of infected and infector until the disease becomes epidemic within a population.

The same methods used to interrupt the transmission of the Ebola or West Nile virus can be adapted to the contagion filling so many coffins in Chicago and the Bronx, argues Charles Ransford, senior director of science and policy at Cure Violence. The group’s methods have been adopted in 25 U.S. cities, including New York, San Antonio, Kansas City and New Orleans, and in communities worldwide from San Salvador to Sadr City, Iraq.

“We’re often talking about the work with an epidemiological lens,” Mr. Ransford explained. “I can imagine a world without violence, and all that that would mean for everyone, especially the most marginalized. With this health approach, I can see how it is possible—with people who need help and care getting it, conflicts that naturally arise being worked out, sometimes with outside help.”

He advocated an expanded mindset that understands the link between suffering injury and committing violence. “There is no justice in waiting for a person who has been heavily traumatized by violence themselves to behave violently and then send them to prison. That is not just or fair for anyone involved.”

Mr. Ransford’s work involves surveillance of the sort familiar to the World Health Organization or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: identifying where the outbreaks are, who the carriers are and what the patterns of transmission look like. What appears to an outsider to be random violence, is, on closer inspection, anything but that. Cure Violence accumulates information, maps the relationships in a neighborhood, and learns the history of

neighborhood resentments, loyalties and disputes.

Analysts with Cure Violence review violent crime data for areas as small as just a few blocks—the same method used in statistics-driven policing of the sort initially championed by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Police Commissioner Bill Bratton of New York City. But instead of using the data to marshal a police response, Cure Violence uses workers on the ground to identify the protagonists and other people affected by violent crime and work with victims before they spread the violence to the next host. It is akin to sending health promoters with mosquito nets out to villages where West Nile has been identified.

In this case the men bearing metaphorical mosquito nets are called violence interrupters. They work in concert with outreach workers, education coordinators and a host of Cure Violence staff who surround a “contagious” person with social support, job training, psychological counseling and hope.

There are exceptions, but most violence occurs between people who know each other and have some kind of a relationship. The person most likely to commit the next murder, the evidence suggests, is someone who has been touched by this one. For this reason, Cure Violence and its ancillaries send emissaries to meet, listen to and attempt to influence the person hurt by a violent crime. This work requires people who know the neighborhood, for whom the code of retaliation and respect is not foreign but simply a set of expectations they no longer follow.

The program hires men from the specific area being targeted for Cure Violence intervention, those who know the life of street corners but have turned away from it or outgrown it. Often they have served time in prison. Usually they are still known to people involved in crime, to gangs and less formal criminal groups, and so have credibility that a social worker lacks, explained David Caba, director of Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence, a Cure Violence partner that operates under Good Shepherd Services, a large Catholic social service provider in New York.

“We identify high-risk youth and get them to change



Pastor Reginald Paris (left) and David Caba (center), senior program director for Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence, laugh with residents of the Williamsbridge neighborhood of the Bronx. This summer the organization held a series of block parties in the Bronx neighborhoods most affected by violence.

their violent mindset [away from] conflict. We mobilize to change the community norms,” Mr. Caba said, explaining that after a shooting or a killing BRAG covers the immediate area with posters condemning the crime and urging a cessation of violence. It also sends in outreach workers, literal peacekeepers, who organize a rally or vigil on the spot where the violent incident took place. They call in community organizations and churches, elected officials and neighborhood pillars, and walk the streets with a bullhorn, talking about how the violence needs to end.

Each afternoon, violence interrupters working for BRAG fan out across a sector in the mid-Bronx, a mile north of Yankee Stadium. It is a busy commercial district of auto repair shops, clothing stores and workaday restaurants, with menus printed in Spanish first. BRAG’s people work from 4 p.m. to midnight, later on Friday and Saturday, for 40 hours a week. Beneath the awnings of small groceries or on sidewalks thick with families hustling home at the end of the day, they check in with people affected by violence, those most likely to spread it. A passerby might notice a burly man walking in step with a younger man, something like a brotherly conversation passing between them. The interrupters hold brief conversations to take the temperature, assess potential tensions and suggest how the transmission of violence can be broken. The goal is to keep conflicts from boiling up.

Intervention Works

Joel Castillo still has the bearing of the boxer he was in his youth, a thinly suppressed physical energy lightened

by a certain gentle sweetness unique to tough guys. A big man with tattoos written across his arms, he had his share of altercations outside the ring. Now his work is to be a peacemaker. His entreaties to lay down arms are effective, Mr. Castillo said, because people know he speaks from experience in the same community he now tries to heal.

“That’s where I did damage. I was the problem, and now I’m part of the solution,” he said. “I was able to get someone to put a shotgun away. I was able to get someone to not stab his girlfriend’s father. He’d seen the way I changed my life. He trusted me.”

St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx lies half a mile from the Bronx Zoo, a 10-minute walk from Fordham University, in the 48th precinct of the N.Y.P.D. There were 137 homicides in 1990 within the confines of the 48th, with many of the victims rushed through the swinging doors of St. Barnabas’s Level-1 trauma center. In 1998 there were 23 homicides. Last year: just eight. But that was still eight too many for Cure Violence and Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence. Since last year BRAG has had a direct relationship at St. Barnabas, working under its department of community affairs.

Three times a week, Mr. Castillo walks the hospital halls, ducking his head into the rooms of young men being treated for assaults or gunshot wounds, the boys most likely to wield a gun when they recover. Are they interested in talking, he asks? Do they want to think about a different way, a means to stop the cycle?

In some cases the work is even more direct. The surgeon stitching up the wounded boy makes contact first, suggesting the victim might want to talk to someone who



The organization Cure Violence trains staff to be “violence interrupters,” who work in concert with outreach workers, education coordinators and a host of staff to provide social support for young people in violent neighborhoods.

knows a way out. St. Barnabas considers BRAG part of its aftercare regime, of a piece with the antibiotics and physical therapy the medical team will order, explained Arlene Ortiz-Allende, senior vice president for community and external affairs. Mr. Castillo or other outreach workers are often called to the hospital at night, in the heat of a dispute. They walk into a waiting room to grieving, raging family members, friends angry and frightened—a virus about to erupt. They explain to the hurt about trauma, about learned behaviors and ways to change.

The work is one to one, person to person, a reversal of the trauma and the violence.

In cities used to meeting force with force, accustomed to spending money on armored gear and jails, sending hard and gentle men into hospitals in the night to tell boys not to retaliate might seem foolish. It sounds naïve and small-bore.

But Cure Violence offers reams of statistical evidence for its approach, with assessments of effectiveness conducted by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice Research, Johns Hopkins University and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Northwestern University and the National Institutes of Justice. Mr. Ransford proffers charts and tables showing declining contagion where the program is put into practice.

The number of shootings in Chicago neighborhoods that use Cure Violence and similar programs dropped 36 percent from the first quarter of 2017 to the same period in 2018 (from 80 to 44), after Cure Violence was reintroduced, according to Chicago Police Department records. Shootings and homicides dropped citywide that year, but

the steepest declines were in the most violent slivers of neighborhoods, the ones using the program. The program was first introduced in Chicago in 2004 and showed strong promise, but a state budget dispute shuttered the program—and severely limited all other non-emergency spending in the state—between 2015 and 2017. In those years the death toll in Chicago climbed.

New York City dedicated \$22.5 million in 2017 to dramatically expand its program to prevent gun violence, establishing a crisis management system informed by Cure Violence methods in the city’s 18 most violent neighborhoods. New York had seen a 63 percent reduction in shootings with injuries or fatalities in one South Bronx neighborhood that used the the Cure Violence method between 2014 and 2016, according to an assessment by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation Center. The study compared the South Bronx neighborhood with a demographically similar neighborhood that did not have violence interrupters. But perhaps more promising than the decrease in shootings were the shifts in attitudes toward violence the John Jay survey found among young men in the neighborhood.

“We’re a second voice in their ear saying there’s another way,” explained Brian Atkins, who has worked as a front-line violence interrupter. Those enmeshed in violence need to be introduced to the idea that there are other options, he said. “When you’re younger, you do things; you don’t really think about it. In one type of sense, it’s like you outgrow it and you realize that path ain’t getting you anywhere. But some people don’t know the resources. Even getting back

to school, they don't know the steps to take, and we help connect them with those steps."

In August, New York State announced an additional \$18 million to fund a similar fleet of community outreach workers and interrupters across the state.

This summer BRAG expanded to another part of the Bronx: Williamsbridge, an area of brick houses and wide boulevards, hit hard by the subprime mortgage bubble 10 years ago. The neighborhood has been plagued by local drug-dealing gangs and their attendant disputes and grievances for decades. People keep their children indoors and teenagers walk fast, avoiding unnecessary eye contact. Violence seems inevitable, normal. Mr. Caba wants to change that. This summer BRAG organized a series of block parties in the zones most affected by violence. The goal was simple: get neighbors to imagine a different normal.

On a muggy day in August, Mr. Caba and his crew set out folding tables on the street and chipped frozen hamburgers onto a six-foot long charcoal grill and chatted while they laid out cheese and rolls. A little further down the block Shareef Landsmark, who directs the young men

BRAG works with back into school or into trade programs, turned the music up at a D.J. booth and hit the microphone to call the children out. There would be a dance contest.

He used to operate with one of the gangs that ply the neighborhood, finding trouble and drama on White Plains Road. He tilts his neck to show where a bullet grazed his skin. A neighborhood grotto narrowly avoided. A few years ago he came to BRAG outreach events, curious, and found a new way to marshal men.

As a propulsive bass filled the street and wary neighbors ventured contact, a young man rode into the party on a bicycle. He glided slow loops up and down the block before he slowed to look at the hamburgers and make conversation. One to one. Rain threatened all afternoon and finally burst forth like a monsoon, but the children danced and the young played. Nothing inevitable.

Eileen Markey is an independent reporter and the author of *A Radical Faith: The Assassination of Sr. Maura* (Nation Books). She lives in the Bronx and teaches journalism at the City University of New York.

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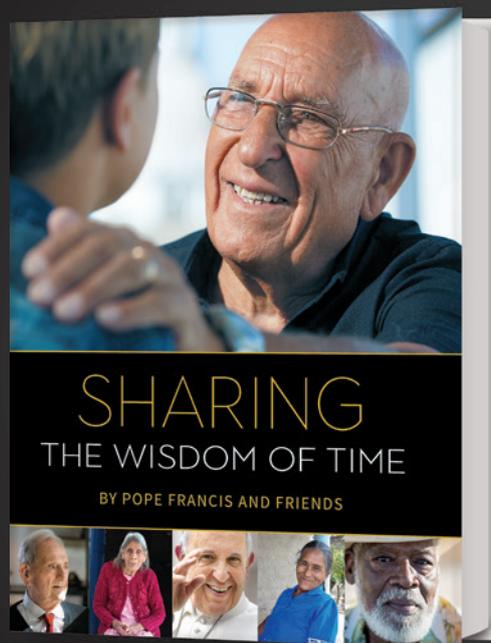
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A MINISTRY OF LISTENING

How bishops can help heal the church in a time of crisis

By John J. Strykowski

The Catholic Church around the world is facing numerous crises and challenges: the sexual abuse of minors by clergy (including bishops); the cover-up of abuse by some bishops; the harms perpetrated by a clericalist culture; investigations into homosexuality in seminaries; allegations against former cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick; the request by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò that Pope Francis resign; direct criticism of the pope by some bishops and ideological divisions among bishops themselves.

What is needed now is serenity and clear thinking. The nature of the human mind is to seek answers and solutions as quickly as possible. The nature of conscience is to slow down the mind in order to gather facts before reaching a judgment and then proceeding to a gradual and communal deliberation that precedes solutions and action. Unfortunately, all too often the urgings of conscience are ignored and the deliberation that can also be called discernment is short-circuited.

Bishops should keep this in mind as they are receiving advice from every side. There is a broad consensus, however, that the laity must be increasingly involved in the discernment leading to solutions and action. This would actually be a manifestation of what Pope Francis has called the constitutive synodality of the church. The word “synod” means “journeying together.” The pilgrim people of God is called to constant walking together in order to discern how our history and tradition can be used for its evangelizing mission today. This discernment is best achieved by what a recent document from the International Theological Commission (“Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church”) called circularity: That is, careful, mutual listening among all the members of the church (laity, women and men in consecrated life, clergy) gradually and hopefully leading to a consensus on decisions to be made by those charged with governance (pastors, bishops, pope). Thus, the laity become fully

active participants in the journey of the church, the process of discernment and evangelization.

The spirituality of communion, which, as St. John Paul II taught, enables us to value each person as a “gift for me from God,” is necessary for bishops, who form a college (a corporate body) with and under the bishop of Rome. “The bishop is never alone because...he is constantly united with his brethren in the episcopate and the one chosen by the Lord to be the Successor of Peter,” according to the “Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops” published by the Congregation for Bishops in 2004. It describes what it calls “affective collegiality.” The directory goes on to note that the “spirit [*affectus*] of collegiality, which is more than a mere sense of solidarity, is manifested in different degrees.”

Up until the Second Vatican Council, bishops were seen fundamentally as autonomous agents in their respective dioceses, responsible only to the pope. Vatican II’s affirmation of the bishop as a member of the college or communion of bishops with and under the bishop of Rome, while sustaining a certain autonomy in the governance of his diocese, puts him into an inextricable relationship with all bishops. What he does in his own diocese inevitably “affects” the wider church even as he is inevitably “affected” by the wider church. Affective collegiality ranges from the spiritual bond of communion to the various levels of contact among bishops, both informal and formal, and culminating in special events with possible juridical consequences, such as synods and ecumenical councils. These latter are known as instances of effective collegiality because of the effects they may have on doctrine and pastoral practice.

Each bishop brings to communion and communication with other bishops not only his own perspectives but also the experience of his own diocese. This is the source of both mutual enrichment and also contrast that can lead to conflict.





CNS photo/Stefano Rellandini, Reuters

Bishops walk in procession in St. Peter's Square, Oct. 12, 2012, during celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. Vatican II affirmed the bishop as a member of the communion of bishops with and under the bishop of Rome.

In general, healthy relationships flourish best when they look beyond themselves to a unifying point. In the case of the college of bishops it is their head, the bishop of Rome, who provides that unity. But recent history demonstrates that the rich and vast tradition of the church also fosters unity in conjunction with the unifying role of the pope. I propose two instances from that history: Vatican II and the meetings of the Synod of Bishops on marriage and the family in 2014 and 2015.

Unity in Diversity

The 2,500 bishops from all over the world who gathered in Rome in October 1962 for the Second Vatican Council were presented with draft documents that had been prepared substantially by the Roman Curia and represented the neoscholastic theology of the time. It was the theology that most of the bishops had learned in seminaries. As the bishops embarked on their synodal journey, they came to know each other (affective collegiality), the challenges to the church in different parts of the world (e.g., atheism in Europe, poverty in Latin America, the effects of colonialism in Africa, the fragility of Christianity in Asia) and the renewal in scriptural, liturgical and theological studies from fellow bishops and theologians appointed as experts for the council.

The bishops had to discern whether to stay with the neoscholasticism of the time or to accept the rediscovery

of the church's vast tradition brought about by the renewal in ecclesiastical sciences after World War II. Aware of the signs of the times and with active support from St. John XXIII and then St. Paul VI, in the course of their four-year walk together they chose renewal and approved almost unanimously in every case documents that have provided reform and guidance to the church since then.

The second instance I propose is the meetings of the Synod of Bishops in 2014 and 2015 on marriage and family. Consultation of the faithful mandated by Pope Francis before the synods revealed a great yearning for pastoral care, especially of couples in "irregular situations." These included Catholics who had divorced after a sacramental marriage and had remarried civilly. This created much controversy. But toward the end of the Synod in 2015, the German-language group, including Cardinal Gerhard Müller, then prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, unanimously proposed the use of the internal forum for couples who could not obtain a declaration of nullity for a previous marriage in an ecclesiastical tribunal.

The use of the internal forum is nothing new in the tradition of the church. It was taught, for example, in the manuals of moral theology before Vatican II. In 1998 Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, then prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, had proposed its use when it was not

possible to obtain a declaration of nullity from a tribunal.

The proposal of the German bishops was accepted by more than a two-thirds majority of the synod and then incorporated by Pope Francis in his apostolic exhortation “*Amoris Laetitia*.” He added that the use of the internal forum could in specific circumstances lead to readmission to the sacraments. This too was based on the tradition regarding the conditions for mortal sin, so that if a person because of certain mitigating circumstances did not give full and deliberate consent to an objectively grave act, then that person could not be considered culpable and thus was capable of receiving the sacraments.

The pope, head of the college of bishops and with them drawing on tradition, thus resolved a controversy in a way that has been accepted by a majority of bishops. But there is a minority of bishops who have taken issue with this act of the ordinary magisterium of the bishops and have failed to give the religious submission of intellect and will demanded by Vatican II to such an act.

Some of these bishops have aligned themselves with theologians, laypeople and people in the media who are in public opposition to the pope. This is the politicization of dissent, the creation of a “party” in which there is no balanced exposition of truth but rather simplistic denunciations of a teaching. This diminishes the visible unity of the college of bishops with and under the successor of Peter. What also diminishes this unity is the defiance by some bishops of general norms approved by the conference of bishops or the Holy See. And the bishops’ failure to exercise affective collegiality by holding those recalcitrant bishops accountable diminishes their credibility.

Teacher and Learner

Affective collegiality means the bishops are not only accountable to one another and to the pope but also accountable for one another. How does affective collegiality address the issues noted above? And how can the bishops be more effective in addressing all the challenges I listed at the beginning? What can the bishops do?

Listen. This has been a recurrent theme during the pontificate of Pope Francis, reiterated most recently and forcefully in his apostolic constitution “*Episcopal Communion*,” in which he establishes new norms for the Synod of Bishops. He insists that the bishop must see himself as both teacher and learner (*discepolo*). On the local level, through appropriate consultative bodies, the bishop can hear where the Holy Spirit is leading the church in the search for new

ways to evangelize. On the universal level the Synod of Bishops “is an instrument appropriate to give voice to the entire People of God through the Bishops themselves, established by God as ‘authentic guardians, interpreters and witnesses of the faith of the entire Church.’”

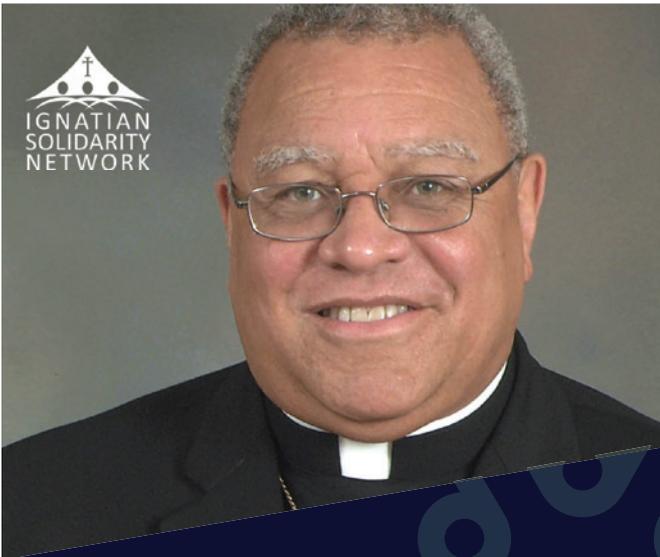
The bishop is never alone. His ministry is a constant listening to his local church, his fellow bishops and the bishop of Rome. His listening must extend to the pope, who as pastor of the universal church is in a unique position to discern the movement of the Holy Spirit in the church. The loyalty of the bishop to the pope includes an obedience that is a respectful listening beyond what is juridically required. It is possible for a bishop to disagree with the pope. Pope Francis has shown himself to be quite welcoming of criticism, for which there are appropriate channels. What is not appropriate is the use of media and partisan cliques.

The bishops must listen to the tradition of the church, which can be unpacked for the needs of our times; to the people of God, whose articulations of their faith and yearnings may be vague or ambiguous; and to the magisterium of popes, which over the past few decades is vast. Theology plays an indispensable role in mediating between bishops and these voices. But theologians themselves are hardly uniform today in their thinking. That is why it is essential that bishops listen collegially to multiple interpretations of the tradition, the voice of the people of God and papal magisterium. Discourse between theologians and bishops can be modeled on the principles of dialogue outlined by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical “*Ecclesiam Suam*.” The relationship of affective collegiality is best served when the bishops turn *ad extra*.

What can the bishops do to address the current crises? There may be some short-term solutions that address the scourge of sexual abuse and the failures of leaders who failed to stop it. But issues like seminary formation, clericalism and polarization—indeed, the very ordering of the church—demand long-term solutions that are best addressed by gradual discernment leading to broad consensus on the part of the college of bishops. The people of God have the right to be led by the unity of bishops among themselves with and under the bishop of Rome.

Today more than ever, the bishop must recognize that he is never alone.

Msgr. John J. Strykowski, a retired priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn, served in the Congregation for Bishops for six and a half years and at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for five years.



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as a Catholic civil war

By Joe Hoover

The church in the United States is not divided, it is not polarized, it is not at war with itself. In no meaningful way are millions of Catholics in this country at each other's throats about liturgical styles, homosexuality, Vatican II, priest genders, Mass translations or what kind of pills a woman can morally ingest. People do not have the time or money or energy to be angry at popes or angry at people who are angry at popes. They have to work or sleep or put up swing-sets for their kids.

Some Catholics may disagree on some things, but statistics do not measure where in their body, in their mental space, in the hours of their day, those disagreements live. Talks by learned panelists or grave churchmen do not capture the precise amount of time millions of churchgoers grumble about ecclesiastical issues. In fact, most Catholics do not spend much time there at all.

If you work in Catholic media or pay attention to articles and conferences and organizations or any number of public discussions of Catholic life, you are always hearing about "our divided church." The connotation can be that we are spiraling, breaking apart, shouting across the aisles like Question Time

in Parliament. The New York Times columnist Ross Douthat has even said that the church is in a civil war.

Over the past 15 years, I have been everywhere for church. Missioned by the Society of Jesus to study or teach at Catholic schools, attend Catholic conferences, make pilgrimages to Catholic holy sites and give retreats at Catholic spirituality centers, I've attended Masses on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, in Greensboro, Vt., on a plains American Indian reservation, in Berkeley, St. Paul, Chicago, New Mexico, St. Louis, Milwaukee and New Orleans, not to mention the churches in my hometown of Omaha and my grandparents' parish in Billings, Okla.—in rich and poor churches, black and white, rural and urban and suburban.

In none of these churches, nor over coffee after Mass, nor in the adjacent Catholic schools or retreat houses, nor in conversations in kitchens or bars or at baseball games are Catholics bickering with each other about Catholicism.

At times it can look like they do. In one Midwestern diocese, some of the young priests banded together and let it be known that they did not want Bishop X appointed as their new leader. A polarized church!



But really? Did those young priests truly represent their flocks? I am all but certain that had people in the pews known of this seething anti-Bishop X stance, they would have found it over the top.

Another bishop offers a dispensation for eating meat on a Friday during Lent. His email box fills up with furious, unrestrained responses about his lack of orthodoxy. Clearly a church at war.

No. A skirmish in a tennis match. John McEnroe flipping out at an umpire, not an all-out battle between the men's circuit and all umpires.

When the updated Mass translation came out in 2011, a professional churchwoman insisted to me the people of God would reject it. They would refuse to use it, would sabotage it, would demand it be taken back. No such thing happened. (Granted, I wouldn't have minded if it had been questioned more strongly by the faithful.)

People are less into "church issues" and more into the basics: Christ has died, Christ has risen; my life is hell, but God is love; for reasons I can't adequately explain, I am unable to go without the Eucharist; seek and you will find,

knock and it will be opened up to you; clothe the naked, feed the hungry.

Or maybe they are disconnected from church issues because their Catholicism is little more than a weekly habit. Church is what they have always done on Sunday, and it makes their mom or boyfriend or inexplicably pious 7-year-old daughter happy.

Catholics do not focus on epic abstract quarrels (the *dubia*? Does anyone really know what *dubia* are?) as much as they do on whether their parish is welcoming, the choir at least tries, the grade-school principal is competent, the church leaders treat their staff fairly. They want to know if the pastor is putting the collection money to an actually needed renovation of the church sanctuary. Or if he is mobilizing a sweeping fantasia of marble altars, gold leaf ceilings and triumphant statuary as a working out of his own unreconciled impulses toward conquering death, God and insignificance. People can tell which is which.

People want a church that is engaged in their lives, that is with them, that cares for them. They want to be called out when they are being pathetic and know it. They want to be



People do not have the time or money or energy to be angry at popes or angry at people who are angry at popes. ●●

called to something better. This is what most people spend their energy on. The undramatic fundamentals. Your everyday young new priest can wear a somber cassock and sing the Mass all he wants, but if he is humble and decent, if he is with people in their struggles and pain, if he speaks to reality, they will welcome him. Love covers a multitude of chanted Gospels.

Catholics have preferences, sure. Some go to a “gym Mass,” where things are looser, priests improvise prayers, laypeople preach, songs are more fun. But the gym Mass people do not fume at the people who go to the church Mass.

High school theology faculties can fall into camps around curriculums. Theology graduate programs sometimes quarrel over words like complementarity, intrinsically disordered, disruption versus continuity in relation to Vatican II and any other topic you please. Young priests and older priests can be at odds with each other. But none of this makes for a schismatic church.

It has been pointed out that opinions about Pope Francis can fall along political lines. Liberals like him more than conservatives. But this difference of opinion about their leader very rarely manifests itself in actual Catholic lives. Most people don’t live there.

Granted, maybe a divided church, a polarized faithful does not and never would look like scores of people in the pews sniping at one another. Maybe this church war actually is taking place but is simply fought by the professionals, by mercenaries. Maybe the “battle” in the church is a war like most American wars these days: a tiny minority of rugged citizens who on the regular people’s behalf are fighting out there on the front lines.

“People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf,” goes the George Orwell quote that was not by George Orwell. Perhaps Catholics go peacefully to coffee and

doughnuts after Mass only because pitiless churchmen stand ready to argue violently about theology in their stead.

Most Catholics, one could say, can serenely pray the rosary and coach C.Y.O. with little worry of conflict and agitation because a small number of other Catholics carp over minority reports of papal commissions, give pleading talks on the new evangelization in church undercrofts, deliver lectures about how Bible passages say one thing but actually mean another, fume that no one understands the West’s “contraceptive mentality,” argue on Twitter about the pope’s orthodoxy and generally take up arms against “the other side” within the church.

If that is what makes up a war, so be it. And perhaps more Catholics should be engaged in the theological issues that can strafe the global church. But rightly or wrongly, church “professionals” and activists do not speak for everyone. Sometimes their urging is toward a war few people really asked for.

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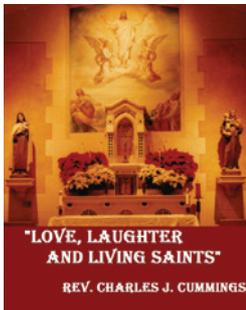
I am writing this in what is called a media “echo chamber.” (Here, it is a “Catholic media” echo chamber. Did you even know such a thing existed?) An echo chamber is where people in journals like this one (or on podcasts, Twitter, Facebook, etc.) make claims that people in other media outlets respond to. These responses then are responded to, rebutted or developed by others in the echo chamber, and on and on—you get the point. We only hear and write about what our colleagues hear and write about, not what “the people on the ground” are concerned with.

I am writing this, I think, particularly for the echo chamber. Sometimes we need to hear it. The more you feed the wolf the bigger the wolf gets. The more you focus on discord and distrust, the more suspicious we actually may become of each other. A teacher who spends all his time on the unruly kids only gives those students what they want—attention. And the rest of the class suffers.

No one is saying that professional Catholics shouldn’t talk about distress in the church. It is more about putting it in context. American Catholics are not constantly at odds, rent apart, breaking down into hopeless divisions. We need to keep our eyes on reality, on how things actually are in the church we serve. Reality is the only place the good spirit lives.

Joe Hoover, S.J., *America’s poetry editor, is a Jesuit brother, a playwright and an actor. He lives at a Jesuit community in Brooklyn, N.Y.*

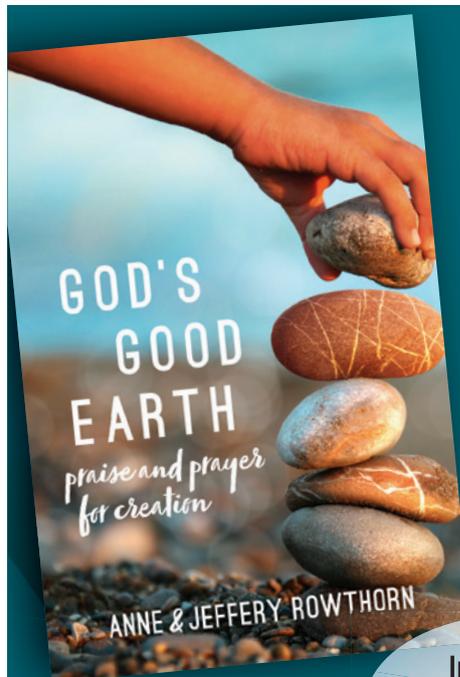
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Louisa May Alcott's Radical Message for Modern-Day 'Little Women'—and Men

By Elizabeth Grace Matthew

As an undergraduate preparing to write a thesis on 19th-century American girls' literature, I read many so-called sentimental novels. Most were written by women for a female audience, and nearly all disparaged the popular culture of their time as frivolous and materialistic while trying to orient their readers toward more pious pleasures. This seemed like a noble endeavor. Yet I found almost all of these books frustrating because they seemed to share a simple, enervating and

reductive formula: the more a heroine cries, the greater her piety. Religion and sentiment were synonymous.

Then I reread a childhood favorite of mine, one of the most popular, and certainly the most enduring, girls' novels of the period: Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*. Published in 1868, it tells the story of the four March sisters coming of age in their impoverished New England home during the Civil War. This seemingly simple tale is based loosely on Alcott's life. Near-

ly a century and a half later, as I made plans for my own life, I found in it a thoughtful guidebook for young adulthood and beyond.

Some of what is different about *Little Women*, compared with its more sentimental contemporaries, has been duly noted by the many filmmakers and literary critics who maintain an ongoing interest in Alcott's most famous novel. But a great deal of the novel's complexity has been lost to the kind of oversimplified debates so



One hundred and fifty years after it was first published, *Little Women* remains a thoughtful guidebook for young adulthood and beyond.

prevalent in our time.

The various arguments around *Little Women* have long boiled down to this: Does the novel empower women, or does it oppress them?

When critics read the novel as empowering, they focus on Alcott as a proud rebel against the 19th-century cult of domesticity and the sentimental Christianity upon which it rested. They see her as attempting to reform that world from within with a novel that rejected all the pre-emptive categorizations and premises that would have put it on a shelf alongside tracts like those referred to above. These are the critics who view *Little Women* as a female utopia, free from any male intrusion.

When critics read the novel as oppressive, they focus on Alcott as a (usually reluctant) captive of a perniciously moral domesticity to which the fictional March sisters also succumb. These are the critics who cite Alcott's own characterization of her novel as a "dull" book that she wrote only for the money her family desperately needed, and lament that *Little Women* was not really imbued with the rebelliousness and ingenuity of its author.

Even readings of *Little Women* that reject the above binary tend to enforce this core belief of many educated people in our time: When it comes to women's place in our culture, what is traditionally religious is regressive and of low quality; and what is progressive and of high

quality must, by extension, be in conflict with traditional religiosity. In honor of the novel's 150th anniversary, I would like to offer a new and different reading.

'Little Pilgrims'

In *Little Women*, Alcott does reject the tearful sentimentalism that so many of her contemporaries embraced in their own rejection of their time's secular culture; yet she also rejects that same secular culture just as emphatically—and with just as much religious foundation—as they do.

While Alcott's novel embraces an intertextuality that reveals its author's extensive reading, John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) is its central influence. This allegory about a sinner named Christian conquering his sins to reach salvation was standard 19th-century educational fare. In Bunyan's allegory, Christian embarks on the road to salvation without his wife, since she would be too much of a distraction in his endeavor to be "saved." His only companions are male, and the challenges he has to conquer are various types of physical dangers.

In *Little Women* Alcott boldly adapts Bunyan's rugged pilgrimage to the domestic space of the March women. In this way, she offers a vision of what female virtue liberated from the limits of sentimentality could look like.

In the novel's first chapter, "Playing Pilgrims," Marmee reads her daughters an excerpt from their father's letter from the Civil War's front lines: "I know [the girls]...will do their duty faithfully, fight their bosom enemies bravely, and conquer themselves so beautifully, that when I come

home I may be fonder and prouder than ever of my little women." The language here, adapted from Bunyan, may seem rather unsuited to a group of impoverished girls tasked with traditional female occupations—keeping food on the table and the house clean—and struggling merely with their own small flaws: vanity (Meg), anger (Jo), shyness (Beth) and selfishness (Amy). But Marmee insists that women's work in the domestic space is a pilgrimage on par with Christian's journey: "Our burdens are here, our road is before us, and the longing for goodness and happiness is the guide that leads us through many troubles and mistakes to the peace which is a true Celestial City."

This conviction that the work of the domestic realm merits and should sustain an intellectual religiosity of purpose, not merely an emotional religiosity of sentiment—that the home should be a place of sober character formation for all—is the central contention of *Little Women*. It is this unique and radical premise from which *Little Women* addresses the two areas of female life that continue to generate the most spilled ink today: courtship and motherhood.

'To Be Loved and Chosen'

There is a dominant strain of literary critique on *Little Women* that holds that the first half of the novel evinces a feminist power that has to do with the absence of men, but that the second half, originally entitled *Good Wives*, is a disappointment because the March girls—now women—become wives. The dominance of this reading is not surprising, since derision of

In Little Women, the home is the space where the seeds of moral rigor are sown—for men and women alike. 💧💧

marriage and glorification of single womanhood is one prominent strain in modern feminist thought, and it is typically feminist critics who have been interested in *Little Women*.

Meanwhile, today American women continue to purchase coldly practical “land a man” books with titles like *Get the Guy: Learn the Secrets of the Male Mind to Find the Man You Want and the Love You Deserve* and *Single Ladies: Why You’re Still Single and How to Attract the Man of Your Dreams*. These guides teach women how to change virtually every aspect of themselves to please a potential mate. Hence, these two seemingly competing ideas—that women are at their most fulfilled without men and that women should catch a man at any cost—coexist to create a popular culture as confounding as it is disempowering.

Alcott, who died in 1888, would be surprised at our modern elites’ glorification of single women, since her lifelong spinsterhood brought her no accolades. That her flinty and laudable pride in unmarried women’s dignity has led whole generations of critics to misread her as deriding marriage is just a reflection of how ingrained the other extreme—marriage as the chief accomplishment of womanhood—was in the popular culture of her time (and, if we are honest, in many pockets of our own as well). *Little Women*

rejects that view, not in favor of its equally hollow opposite, but in favor of better marriage—unions based not on commodification, but on a foundation of collective self-mastery and shared spiritual growth.

Addressing Meg and Jo, Marmee says: “To be loved and chosen by a good man is the best and sweetest thing that can happen to a woman, and I sincerely hope my girls may know this beautiful experience.” When Meg responds that it is difficult not to put her time and energy into catching a man when “poor girls don’t stand a chance unless they put themselves forward,” Marmee replies: “Better to be happy old maids than unhappy wives, or unmaidenly girls, running about to find husbands.” What a wonderful seeming juxtaposition that isn’t a juxtaposition at all: Loving marriage to a good man does indeed offer the greatest happiness, but a woman can certainly be happy and whole without that, provided she stays true to herself.

In suggesting that her daughters spend their late teens focusing on their own self-improvement rather than on attracting potential mates, Marmee is attempting to mold sober adult women who are ready for the shared self-improvement that a good marriage requires. The models of marriage that Alcott puts forth look a lot like conquering oneself, but together. Jo begins to prepare for marriage when she takes to heart her eventual husband Friedrich’s criticism of her writing as “trash” motivated by money—secular sensation stories that were, for Jo as for the real-life Alcott on whom she is based, a source of both pleasure and shame. Meg grows closer to her husband, John, when they overcome together her vain desire for the expensive dresses that

their poverty precludes. Both women become better wives because they become better people, indicating that “good wives” are no more and no less than women living out their unique moral purposes within marriage.

‘The Deepest and Tenderest Experience’

Meanwhile, for Alcott, good men are a lot like good women. They are the men for whom domestic work, especially parenthood, is the gravest moral work. And they are the men who understand the practical and characterological demands of parenthood’s purposeful love.

Most sentimental novels of the era, if they addressed young parenthood at all, glossed over it as a blissful experience full of cooing babies and maternal smiles. Alcott introduces the reality of hard work to this fanciful picture.

When Meg’s twins are little, she recoils at the suggestion of leaving her children in someone else’s care to attend a play, clean her house or get some exercise. But one evening, when Meg is unsuccessful at getting her toddler son, Demi, to stay in his bed, John takes over. Unlike Meg, who has been “conquered” by the boy’s wailing every night for months, eventually sitting by him until he falls asleep, John lets Demi (to use a modern phrase for a timeless problem) cry it out. To Meg’s rebuke, “He’s my child, and I won’t have his spirit broken by harshness,” John replies, “He’s my child, and I won’t have his temper spoiled by indulgence.” Eventually, after a reign of screams so prolonged that John himself falls asleep, “more tired by that tussle with his son than in his whole day’s work,” Demi, too, goes to sleep, secure in his father’s “justice

tempered with mercy.”

For Alcott, motherhood is “the deepest and tenderest experience of a woman’s life.” The gleeful denigration of motherhood so common among some of our secular feminists today would likely puzzle her. But she would have recognized with concern the modern manifestation of sentimentality left unchecked, the roots of which are evident in her portrait of Meg—namely, our so-called helicopter mom, so consumed with the instinct to provide for her children the safety and comfort of today, that she neglects the duty to prepare them, with just as much urgency, for the self-mastery of tomorrow.

In *Little Women* successful motherhood—like successful womanhood more generally—is about a religious morality centered on toughness of mind, not softness of heart. Parents ready children to understand what Jo eventually and painfully learns: In the (not so) simple rigor of doing one’s duty is the greatest glorification of God. In this way, Alcott depicts the home, the traditional province of women’s work, not as a haven from moral rigor, but as the space where its most important and empowering seeds are sown—not just for women, but for men as well.

It has been nearly 10 years since I completed that undergraduate thesis, mostly on *Little Women*. Today, I am a wife and mother. With my husband, I strive (and fail at least as much as I succeed) to live and to parent with passionate moderation: to resist today’s iterations of both sentimental excess and secular aimlessness, and to help my own children become little pilgrims. They are boys, but when they are old enough, I will read them *Little Women*.

Elizabeth Grace Matthew works in higher education. She holds an M.A. in English literature from Penn State University and an Ed.D. in educational leadership from St. Joseph’s University in Philadelphia.

A Father’s Heart

By David Craig

Abraham had no time for the future, the “river of faces”:
mighty kings, fools who would bear an imprint of his mind.
(Gifts behind a current he wasn’t permitted to see!)

He noticed the light flicker inside his distant tent.
Let all goat-hair be God’s! Let the night trees move
His song. What can a servant do but follow?

He imagined his past, people ill-used, shorted:
“Let every enemy I’ve made be blessed, double;
let me be broken enough to give them ear.”

Who is this generous: the Hand that carves the plains!
Himself, he was nothing, a gatherer of sheep, a man
alone, without instruction—a man without place.

What could he give but the cooling night in the ground,
the ways of animals? Perhaps it was his common
ways that marked him: the snore, the open-mouthed nap?

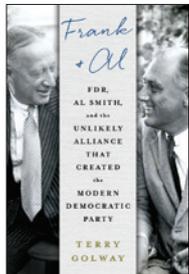
His heart was not a father’s heart today.
It was a leafy passage, the waking of smooth stones.
He would be a desert welcome: for animals, men.

David Craig’s 22nd book, *Mercy Wears a Red Dress*, was published in 2016. He has taught creative writing for 28 years at the Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio, where he also edits the *Jacopone da Todi Poetry Prize*.



The feuding fathers of the Democratic Party

By Maurice Timothy Reidy



Frank and Al
FDR, Al Smith, and
the Unlikely
Alliance That
Created the
Modern
Democratic Party
Terry Golway
St. Martin's Press
336p \$29.99

One of my first introductions to politics and the divisions that it can create within tribes and families came to me as a boy when my great-aunt informed me that she was no fan of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. How could this be, I wondered? I had been taught that F.D.R. was a secular saint who had saved the United States from economic collapse and led the Allies to victory in World War II. And we were a historically Democratic New York family.

But political beliefs have deep roots. My aunt had family connections to Alfred E. Smith—her father was one of his lawyers, and she was one of his

godchildren—and Smith, the former Democratic governor of New York and onetime presidential candidate, had somehow been betrayed by Roosevelt. Or so my aunt led me to believe.

How and why divisions like these developed is the subject of an elegant new study from Terry Golway, a senior editor at Politico and a former columnist for **America**. Golway, who has been studying these two men for decades, somehow finds a way to offer a new glimpse at both. Roosevelt, a 20th-century titan, is seen here as a politician still finding his voice. And Smith, perhaps now known more for the bitterness that engulfed him after his 1928 presidential loss, re-emerges here as the Happy Warrior waging battles on behalf of the working class.

Frank and Al reminds us that fortune is a fickle friend. As a young politician, Al Smith saw his career take flight with the help of the Tammany Hall politicians who ruled New York City. A son

of the Lower East Side who famously never finished grade school, he was elected to the State Assembly in 1903 and became the majority leader only eight years later. The horrific Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911 gave him and his friend Robert Wagner, another rising New York legislator, the opportunity to push through a raft of reforms aimed at improving the plight of workers. By 1919 Smith was governor.

Roosevelt, meanwhile, had a shaky start in politics, with a short and unremarkable stint in Albany and a failed run for the U.S. Senate in 1914. When he contracted polio in 1921, it seemed that his political career was over.

But we all know how this story ends. Smith suffered a loss of historic proportions to Herbert Hoover in the 1928 presidential election, a defeat fueled in no small part by anti-Catholic animus. Meanwhile, F.D.R. won the governorship of New York and would never lose

◀ After a fierce battle for the presidential nomination in June 1932, former Gov. Al Smith shakes hands with Gov. Franklin D. Roosevelt at the state Democratic convention in Albany, N.Y., Oct. 4, 1932.

another election—though in a plot development worthy of the Bard, Smith would oppose F.D.R. for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1932.

Roosevelt and Smith first met in Albany in 1911, when F.D.R. was a freshman legislator. Smith stopped by Roosevelt's residence with Wagner to introduce himself and inquire about a bill whose passage the new state senator from the Hudson Valley was (rather impudently) holding up. In a sign of the economic circumstances that separated them, Smith was greeted by Roosevelt's butler.

Over time, it became clear that the two men needed each other. Roosevelt had connections in the Protestant establishment that Smith, in all his Irish Catholic glory, decidedly did not. When Smith wondered why Roosevelt needed to introduce him at the 1928 convention, an aide explained: "Because you're a Bowery mick and he's a Protestant patrician and he'd take some of the curse off you."

Meanwhile, at key moments in his political life, especially after Roosevelt contracted polio, Smith offered him a lifeline: the chance to introduce him at the Democratic Party convention in 1924, and then the opportunity to run for governor in 1928. Roosevelt would not have run, and probably would not have won, without Smith's goading and support.

What interests Golway most is the partnership these men forged between the "patrician progressives" and the "pragmatic politicians," between the sons of Tammany Hall and the gentry of Hyde Park. This coalition eventually propelled the Democrats to a landslide victory in 1932 and gave birth to a national movement. For Golway, the modern Democratic Party has two fathers.

The author is obviously fond of both men, but he sees their faults too. He commends Roosevelt for being "admirably gracious" toward Smith in his latter years, especially when the mentor turned on his disciple. Smith questioned the "alphabet soup" of agencies instituted by Roosevelt's New Deal and joined with business leaders in 1934 to form the American Liberty League to work against these reforms.

But Golway also recognizes that in the process of his own political myth-making, Roosevelt did not give Smith full credit for the series of reforms he pushed through in Albany and that would later come to shape the New Deal. They included a 48-hour workweek, prison and school reforms, and child welfare laws.

An interesting question raised by this book is why one of these men is still revered and written about today, while the other seems to have faded into the mists of time. The enduring fascination with World War II explains part of Roosevelt's appeal, but there is more to it than that. In the very way he looked and sounded, with his brown derbys and ubiquitous cigars, Smith seems like a character out of the 19th century. Roosevelt, meanwhile, despite his physical limitations, emerges as a vibrant leader for the new century, hopeful and defiant.

This is not entirely fair to Smith, who in Golway's telling emerges as much more than a machine politician. In his heyday in Albany, he was a master speaker who was also smart enough to plow through the state appropriations bill in all its excruciating detail. He had an eye for talent, and helped guide the careers of, among others, Robert Moses, the political organizer

Belle Moskowitz and Frances Perkins, who would become the first woman to serve in a presidential cabinet. Indeed, many of Smith's acolytes went on to work in the Roosevelt administration.

But if Roosevelt emerges as a figure of hope, Smith seems by the end of his life to have become one of despair, "an embittered misanthrope," in the words of one journalist.

Why did Smith turn on Roosevelt? Early in his career, Smith saw Roosevelt as an amateur politician—which perhaps he was. But Smith never fully grasped the transformation that Roosevelt went through in the years after he contracted polio. Later, Smith would "turn incandescent with rage" when Roosevelt invoked "the forgotten man" in one of his early presidential speeches. For Smith, Roosevelt had no right to talk about the poor and the forgotten—these were Smith's people, and he was their spokesman. The student had eclipsed the teacher, and the teacher would never forgive him for it.

Smith himself never gave an explanation for the split. Some suggested the money changed him. Golway drolly remarks that after leaving politics, Smith traded in his brown derby for silk-lined hats. That may be true, but it is worth remembering that Smith always had much more to lose than Roosevelt. Smith actually lost money in the stock market crash of 1929, whereas the Roosevelt fortune, one presumes, was always secure. The fact that Smith may have become protective of his own status and wealth as he grew older is a different kind of American story, but an American story nonetheless.

Maurice Timothy Reidy, *deputy editor in chief*. Twitter: @mtreidy.



Cuéntame
Narrative in the
Ecclesial Present
By Natalia
Imperatori-Lee
Orbis
192p \$35

Bridging faith and church teaching

At the outset of her new book, Natalia Imperatori-Lee sets out to achieve a lofty goal: to craft a theology of church that begins with the experiences of Latinx communities.

To develop an ecclesiology that is shaped by narratives as much as dogmatic theology, she draws upon various sources, including significant works of literature from the Americas. Her work is necessarily interdisciplinary, using the work of historians (Tim Matovina, David Badillo), theologians (primarily Michelle Gonzalez-Maldonado, but also Ada María Isasi-Díaz, Ken Davis, Hosffman Ospino and Roberto Goizueta, among others), sociologists, fiction authors (Rosario Ferré, Daína Chaviano) and visual artists (Yolanda López).

I consider it valuable that Imperatori-Lee draws primarily on the work of Latinx scholars, especially those who share her Cuban-American context. Doing so interdisciplinarily not only lifts up the work of scholars whose contributions often are undervalued by members of the dominant culture, but it also brings her closer to achieving her aim of truthful ecclesial storytelling. As one who engages narrative by put-

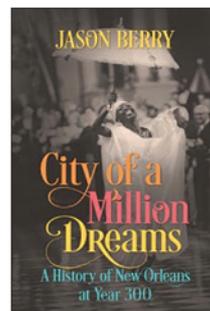
ting grounded theory at the service of theology, I appreciate her use of narrative through the disciplines outlined above.

One illustration of this truthful ecclesial storytelling comes from Imperatori-Lee's engagement with Isasi-Díaz. She engages with Isasi-Díaz's term "multi-site," a descriptor Isasi-Díaz uses for Latinas, who often are locationally betwixt and between, rarely totally at home in the places in which we reside. Imperatori-Lee uses this term to characterize a global Catholic Church: "Narrative ecclesiology must map the multi-site reality that is the church and use this map to proclaim the kerygma in ways that are culturally intelligible and doctrinally coherent."

Imperatori-Lee weaves these sources together masterfully, and the theology of church she produces simultaneously is rooted in the faith of the people from whom she comes and addresses the needs of the wider church.

The significance of this particular book cannot be overstated. Drawing on the interdisciplinary resources she uses as theological sources, she not only heeds the twin call of Gonzalez-Maldonado to use literature as a resource to describe Latinx practices of faith and as a theological source, but she also paves the way for other Catholic theologians, especially those working from a Latinx perspective, to build on the faith of the people: one of the founding principles of Latinx theology.

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City of a Million Dreams
A History of
New Orleans at
Year 300
By Jason Berry
The University of
North Carolina Press
424p \$35

'Laissez les bons temps rouler'

New Orleans is brimming with strangers from strange lands. If you feel at home in New Orleans, you are some variation of misfit who found peace among the magnolias. Jason Berry is no stranger to misfits, having built up his writing career analyzing the Catholic Church and the sounds of jazz. In *City of a Million Dreams: A History of New Orleans at Year 300*, he captures the vinegar of life found on this sliver of land between the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain—a city built by French pirates, Haitian slaves, Piedmontese planters and Sicilian grocers, always under threat of choking to death on muddy water.

New Orleans understands herself as a city of displacement. The Spanish displaced the French. The Americans displaced the Europeans. Slaves displaced free people of color. Irish and Italian immigrants displaced white Creoles. And all the while, hurricanes displaced everyone on occasion. One learns in New Orleans to be a little more carefree because big trouble is always close. Berry captures the reality of Mardi Gras as the ultimate expression of "letting the good times roll" in the face of the absurd, of lampooning

the powerful, celebrating the fool and cleansing the soul before the holy season of Lent.

The story of New Orleans today is a long meditation on its value—locally, regionally, strategically—at 300 years. Hurricane Katrina blew away many fictions and revealed the truth about poverty, race and negligence. Each hurricane season brings a fresh time to contemplate whether or not New Orleans will survive to see 400 years. While Berry does a masterful job giving us the twists and turns of ghosts of New Orleans past, it is our contemplation about the future that is most dark and troubling.

For Northerners in the latter part of the 19th century, Lafcadio Hearn, of the now-defunct New Orleans Daily Item, served as an oracle for interpreting the crown jewel of Dixie. He wrote: “Times are not good here. The city is crumbling into ashes. It has been buried under taxes and frauds and maladministrations.... But it is better to live here in sackcloth and ashes than to own the whole state of Ohio.”

It is hard to argue with Lafcadio. The waters will rise. The cocktails will remain sharp. The faithful departed will watch over us. The people of New Orleans will dream and laugh and live.

Kyle Gautreau is a New Orleans-based political consultant and writer.



My Year of Rest and Relaxation
By Ottessa Moshfegh
Penguin Press
304p \$26

To sleep, perchance to dream

When we first meet her, the unnamed narrator of *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* is on autopilot. A “pretty, still blond, and tall and thin” graduate of Columbia University, she has settled for an assistant’s job at an art gallery after giving up plans to become an artist herself. But this gig is not the only object of her ironic remove. The job, her few friends and her days glued to the television are just sideshows to her true passion.

That, it turns out, is sleeping. With the help of her quack physician, Dr. Tuttle, this self-described “somnophile” plans to up her usual prescriptions. Once she adds the fictional “Infermiterol”—which can knock her out for days—to the alphabet soup of drugs at her disposal, she sets out on the novel’s titular scheme: to sleep through an entire year.

When Ottessa Moshfegh commits to the surrealism of the premise, the results are at once slick, mordant and punchy. Her anti-heroine indulges in dark comedy as a distancing if not a coping mechanism. Her life is bleak when it’s not preposterous, her constant VHS binge-watching punctuated by weeklong blackouts. The sleep in which she finds “black emptiness” does not even offer clarity or

mystical ecstasy. Stuck in this woman’s head, the novel cannot grant us transcendence or redemption, just a grim and entertaining wit. At once languid and sharp, the prose is its own precise alchemical combination; like the character’s own pharmaceutical tricks, it becomes an addictive repellent, a frothy and alluring bile.

This all gives the novel breeziness but also a powerful and numbing weightlessness. The narrator is untethered and unapologetic, prone neither to moral self-indictment nor any animating compulsion. She is not so much manic in her self-destruction as avoidant, too unbothered to even give us her name. She is, above all, exhausted by responsibility, even the responsibility to feel. To psychologize this with the usual suspects—grief, depression, despair—is to betray the novel’s own terms: What Moshfegh gives us, no matter how fascinating or involved, is all surface. But as the novel makes clear, that is its own distinct psychology. Some people really may just short-circuit and slouch into the next day.

This narrator could be a reliable one, and there really could be no further intensity of feeling here. That may be the novel’s last joke—and its cruelest.

Peter Morgan is a graduate student in English literature at Stanford University.



Image via The Met

In Delacroix's "Christ in the Garden of Olives," the figure of Christ is monumental, with three angels of compassion (none biblical) attending him.

Eugène Delacroix arrives in America

By Leo J. O'Donovan

On Sept. 17, the Metropolitan Museum of Art opened the first full presentation of the great French Romantic painter Eugène Delacroix to be held in North America, with nearly 150 paintings, prints, drawings and personal journals, 17 on loan from the Louvre.

The Met's show, organized by its own Asher Miller, together with Sébastien Allard and Côme Fabre of the Louvre, follows a chronological order. The artist was born into a distinguished family in 1798, orphaned at the age of 16 and impoverished soon after that. He managed to enroll in 1815 at the studio of the Neoclassical painter Pierre-Narcisse Guérin, where he became a lifelong friend of the somewhat older Théodore Géricault. Convinced that fame would come with acceptance in the annual, state-sponsored salons of contemporary art, Delacroix sub-

mitted his "The Barque of Dante" in 1822 and, with even greater success, his "The Massacre at Chios" in 1824. The gruesome scene of the latter painting reflected French enthusiasm for the Greek War of Independence from Turkey, and the Met presents an example of that cause in the stirring "Greece on the Ruins of Missolonghi" (1826).

Opposite the painting is one of the show's curatorial coups, "Christ in the Garden of Olives" (1824-26), from the Church of Saint-Paul-Saint-Louis in Paris, the artist's first religious commission and an early triumph. The figure of Christ is monumental, with three angels of compassion (none biblical) attending him, his sleeping disciples barely discernible and the arresting crowd dim but foreboding in the background.

"Liberty Leading the People," perhaps Delacroix's most famous painting,

depicting an allegorical woman who raises the French tricolor in one hand and a musket with a bayonet in the other as she leads a crowd of revolutionaries, could not leave the Louvre. But the Met has other striking examples of his treatment of violent scenes, including: the enormous "The Battle of Nancy and the Death of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, January 5, 1477" (1831); the chilling "Murder of the Bishop of Liege" (1829); two vigorous examples of "The Combat of the Giaour and Hassan" (1826 and 1835); and a sketch, from 1826-27, and a reduced replica in oil, from 1845-46, of "The Death of Sardanapalus," depicting the chaotic death scene of the last Assyrian king.

The Met's show climaxes in Galleries 7 and 8, which introduce the artist's pivotal visit to Morocco in 1832 and then survey the drama and

Michael Moore asks the heartland to deliver us from Trump

monumentality of significant paintings from the years 1835 to 1839. The color, vibrant costumes and “timelessness” of North Africa, which Delacroix described as “antiquity come alive,” enchanted him. “The Sultan of Morocco and his Entourage” (1845) shows his admiration for the dignity of the sultan. But it was “Women of Algiers in Their Apartment” that awakened the larger public to Delacroix’s heightened vision. As for the richness of imagination displayed in the paintings from the late 1830s, the Met contrasts the dramatic “Medea About to Kill Her Children” (1838), hung facing visitors entering Gallery 8, with a monumental, tender “Saint Sebastian Tended by the Holy Women” (1836) on the wall to the left and a stirring “Christ on the Cross” (1835) on the wall to the right.

The Met’s magnificent show closes with a final gallery dedicated to the Exposition Universelle, held in Paris in 1855, where Delacroix offered a retrospective of his work and painted a final “Lion Hunt,” of which we have only a fragment because of a fire that destroyed another great Rubens “Lion Hunt.” But it is enough. An oil sketch and an oil replica hung nearby suggest the full tumultuous tangle of hunters and animals in colors that leap from the canvas. In the gallery, there are also copies of Delacroix’s journals. His last entry, from June 1863, the year of his death, read: “The first merit of a picture is to be a feast for the eye.”

Through Jan. 6 a feast awaits you—one whose equal may not be seen this year.

Leo J. O’Donovan, S.J., is president emeritus of Georgetown University and director of mission at Jesuit Refugee Service/USA. A longer version of this review is available at americamagazine.org/art.

“Fahrenheit 11/9” did poorly at the box office on its opening weekend, especially compared with Moore’s record-setting 2004 documentary “Fahrenheit 9/11.” One reason may be that one can now stay at home and consume two hours of this stuff by simply scrolling through Facebook or Twitter. It may also be relevant that Moore supported Bernie Sanders over Hillary Clinton in the 2016 Democratic primaries, and Clinton diehards are in no mood for a film that excoriates the Democratic Party—the Clintons in particular—for abandoning the working class in favor of Wall Street donations.

Moore got his start—and a reputation for effective atmospherics over strict accuracy—with the 1989 documentary “Roger and Me,” about the decline of his hometown of Flint, Mich. His return to Flint makes for the most effective sections in his new film, with residents talking about the discoveries of rashes and other illnesses from the lead-heavy water, as well as the brush-offs they got from the state officials who took over the management of their city.

There are also scenes of U.S. Army military exercises that took place in Flint in 2015, apparently with no advance warning to resi-

dents. And there is a wry but devastating sequence about President Obama’s visit to Flint in the closing days of the 2016 presidential campaign—in which the president reassured his audience that the water crisis was under control, instead of urging people to get angry and vote. Moore, in fact, blames Obama’s disappointing visit for depressing voter turnout in the state and possibly throwing Michigan to Trump.

Aside from footage with some of the most unhinged attendees of Trump campaign rallies, the voters who actually put him in office are nowhere to be seen. Moore might argue, with justification, that the same media outlets that gave Trump so much free publicity in 2016 have since given us more than enough interviews with diehard Trump supporters. But “Fahrenheit 11/9” does avoid the question of just how much racism and sexism had to do with the outcome of the 2016 election. Perhaps Moore feels that he can instill only so much anger with “Fahrenheit 11/9” and does not want to waste it on Trump voters who may be loud but are still quite powerless.

Robert David Sullivan, *associate editor*.
Twitter: @RobertDSullivan.



It is grimly ironic that Moore has a reason to revisit his hometown of Flint in “Fahrenheit 11/9.”
State Run Films/Briarcliff Entertainment via AP

Loyal Love

Readings: Dt 6:2-6, Ps 18, Heb 7:23-28, Mk 12:28-34

Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, the primary characteristic of love is loyalty. The Hebrew word for love, like its English counterpart, can express ideas of familial warmth (Ru 4:15), erotic attraction (Gn 24:67) or a desire for things (Is 1:23, Eccl 5:9). But whereas English usage tends to stress love's affective qualities, Hebrew emphasizes fidelity. Today's Gospel passage can confuse any who wonder how Jesus could demand an affective kind of love. This is not what he meant. Jesus drew on the biblical meaning of love, commanding unwavering loyalty to God and neighbor. Jesus shared this kind of loyal love with the Father and wished his disciples to experience it in the Spirit.

Today's Gospel reading has parallels in Mt 22:34-40 and Lk 10:25-28. Matthew includes a briefer version of the passage among the debates Jesus has with his opponents in Jerusalem. Luke uses this tradition to introduce the parable of the good Samaritan. For Mark, this account illustrates the realities of the kingdom. Jesus' encouraging words to the scribe who asked which was the most important commandment, "You are not far from the kingdom of God," reveal that this kind of loyal love is essential to life in God.

The "kingdom of God" was the organizing principle of Jesus' preaching. Mark emphasizes two elements of the kingdom. The first is God's self-disclosure. God had a message to share, and humanity could encounter that message in Jesus' preaching and example. The second element Mark emphasizes is the human response to God's message. The kingdom took root whenever the Gospel message transformed human minds and actions.

Jesus' great insight was to organize his preaching of the kingdom around the loyal love God offered Israel in the covenant. Divine love was steadfast; human love must be the same. Jesus could have combed the Scriptures and found other organizing principles for his program, as indeed other so-called messiahs did. Zealots focused on God's power. Gnostics focused on divine wisdom. Others focused on righteousness, justice or holiness. Jesus focused on the covenant and the eternal love that it symbolized. The kingdom's arriv-

'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' (Mk 12:34)

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

To what or whom are you loyal?

In whose kingdom do you live?

al will be complete when human love is as reliable as God's.

The sense of crisis many feel today inspires them to search out new principles around which to organize their life. Some believe, for example, that loyalty to a certain brand of personal masculinity will lead them to happiness. Others attempt to build lives around economic, fitness or relationship goals. These are no substitute for the loyal love of God that Jesus holds up in today's Gospel for our emulation. One needs only to love the way God loved first in order to find a life worth living.

God continued to love Israel even when the spark was long dead, as several prophets teach. Just so, our loyalty to God must remain even when reasons are elusive. This was Jesus' example on the cross. Likewise, God sends rain on the just and unjust, and our generosity to neighbor must extend even to those who do not deserve it. An even greater challenge is to forgive. God forgives even the most vicious sinner; we must do the same. When our love becomes as steadfast as God's, we will discover the kingdom all around us.

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True Courage

Readings: 1 Kgs 17:10-26, Ps 146, Heb 9:24-28, Mk 12:38-44

Jesus lived in a time when the pressure to assimilate was strong. Greco-Roman culture held out both power and pleasure to anyone who adopted its conventions. By the time of Jesus' birth, Judaism had been under this foreign influence for over three centuries. Certain Jewish communities responded to the pressure with extravagant displays of Jewish practice. Among the most visible of these were the observance of the Sabbath, food laws and ritual washings. In this Sunday's Gospel reading, Mark adds ostentatious dress and elaborate public prayers to the list of markers of a certain kind of Jewish identity.

Mark's Jesus was no fan of the Romans, but he held the scribes and their practices in similar disdain. At one time, scribal dress and public prayer were acts of courage. Jews had lived through times when signs of their heritage could lead to martyrdom (see 2 Mc 6:10). In Jesus' day, the Romans tolerated traditional religions, but they generally offered patronage or power only to subject peoples who embraced *Romanitas*,

that is, those who assimilated into Roman culture. Participation in the imperial cult was a requirement, so Roman patronage was not available to pious Jewish scribes. The suspicion with which the Romans held them had an odd effect, however. To fellow Jews, the scribes appeared brave, and it increased the respect shown them.

Jesus questioned their bravery. He noted that their public displays of Judaism opened as many doors as they closed. Anywhere pious Jews met, scribes were welcome. They had seats of honor and public recognition. Their knowledge of ancient texts allowed them to offer traditional prayers on others' behalf, and they grew rich off the fees. Certainly, they took some risks; in the complicated and hostile climate of first-century Palestine, any public display of faith was bound to irritate someone. Nevertheless, their risks were calculated and, in sum, the scribes' actions resulted more in power than in peril.

Jesus contrasted their behavior with that of the widow. She may have been one of those poor Jews who appreciated the scribes' apparent sacrifices. She may have been one of those whose inheritance the scribes consumed. It is possible that she was both. In contrast to the scribes, for whom donations to the temple were yet another public display of Jewish identity, the widow's offering was a true act of faith. The scribes took care of their own needs first and gave to God from the surplus. The widow gave her whole livelihood. Jesus recognized an irony: The scribes who grew rich teaching and observing the covenant had missed its call to radical dependence on God. It was the poor widow who responded to this appeal. She gave her last coins and entrusted her well-being to God.

To give God everything and receive no human honor in return is challenging for many people in every age. Such radical dependence is the example Jesus left us. Whatever we give—time, resources, skills, attention—the offering ought to be like the widow's: complete, courageous and with total trust in grace.

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

'Beware of the scribes, who like to accept greetings in the marketplaces and places of honor at banquets.'
(Mk 12:38-39)

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

What have you given to God?

Did it come from your surplus or your poverty?

What can you give God in secret?

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CATHOLIC
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Running for the Gospel

How Catholic social teaching can help politicians

By Christopher Jolly Hale



This past year, I ran for the U.S. Congress in Tennessee as a Democrat who tries my best to adhere to the teachings of the Gospel and the social magisterium of the Catholic Church. During the campaign, my Catholic faith and my background doing Catholic outreach for President Barack Obama and faith-based legislative advocacy work were often met with skepticism—I was running in one of the least Catholic congressional districts in the United States.

I launched my campaign just two months before early voting began and over a year after both of my primary opponents started running. For my first campaign event, I set out for Dayton, a small city on the edge of our gerrymandered district in one of the most impoverished and rural areas of the country.

After my initial speech, a construction worker raised his hand and said: “Sir, I hear you’re Catholic. You ain’t got a chance down here. And if you head over to Van Buren County, they’ll beat you up.” This man was not alone.

For the entire summer, I tried to convince a rural community that was 95 percent Protestant that my Catholic faith was not about blind allegiance to a political ideology, a Roman pontiff or a global institution. I consider my faith an informed discipleship to Jesus and his call to create a world where the poor are blessed, the last are first and no one is unheard, unseen or unloved.

For decades, the U.S. church has gifted its public servants with the social teachings and magisterium of the church. Too often, however, we are informing Catholic politicians of the moral and social obligations of their public service but not forming them to be public servants who are infused with the Holy Spirit and transformed by the Gospel.

Our most important job as Catholics is to spread the good news of God’s redeeming love in Jesus. Jesus Christ is the pioneer and the protector of the faith. Too often we forget that Catholic social teaching without Jesus and his radical mission at the center is superficial. Too often those entrusted with passing down the faith have instead reduced it to what Pope Francis calls “a disjointed multitude of doctrines to be imposed insistently.”

Leading with doctrinal questions instead of the person of Jesus simply will not work among today’s skeptics of the Gospel, who are constantly under the sway of the false god of consumerism, empty political rhetoric, dictatorships of relativism, historical fundamentalism, systems of ethics lacking goodness and intellectual discourse high on privilege and low on wisdom. We must remember that the social teaching of the church did not begin with Pope Leo XIII’s “*Re-rum Novarum*” in 1891. It began with Jesus Christ. Without him, the social teaching of the Catholic Church be-

comes pointless.

“When we quit moving, life goes wrong” was the theme of Pope Francis’ first homily as the bishop of Rome in March 2013. I was 23 when I first heard those words, and they helped motivate me to take a tremendous risk. I quit my job in partisan politics, took over a struggling Catholic advocacy nonprofit and “kept moving.”

Though it was only good for a strong second-place effort in the Democratic primary, over 11,000 of my fellow Tennesseans took me at my word. And in Van Buren County, the least Catholic county in the United States, where was I told violence would greet my presence, I won by five points.

Perhaps that shows us Catholic politicians that our faith’s social mission has resonance beyond the borders of the church. That’s not a claim of perfect orthodoxy (correct teaching), but rather of a growing orthopraxis (correct practice). I want to add more light and less heat to the important conversations about the role of our faith in public life, and I want to be someone who communicates in both word and deed God’s particular love for each and every person.

After all, that’s the Catholic way that seems to work even in the least Catholic parts of this nation.

Christopher Jolly Hale was a Democratic candidate for the U.S. Congress in Tennessee’s 4th District.

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