America

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Lessons From Trent

JOHN W. O'MALLEY

Rembrandt's Faces of Jesus

LEO J. O'DONOVAN

OF MANY THINGS

Halloween was not always fun. To the ancient Celts, who seem to have originated it, Halloween was deadly serious. By October's end, the dark came early, the cold never left and death dwelt nearby. Surviving the coming winter demanded attention.

These peoples of ancient Ireland knew of thin places—sacred wells, haunted groves—where the veil between our world of stone and wood and another world of spirit and imagination was flimsy. And at Halloween, they felt, these worlds were very close indeed. So they dressed up to confront and confuse the demons of the other side, powers they did not understand but had to face. They were saying to these forces: "We are just as strong as you. We can match your power for evil with our power for good. You can haunt us and harm us, but in the end you are no match for us."

I learned of this in October 2010, when I was in Dublin. I took a day trip up north to Newgrange, a Neolithic burial chamber some 5,000 years old. It was constructed so that the rising sun on Dec. 21, the winter solstice, shines directly into the door to this chamber. The builders knew how to celebrate the earth's victory over darkness!

Modern revelry on Halloween bears some resemblance to ancient fears. When children dress up for Halloween, they conjure up images of the other world the Celts knew of and invest it with their own defiance. The 5-year-old ghost declares that ghosts do not scare her! The 7-year-old in his pumped-up Chicago Bears uniform is telling the world that he will be that fearsome Bear some day. The-8-year-old fairy is as regal as any bride in Westminster Abbey. One year when a nephew of mine was about five, we went to a neighborhood park to face the spook trail set up there. He endured bravely but begged Mom and Dad not to make him do that ever again. Let's leave Halloween to tricks and treats.

But Halloween is not just a game for children. We know from the specialty Halloween stores that suddenly open for the season that Halloween is big business. As Dublin came alive at October's end last year, phantoms of every sort haunted O'Connell Street and the Temple Bar—not so many ghosts and demons as St. Patricks and nuns and punks, all with healthy draughts of Guinness. They would hardly scare away the forces of evil, but they were having a lot of fun.

We have other ways to confront our fears today, our demons, our ghosts, our hostile powers. There are things that reasonable people can fear—not becoming crippled by it but needing to face it. Some drown their fears with drink or drugs—hardly a healthy response to things we cannot control. Some seek therapeutic help and benefit a lot from it. Some take action to confront sources of destructive power. Our current economic and political climate has induced thousands to take to the streets, to occupy public spaces. This is how they creatively face a future that looks bleak and without hope. And simple knowledge can be a helpful first step in taking control of what threatens us, making the unknown less fearsome and less powerful.

Our faith, of course, is a great resource. In the Gospels, Jesus appears to his frightened apostles, and they think he is a ghost. "Don't be afraid," he urges them. Don't be afraid of the storm or the sea, "Oh you of little faith." Jesus is telling us not to look at phantom evils but to know the power of good. He tells us not to rely on our own power, but that he will be with us always.

After the ghosts of Halloween come the saints of Nov. 1, those who heeded that Gospel call. These are the heroes who have gone before us, faced evil in this world and won victory. They are in our memories and in our hearts without masks or makeup.

EDWARD W. SCHMIDT, S.J.

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All at americamagazine.org.

A Free Catholic Press?

The six editors of Zenit, a private Catholic information service based in Rome, resigned over the issue of independence, according to a report by Catholic News Service on Oct. 11. They objected to the growing control of Zenit by the Legionaries of Christ, a major financial backer, and cited the spirit of Zenit: to serve the universal church, not one religious congregation. The editors said they preferred to resign rather than betray their principles. This followed the forced resignation of Jesús Colina, who founded Zenit in 1997. Mr. Colina stated that a major issue was the Legionaries' lack of transparency over finances and the sexual scandals surrounding their founder, Marcial Maciel.

Speaking for the Legionaries, Andreas Schoggl, L.C., said that Mr. Colina's resignation did not indicate a change of policy but that "the stress on journalistic independence…might have induced people to think that Zenit was just a private initiative of Catholic journalists." Quite clearly, Zenit is now just a mouthpiece for the Legionaries.

Journalists struggle to maintain the credibility that comes from the pursuit of objectivity. Which stories appear and how they are weighted are subjective decisions, of course. Still, writers and editors—even in Catholic journalism—must work independently of their publishers' business and public relations agendas.

The Alabama Experiment

A new state immigration law in Alabama, perhaps the toughest in the nation, empowers police to check the immigration status of people they stop or arrest, adds new pressure on employers to verify worker residency and requires schools to filter out children of undocumented residents. Other states have passed similarly stringent laws, and still more are poised to join the fray, making a riot of U.S. immigration policy. The chief blame must fall on Congress, which has consistently failed to pass comprehensive immigration reform that might begin to make sense of America's contradictory relationship with its vast undocumented workforce.

Major components of the Alabama law have already been suspended after being challenged by the U.S. Department of Justice. Whatever the outcome in the courts, a backlash against the law quickly emerged, not from soft-hearted liberals but from hard-headed employers in Alabama's agriculture, construction and restaurant industries. Their position is neither red nor blue but green, as in cash, something they fear they will be losing now that Alabama's low-paid workforce has begun a hurried exodus from newly hostile territory. Even properly documented workers are leaving, worried about hassles with police and state and school district bureaucrats. The abrupt departures have left crops rotting in the fields, shingles unhammered and restaurants scrambling for replacements. For proponents of the law, this is all to the good: employers will be forced to seek out native-born citizens and legal residents to replace the departed workers.

Alabama has begun a real-world sociological experiment that is fraught with peril. Are there some back-breaking jobs that native-born workers simply will not take, and are there wage hikes for unskilled work that U.S. employers simply will not make? Testing these questions could prove devastating to Alabama's economy.

Fighting Bias

When the U.S. bishops' Office of Migration and Refugee Services learned that it had been denied a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement, some expressed worry that the lack of funds would negatively affect those served by the organization. But another concern also surfaced: fear of anti-Catholic bias in the White House. A post on the bishops' Media Blog argued that the H.H.S. was abiding by "the ABC Rule, Anybody But Catholics" and cited the bishops' stance against abortion, sterilization and artificial contraception as the reason.

The lack of this grant may disrupt services while the cases at the bishops' migration office are shifted to new agencies, and this is unfortunate. But to describe the move as anti-Catholic is to get caught up in an argument that benefits no one. Two-thirds of the migration office subcontractors were non-Catholic organizations, so Catholic groups are not the only ones to suffer the loss of funding.

It is discouraging that the administration caved in to the American Civil Liberties Union on reproductive issues. But claims of anti-Catholic bias ignore government funding for other Catholic entities and other good-faith efforts by this administration to establish cordial working relations. On Oct. 14 approximately 160 leaders from Catholic Charities USA met with White House officials in a daylong meeting to discuss the economy, human services, housing and immigration. In a press release, Jon Carson, director of the White House Office of Public Engagement, called Catholic Charities "an incredible network of social service organizations" and added that he was looking forward to working "towards our shared goals." Still, a positive word from Mr. Carson is no substitute for collaborative efforts to serve those in need.

EDITORIAL

Conscience in the Mud

When James Madison warned that "no nation can preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare," he was referring to the corrupting influence of unchecked power on leaders. Since the Korean War ended 60 years ago, the world has backed away from war as an instrument of national policy. Tactics have changed to guerrilla warfare, air strikes, drones and house raids; yet all these share moral ambiguities. Unchecked power lurks in the shadows.

If the United States wants to lead and bring about what St. Augustine called the "tranquility of order," it should first examine its own conscience. The United States has earned worldwide respect for its help to victims of hurricanes and earthquakes. But today, especially in the Middle East and the undeveloped world, the dominant image of America is negative. Why? There are three related reasons: overwhelming U.S. military presence, the drone syndrome and a wobbling commitment to human rights.

Military Presence. The United States maintains approximately 1,000 military bases around the world. And when U.S. troops "withdraw" from Afghanistan, at least 10,000 troops may remain, along with thousands of civilian operatives, to protect U.S. interests in resources and to expand U.S. power. This will cost billions that could be invested better at home.

Drones. Many of these bases house the drones that redefine how 21st-century wars will be fought. Drones also expand executive power to a dangerous degree. Robots kill the enemy without endangering American troops or contractors who may operate the weapons from thousands of miles away. But drones also obfuscate the responsibility of the faceless technicians and White House lawyers for their deadly results, and they raise factual and moral questions that the president declines to discuss. After President Obama's announcement that the United States had killed Anwar-al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen, in a drone attack, his press secretary sputtered helplessly when a reporter pressed for evidence that justified the order to target an American citizen abroad. A week later another drone reportedly killed another U.S. citizen, Mr. Awlaki's 16-year-old son.

Spokesmen for the Central Intelligence Agency have stressed the accuracy of drones. Yet the Awlaki strike killed at least eight persons, not just the two usually named. According to Global Research, based in Canada, out of the 44 drone strikes in the tribal area of Pakistan over the previous 12 months, only five hit their targets. They killed five key Al Qaeda and Taliban leaders, but at the cost of over 700 civilian lives.

Since 9/11 the C.I.A., now under General David Petraeus, has transformed itself from an intelligence-gathering organization into a paramilitary unit. The C.I.A. has embedded agents in the New York City police force to help infiltrate the Muslim community. And 20 percent of the C.I.A.'s staff members are now "targeters," who draw up lists of people the C.I.A. will try to kill—by drones, land mines or other means—without the accountability expected of the military.

Today the Air Force trains more unmanned aerial vehicle operators than it does pilots. Robotic researchers design control panels modeled on video games so that 19-year-old recruits who have been playing "Kill Zone" and "Assassin's Creed" can apply their skills in the real world. The future operator will have to control multiple drones rather than one. Military planners hope technology will develop drones that can be programmed to make life-or-death combat decisions by themselves, at the projected cost of $94 billion over 10 years. By then many of the 50 countries that have acquired drones will have the capacity to destroy enemies from afar. Will they follow America's moral example?

Human Rights. The United States must extricate itself from the 10-year-old mentality that the journalist Mark Danner has called "the state of exception." That exception has allowed the distinction between politics and law to become blurred. Being "at war" has led to the setting aside of long-held wartime limits and to violations of human rights. And that exception has allowed the United States to torture, waterboard, assassinate and incarcerate suspected enemies indefinitely in Abu Ghraib, in secret prisons abroad and in Guantánamo, still a symbol of U.S. irresolution.

That former Vice President Dick Cheney would praise President Obama for killing Mr. Awlaki and in the same interview criticize him for not approving the Bush-Cheney "enhanced interrogation techniques" exemplifies the national conscience still stuck in the moral mud. The government and the American people must acknowledge that this struggle against terrorism is a police action, not a war. Police are supposed to enforce the law, not bend it. The more the United States fails to follow this rule, the more its conscience shrinks, until it resembles that of the enemy who would drag America down.

U.S. POVERTY

Inner-City Funerals As Economic Indicators

Ask the Rev. Laurence Tracy about poverty in the mostly Hispanic neighborhood of Northeast Rochester that he calls home and he starts talking about funerals. For 40 years, Father Tracy, 71, has kept statistics about the people whose funerals he presides over or helps plan.

These days, Father Tracy's informal analysis points to worsening economic challenges for the residents in the part of the city encompassing St. Francis Xavier Cabrini Parish, spiritual home for Rochester's Hispanic Catholics. Although he is officially retired as a priest of the Diocese of Rochester, he still maintains an active "ministry of presence" on the streets of the city.

He's finding that people are younger and sicker when they die.

"I do about 125, 130 funerals per year that I'm involved in some way or another," he said. "Probably 20, 25 people die in their 40s or 50s as the result of liver failure and kidney failure because of drug and alcohol addiction, which is a consequence of poverty. It's not just a moral problem: 'They're drunks.' No, no. That's due to a lack of beds for recovery.

"I probably do about 10 babies or children a year, children of teenage mothers. I did a [funeral for a] 2-month-old baby about two months ago. The mother was 16; she was 15 when she was pregnant."

Father Tracy argues that people who die younger than 60 years old "do so because they don't have health care."

"There's no preventative care," he said. "They go to the emergency department for treatment. They're not getting adequate care. They don't have money for medicine.... Most of them shouldn't die. It's the result of socio-economic issues," he said.

Father Tracy's unorthodox study is backed up by current Census Bureau data. In 2010, 15.1 percent of all U.S. residents lived in poverty—the highest percentage since 1993—and more than 46 million people, or one in six Americans, were under the federal poverty threshold.

The U.S. Hispanic population has been hard hit during the recent economic downturn. There are now more Hispanic children growing up poor than white children, 6.1 million to 5 million, even though Hispanics represent only 16 percent of the total population.

Father Tracy also is involved with the funerals of a number of homicide victims each year. He has observed that some are the result of family arguments brought on by the "pressure of poverty." Some are the result of turf wars between gangs or rival drug dealers, he said.

"These are consequences, indicators of poverty. It's not just how much money you have or don't have," he explains.

Father Tracy has joined his neighbors in protesting drug dealing and crime. And he talks about the trials facing the residents of his neighborhood in his homilies at St. Francis Xavier Cabrini in the hope of raising awareness of what he sees is a need to "create some balance in our economy."

"We need a social economy, where it's not profit, it's people," Father Tracy said, "an economy that doesn't just focus in on profits, where it doesn't just have everything flow to the top."

HUMAN RIGHTS

Progress in Burma?

Is Burma beginning to emerge from the political darkness of its recent past? While a military junta, some of its members now in civilian garb, has remained in charge since the rejection of multiparty elections in 1990, in recent months there has been some evidence of political thawing. Under house arrest off and on since 1989, Nobel Peace Prize lau-

Natalie Garcia, right, selects food with the help of a volunteer at the Sister Regis Food Cupboard in Rochester, N.Y. Nationwide, Hispanics are falling into poverty faster than any other ethnic group.

reate Aung San Suu Kyi was released in November 2010 and has been "actively in dialogue" with various ministers from the ruling party and with Burma's "moderate" President Thein Sein. The release of 100 political prisoners on Oct. 12 was another step forward, although thousands of political prisoners remain imprisoned under horrendous conditions.

Rangoon's Archbishop Charles Maung Bo said, "Changes are in progress" in Burma. "We are a people full of hope," said the archbishop, who is the president of the Office for Human Development of the Federation of Asian Bishops.

Burma's ruling party, Union Solidarity and Development, which "won" over 75 percent of the seats in a seriously flawed parliamentary election in November 2010, is still directly supported by Burma's military; and many of the "civilians" appointed by Thein Sein were drawn from among army ranks. All the same, cracks have emerged in the junta's rule. In addition to the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and the more recent prisoner release, the ruling party bowed to widespread public resistance and halted construction of a dam along the Irrawaddy River in Kachin territory. Trade unions are currently being tolerated, and there has been some evidence of loosening restrictions on Burmese media.

At best, though, opposition leaders will express only cautious optimism. They say it is still premature to predict what future developments may be. There is conflict within the ruling party's leadership, and Burma remains afflicted with a deep social divide and growing poverty. A recent report from Human Rights Watch suggests that progress toward reform in Burma will likely prove halting. The report charged that "serious abuses" have followed a renewal of hostilities between the Burmese military and the Kachin Independence Army after a 17-year ceasefire broke down in June. The human rights watchdog group said Burmese armed forces have been responsible for killings and attacks on civilians, using forced labor and pillaging villages.

"Renewed fighting in Kachin State has meant renewed abuses by the Burmese army against Kachin villagers," said Elaine Pearson, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "Tens of thousands of people have fled through the mountains and jungle at the height of the rainy season, driven away by fear of army attacks."

"For over half a century," said Archbishop Bo during a visit to India for the meeting of the Asian bishops, "the country has been led by a military regime that has confiscated our mission schools, expelled foreign priests [so that] today we have only local priests." The archbishop said the church in Burma is not the victim of "direct persecution," but there are "restrictions" and "discrimination" on this religious minority that makes up "only 1.3 percent of the population." However, he said, "there have been positive signs" over the last year for the church in Burma, including thousands of baptisms.

Myanmar's pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi leaves her National League for Democracy's headquarters a few days after her release last November.

Archbishop Bo argues that Burma should look to the example of India as it continues down the democratic path. He said, "India is the largest democracy in the world, with freedom of expression, religion and press." Archbishop Bo called it a "very important" point of reference because "in many South Asian countries these freedoms are controlled. India, on the contrary, is a source of inspiration for all."

Haitians 'Stateless' in Dominican Republic

Representatives from Jesuit Refugee Services in the Dominican Republic have accused the government of nullifying nearly 1,600 birth certificates belonging to residents of Haitian descent. An investigation by J.R.S. found that 72 percent of those affected by the government's moves are between 15 and 30 years old and are now unable to find a job, open a bank account or enroll in school. Forty-eight percent also have been unable to register their children as Dominican citizens. The denationalization policy is stripping thousands of Dominicans of Haitian descent of their previously established citizenship, denying them access to their existing identity documents and effectively rendering their children and future generations stateless.

Bishop Finn Indicted

Bishop Robert W. Finn and the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, which he heads, entered pleas of not guilty to misdemeanor charges of failure to report child abuse. The charges were brought in connection with the diocese's handling of the case of the Rev. Shawn Ratigan. "Bishop Finn denies any criminal wrongdoing and has cooperated at all stages with law enforcement, the grand jury, the prosecutor's office" and the independent commission appointed by the diocese to study the matter, said Gerald Handley, the bishop's attorney. The charge against Bishop Finn carries a maximum penalty of a $1,000 fine and one year in jail. Father Ratigan was arrested in May on charges of possessing child pornography. In August federal prosecutors charged him with producing child pornography. In early September, an independent report commissioned by the diocese to examine its policies and procedures on assessing child sexual abuse allegations found "shortcomings, inaction and confusing procedures." The report also said that "diocesan leaders failed to follow their own policies and procedures for responding" to abuse claims.

NEWS BRIEFS

Fausto Tentorio

An activist on behalf of **indigenous communities on Mindanao** in the Philippines, the Rev. Fausto Tentorio, 59, was killed by gunfire on Oct. 17. ✦ Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services **objected to a Pentagon memo** allowing military chaplains to officiate at same-sex marriages, arguing that unions are prohibited by the federal Defense of Marriage Act. ✦ Pope Benedict has **invited nonbelievers** for the first time to an ecumenical religious peace gathering in Assisi, Italy, on Oct. 27. ✦ Two Spanish relief workers with Doctors Without Borders were **kidnapped by Shabab gunmen** at a Somali refugee camp on Oct. 13. ✦ The U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities welcomed House passage of the **Protect Life Act** on Oct. 13, which applies federal policies on abortion funding and conscience rights to health reform legislation passed last year. ✦ Pope Benedict XVI declared 2012-13 a **"year of faith"** on Oct. 16, to give new impetus to the church's mission to lead people "out of the desert…to the place of life, of friendship with Christ." ✦ **Dean Brackley**, 65, an American Jesuit who joined the faculty of the University of Central America in El Salvador after six of his fellow Jesuits were murdered in 1989, died there of pancreatic and liver cancer on Oct. 16.

Freedom From Hunger

Pope Benedict XVI appealed for immediate and long-term relief for the world's hungry, saying adequate nourishment is a fundamental part of the right to life. The hunger crisis that affects millions of people today is a sign of the deep gulf between the haves and the have-nots of the world and calls for changes in lifestyle and in global economic mechanisms, the pope said in a message marking World Food Day on Oct. 16. Citing the famine and refugee crisis in the Horn of Africa, the pope said the "painful images" of starving people underline the need for both emergency aid and long-term intervention to support agricultural production and distribution. The pope said a new global attitude is needed. "There are clear signs of the profound division between those who lack daily sustenance and those who have huge resources at their disposal," he said. Given the dramatic nature of the problem, reflection and analysis are not enough. Action must be taken, he said.

From CNS and other sources.

JOHN J. DiIULIO JR.

When Catholics Vote

As has been widely reported, on Oct. 7 a prominent Protestant minister, appearing at an event featuring Republican presidential hopefuls, called Mormonism a cult. But even before the controversy and media focus on Mormonism sparked by that remark, Gallup polls in 2011 found that 22 percent of Americans would not vote for a candidate they considered to be well-qualified if that candidate were a Mormon—a slight increase over previous numbers. In Pew polls, 25 percent indicated that simply being a Mormon made a candidate "less likely" to get their vote.

In 1959 the same fraction of Americans, 25 percent, said they would not support any Catholic for president. But by August 1961, a few months into the presidency of John F. Kennedy, a Catholic, the figure had fallen to 13 percent. It declined to 8 percent by 1967 and has remained right about there ever since (7 percent in mid-2011).

Today, at least as measured by the polls, the bias against Catholics in the public square that seemed so iniquitous and ubiquitous when Kennedy ran for president is history. To its credit, the post-1960 U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has been consistent over the past half-century in rejecting rank religious chauvinism against any faith tradition and has encouraged Catholics to practice good citizenship and respect religious pluralism.

At least compared with other large religious denominations, Catholics practice the electoral ecumenism their bishops have preached. According to the Pew data, Catholics (19 percent) are less likely than Protestants (29 percent) and substantially less likely than white evangelical Christians (34 percent) to refuse to vote for a Mormon candidate. Catholics are America's biggest bloc of swing voters because most do not vote strictly by party, ideology, occupation, race or religion.

And, as the 2012 campaign season stirs potentially divisive sentiments regarding religion in the public square, the statement "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility," released by the U.S.C.C.B. this month, merits careful consideration, robust discussion and respectful debate by Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

'Faithful citizenship' merits consideration, discussion and respect.

Although most Catholics and other citizens will disagree with one or another part of it, the 45-page document, identical except for a new introduction to the bishops' statement on the same subject four years ago in preparation for the 2008 elections, repays reading for what it offers by way of core principles regarding political engagement, the value of public service and government's moral duty to protect the poor.

As we read in its opening sections, the document "does not offer a voters' guide, scorecard of issues, or direction on how to vote." Beyond the "contest of powerful interests, partisan attacks, sound bites, and media hype," it avows, the church "affirms the importance of political participation and insists that public service is a worthy vocation."

While summarizing the U.S. bishops' moral reasoning as it applies to issues ranging from abortion and the death penalty to immigration and international aid, the document's mini-dissertations on the ongoing "economic crisis" and an America "marred by deepening disparities between the rich and the poor" are especially timely. And its broader call for "a renewed kind of politics," a politics "focused more on the needs of the weak than on the benefits of the strong," is both timely and timeless.

To me at least, it is fitting that the document endorses particular anti-poverty policies and programs, including Social Security, the earned-income tax credit and food stamps. But whether the document, taken in its totality, reflects both "the social teaching of our church" and "the best traditions of our nation" is of course something on which reasonable Catholic hearts and minds are bound to differ.

That said, if any other body of U.S. religious leaders has produced a better document on political responsibility that is addressed primarily to their own co-religionists yet relevant to all Americans who care about civic engagement, I have not seen it.

But the bishops' first order of business should be to make their flocks aware of the document. A recent poll conducted by Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate found that just 16 percent of U.S. Catholics had even heard of the bishops' document four years ago.

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


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Bishops and theologians at the Council of Trent

A Lesson For Today?

BY JOHN W. O'MALLEY

The year 2013 will mark the 450th anniversary of the closing of the Council of Trent. I am writing a book about the council to contribute in a modest way to the anniversary's observance. But I am doing so also because I believe that in this case, as in so many others, what happened in the past gives helpful perspectives on the present. What happened at Trent may help Catholics and observers outside the church to reflect upon the current tension between the magisterium and theologians and suggest better ways to deal with it. The problem is not new in the church, but today it is certainly acute.

Its roots are deep in the past, originating in the 12th and 13th centuries with the founding of the universities. Up to that time bishops, who almost invariably came from the upper social strata of society, had the same literary style of education as their peers. If all went well, they directed their literary skills to expounding on the text of the Bible and thus became qualified to teach in the church. St. Augustine and St. Ambrose fit this mold. Although these bishops might on their own devote time to the study of philosophy, their culture remained general, indistinguishable in style from that of other leaders in society. They were the equivalent of the "gentlemen scholars" of later ages. They held no university degrees because there were no universities.

Birth of the Universities

This comfortable situation changed drastically in the High Middle Ages, when Greek science, newly imported, challenged the Bible as the source of all knowledge. Reflection on the "sacred page" would never again be so easy, as the relationship between "reason and revelation" moved into a new and direct confronta-

"THE OPENING SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT IN 1545," BY NICOLO DORIGATI. PHOTO: ALFREDO DAGLI ORTI/ART RESOURCE, NY

JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J., *university professor in the theology department at Georgetown University, is author of* The First Jesuits *and* What Happened at Vatican II *(Harvard Univ. Press).*

tion. That confrontation has continued into the present—in different forms, surely, but in forms even more exacerbated. There are no easy answers to the question of reconciling issues arising from the confrontation, most especially not in the intellectually and technologically complicated 21st century.

Just at the time the confrontation first took place, and to some extent because of it, the university came into being. The purpose of the new institution was to train professionals, including professionals in the sacred page. At the University of Paris, the faculty of theology was one of the three professional schools, along with law and medicine. To complete the full course in theology might require some 15 years. It was in that faculty that the many problems arising from the new problematic of reason and revelation intruded into the more serene scenario of contemplation of the sacred page. Disputation, not contemplation, was the standard university exercise.

Note that these new professionals in theology were not bishops. For the most part bishops and future bishops continued to be educated in the old ways; some, however, earned university degrees in canon law, a discipline soon considered more appropriate for them than theology. Thus it happened that bishops, the traditional teachers of the faith, generally did not have the technical expertise required to deal with the ever more challenging questions raised in discourse about "sacred doctrine." They had to rely on professionals.

At Trent the theologians played a more formally recognized role and had fewer limitations imposed on them.

In a rough sketch, that is the origin of the tension between magisterium and theologians that we experience today. The relationship between these two classes of teachers has not, of course, always been tense. That is where the Council of Trent can be instructive. It stands as an important instance of cooperation. The Second Vatican Council also provides an instance of cooperation, but at Trent the theologians played a more formally recognized role and had fewer limitations imposed on them.

Vatican II and Trent

At Vatican II the pope directly appointed all official *periti*, the theological experts, even though bishops were free to bring their own. The theologians sat with the bishops on the commissions that prepared the documents. Although they had considerable influence in the commissions, they were officially admonished that they were to speak only when spoken to. They never addressed the bishops in the plenary sessions in St. Peter's Basilica. That was reserved exclusively to the bishops.

The procedures at Trent were different in two significant ways. First, the pope appointed only two or three of the council's theologians. The rest were appointed by the bishops, by monarchs and by the religious orders. At the second period of the council, 1551-52, for instance, the pope appointed 2, the bishops 15, the Holy Roman Emperor 7, Queen Mary of Hungary (the emperor's sister) 8 and the religious orders 22.

Second, the role the theologians played in the preparation of the doctrinal decrees differed. The procedure was as follows:

First, one or more theologians, designated for the task by the papal legates who presided at the council, sorted out the principal points at issue in the doctrine under discussion. These points, brief and pointed, usually amounting to only a sentence or two, were then given to the other theologians and bishops.

Second, in the presence of the full assembly of bishops, the theologians in turn presented their views on the articles. Individual presentations might last two or three hours.

These meetings, called congregations of theologians, were held morning and afternoon and sometimes went on for several weeks at a time. Although bishops were not strictly required to attend these sessions, most did so. They listened in silence and heard a wide spectrum of views.

An example will illustrate the difference between the two councils. The concept of Tradition (the Second Vatican Council) or traditions (Trent) was treated in both. At the Second Vatican Council the Doctrinal Preparatory Commission, made up of bishops, composed a draft decree that was then submitted to the other bishops gathered in St. Peter's. Two theologians—Karl Rahner, S.J., and the Rev. Joseph Ratzinger—were convinced that a whole school of thought on the matter had been a priori excluded from consideration. They therefore felt compelled to create an alternative text, which they circulated on an unofficial basis among the bishops.

At Trent the first action was in reverse order: theologians vetted the problem, while prelates listened silently to the wide variety of opinions expressed.

Third, only then did the bishops, now well informed about the theological options available to them, in similarly serial fashion address the articles. When they finished, a deputation of bishops together with theologian consultants drew up a draft document, which was then debated by the bishops, amended as needed and finally approved by them. It was a long, often tedious procedure, but it resulted in decrees that were fully informed and well thought out.

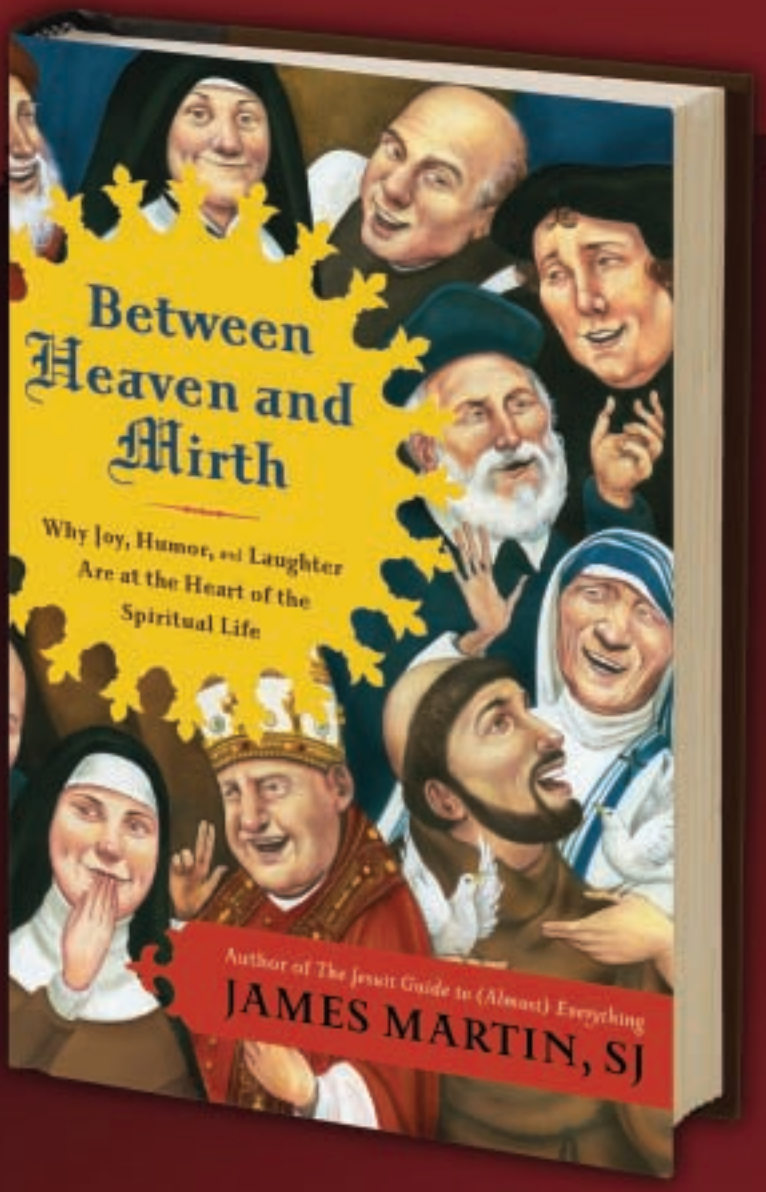
ON THE WEB
A conversation
with John W. O'Malley, S.J.
americamagazine.org/podcast

The bishops at Trent were typical of the Catholic episcopacy at the time. They had little formal training in theology, even though they otherwise might be well educated according to the standards of the day. If they had university degrees, those decrees tended to be in canon law. The theologians at Trent, however, came exclusively from universities or comparable institutions, and some were men of great distinction. They were not hand-chosen to promote a particular perspective but represented a random sampling of theological "schools." The bishops did well to hear them out before proceeding to their own deliberations.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, virtually all bishops have had the basic theological training of the seminaries they attended. In that respect they are different from the bishops who participated at Trent. Nonetheless, few have advanced degrees in theology at a time when the Christian situation has become complex to an extent unimaginable in an earlier age. Now as never before, cooperation and mutual respect are important. In that regard, I believe, the Council of Trent may hold a lesson for both parties. A

"Between Heaven and Mirth will make any reader smile…"

–The Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan, Archbishop of New York



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Late-Night Catechism

A parish youth minister finds challenges and refreshment on the job.

BY MARY LYNN HENDRICKSON

I am an accidental youth minister. After many years as an editor, two stints as a director of religious education and a relocation to Wisconsin, I am three years into my current position. These days I stay up late on mission trips and confirmation retreats instead of burning the midnight oil to write articles on Catholic social teaching. Now I use Facebook more than Photoshop and refer to the Urban Dictionary more than Merriam-Webster.

I have worked for the church my entire professional life—25 years—and thought I had seen just about everything possible in parish life. What I did not glean from interviews with national church leaders and veteran "people in the pews," I figured I knew firsthand as an overcommitted church volunteer myself.

In 2006, however, I accepted a job as a parish director of religious education and got the education of my life. Jesus may have said, "The harvest is plentiful, laborers are few." But Dwight Eisenhower put it more precisely for parish workers when he said, "Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil, and you're a thousand miles from the cornfield." As one who now toils in the fields of parish ministry, I see two bracing challenges.

First, most people have no clue about the myriad maddening details or the continuous drain on energy and attention that go into running a local parish. I have gained new respect for parish priests, seeing the hours they keep, the expectations people have of them and the way they are pulled 10 different directions each day. Expectations of pastors are passed on to the parish staff.

The local parish is not a typical workplace; the detailed work you are paid to do is constantly interrupted by people seeking many different things. Nor are parishioners the kind of clientele you encounter in other lines of work. I once heard a speaker say: "Nobody goes to the drive-up window at the bank and tells the manager, in fine detail, how to run her business. But parishioners do that to trained church staffpeople all the time."

Second, the distressing disintegration of family life shows up in living color at the parish: Many families are in financial trouble; many face the ripple effects of divorce and rocky remarriages. The needs strain a social-services safety net that includes parishes and schools. Few seem to understand the insidious way competition and consumerism erode the foundation of family life. Ironically, in a quest to give their children the best of everything, busy families rarely sit down together any more to eat a meal or go to Mass. Time together means driving a minivan to sporting events and music practices, everyone too occupied with iPods, cellphones and Disney DVDs to converse. As a parish minister, I see a generation of distracted children and harried parents who need repeated reminders to sign up for programs, hesitate to commit themselves to participate and expect endless flexibility. It is as if the parish has become a commodity instead of a community.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

Despite those challenges, I truly enjoy being a youth minister, particularly when I can interact directly with teens. I love hunting for new ways to touch their tender hearts and

MARY LYNN HENDRICKSON, *formerly an editor at Claretian Publications and executive director of Associated Church Press, is currently a writer and parish youth minister near Madison, Wis.*

slightly cynical minds, opportunities to showcase the everyday wisdom of the Catholic faith and the reality of God's unrelenting love. Somehow I am able to earn their honesty, respect and trust. I would like to think it is because I try to approach them from the start with honesty, respect and trust, instead of phoniness or agendas. Listening has turned me into their emissary and advocate among the other adults who populate their world—not in a doting, hovering-helicopter parent way but in a manner that challenges teens to rethink their assumptions.

Teenagers challenge my assumptions, too, and keep me on my toes. We remind each other to laugh out loud and sing along to songs on the radio. Becoming a youth minister has taught me to value a good road trip. Happiness is a carload of teens in lively conversation, as we make our way to a conference or work site. Sometimes the talk turns serious; they ask tough questions or admit to common conflicts with parents, teachers, siblings, peers and significant others. These young people are some of the best traveling companions I have ever had: always entertaining, unusually honest, sometimes vulnerable, typically hopeful.

When the hardest parts of parish work get me down, I find my comfort in the prayer I teach for confirmation (St. Augustine's "Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit") and in the breath of fresh air I find in the company of these parish teenagers. A

The Art of Dying

A Christian fears suffering and loss.

BY SIDNEY CALLAHAN

As aging brings death ever nearer, my fear of dying increases. These surges of anxiety are dispiriting. Shouldn't faith in Christ's resurrection liberate me from bouts of cowardice? I would hate to think that my fear is a sign that my faith is actually self-deception. I have often thought that my "atheist" friends in their heart of hearts really believe in God, but maybe it is the other way around. A Christian who is so loath to die is not giving much of a witness to faith in the Resurrection. A real yes to God should be bone deep, not merely a notional assent.

Yet I can detect nothing but firm and heartfelt convictions when I examine my mind and heart. In gratitude, I affirm Christ as the way, the truth and the life. Everything that I know intellectually and have learned from living confirms my faith in the Gospel message. My fear of dying seems unrelated to doubting but rather wells up as some shuddering dread from the depths of a divided self. When I examine this fear precisely, I find at its core the awful anxiety that in dying I will be overwhelmed by panic and the dissolution of self. As consciousness is extinguished, I dread losing any capacity to think, to pray and to feel the loving presence of God.

Unfortunately, I know that such a psychological collapse is possible, since I have been there before. Forty years ago I suffered two full-blown panic attacks that have been burned into memory. After the loss of a baby to sudden infant death syndrome, I was assaulted twice by an overwhelming terror that I was being helplessly extinguished and suffocated; my sense of self was dissolving into nothingness. The ego, or I, was disintegrating along with the external grounds of reality. The desolation and agony of a disintegrating self is identified in my mind with dying. It is "the horror the horror," or a hell-like nothingness. Such dreadful experiences of psychological suffering appear in mental illness and suicidal despair. It is desolating to imagine how many human beings suffer such traumas as victims of disease, accidents, natural disasters, war and cruel torture.

But less severe losses also seep into my fear of dying. Intense sadness arises over giving up one's part in the ongoing dramas of one's daily life and one's times. The familiar local round and love of one's own family and people (including my adored dog) strongly bind us to our specific and beautiful world. To have this story interrupted is a painful prospect when we could go on forever. When your life is a blessed Sabbath banquet given by God here and now, leaving your place at the table can be hard—even for a more glorious celebration. In dying we will inevitably be entering into an unimaginable, novel existence, like a fetus being born. Despite the promised wonders in the world to come, I am afraid I identify with the happy, contented fetus in the warm womb who does not want to come out.

Of course if one's present condition becomes excruciatingly miserable, death may be welcomed as a relief. Undergoing debilitating disease and loss of all function or being caught in circumstances of torture can make dying less difficult. This is the cure for fear of death offered by Montaigne. He argues that when you become very debilitated and ill, you cease to really care about anything or anybody and will be able to die calmly, as animals die. Oh really? I am willing to bet that Montaigne never had a panic attack, and he certainly lived in a time when people became inured to death, as spouses, infants, children, friends and victims of violence died around them.

By contrast, modern, affluent people growing up, as I did, in a secular family never encounter death or attend funerals. In my time that was consid-

SIDNEY CALLAHAN *is a scholar, writer and licensed psychologist. Her most recent books are* Created for Joy *(Crossroad) and* Called to Happiness.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ANDRIY SOLOVYOV

ered morbid and superstitious. Death was a taboo subject, and I clearly remember defensively saying to myself as a child that by the time I grew up science would have taken care of dying and I would not have to die. Such denials of death can distort a culture in many ways and may even increase its power to terrorize. The fact that our dying is inevitable but indefinite as to when, where or how induces further anxiety. It is all too true that a coward dies a thousand deaths.

Earlier Christians could also be deathly afraid of dying because they would have to face an angry God's judgment and possible condemnation to hellfire. Today, Christians who believe strongly in the forgiveness of sins and God's tender mercy do not fear eternal punishment. But we can still be filled with anxiety about confronting shame when we must stand in the Light of Light that reveals all. Self-judgment can be painful and humbling. Here I identify with the over-confident Peter leaping into the sea bent on walking to join Jesus, only to sink and require rescue. Later still I acutely imagine Peter's shame when Jesus looks at him in the high priest's courtyard. Even receiving forgiveness and unconditional love can be awe-full and overwhelming.

Lifted Spirits

So is there balm in Gilead to heal the entangling fears of death? At the end of the day, in the time remaining, can we help remove the sting, if not the horror, of death? Obviously ancient spiritual practices are needed, as well as welcome new remedies. The great commandments of Christian spirituality are familiar: live, give, love, pray; unite mind, heart and will with Christ. Embrace the sacrament of the present moment and the sacraments and Scripture of the worshiping church. I take great consolation from meditating on Jesus' victory over his distress and sorrow in the garden of Gethsemane.

Other strategies can also be pursued. To counter fear of loss we can visualize the friends and family members who have already died—an ever-increasing group. We can imagine that with the divine liveliness the eternal conversation continues within a constantly joyful company. Surely God's infinite truth will provide infinitely more learning and creativity for us to pursue. These and other reflections can turn us to God, who is our future. Dying is an arduous venture, for which we need all the help we can get from everyone in heaven and earth and from anything that can give courage and lift up our hearts.

Happily, the art of dying is given life with the advent of the hospice movement and the growth of palliative medicine. Care is offered through the comfort of companionship, family, friends and lots of tender physical ministrations. Visual beauty, laughter and music can lift the spirit. And most fortunately, drugs can ease physical pain and, for the phobic among us, psychotropic medications are available to calm agitation, anxiety and panic. Better yet, we may have been able to learn ancient and new meditative techniques of breathing and relaxation that bring mindful control of attention. I first learned of the human psyche's power to control physical and emotional responses when practicing natural childbirth techniques to control pain and fear. Admittedly only one out of seven births was completely painless, but I managed never to use medication and experienced ecstatic joy each time. If mental, spiritual and physical practices, along with the availability of drugs when needed, can work to ease childbirth, why not the process of dying?

One of the wonderful promises in Scripture proclaims that God's power "working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine." Facing certain death, I cling in hope to Christ, my anchor. A

Life or Death Decisions

A view from two practitioners

In response to several articles in ***America*** *by Kevin O'Rourke, O.P., concerning Bishop Thomas Olmsted's reaction to an alleged direct abortion performed in a Catholic hospital in Phoenix, Ariz.,* **CHARLES F. MacCARTHY, M.D.,** *and* **JOHN P. MacCARTHY, M.D., O.PRAEM.,** *offer their insights on medical decision making and the bishop's disciplinary decisions. (The three articles are: "Complications," 8/2/10; "From Intuition to Moral Principle," 11/15/10; and "Rights of Conscience," 8/1/11.) Both authors are graduates of the Stritch School of Medicine, Loyola University Chicago, in Marywood, Ill. Charles is an ophthalmologist, now retired, and John is a missionary priest/physician in a remote jungle hospital in Peru.*

Physicians make ethical decisions every day, though few are as dramatic as the Phoenix case, and few come to the attention of any bishop. Nearly all diagnostic and therapeutic decisions have some ethical implications. When the risks are small and potential benefits are large, decision making is easy. But during a pregnancy, when two or more lives are involved, decisions are hard.

For a physician, every decision about surgery involves weighing risks and benefits and explaining them so the patient and/or the family can share in the decision-making process. Still, after listening to even the most detailed explanation, the question from the patient is usually, "What do you think I should do, Doctor?" The patient implicitly trusts the physician to recommend a course of action that is best medically and ethically.

Decision making near the end of life is often challenging. Would another CT scan, surgical procedure or chemotherapy regimen really help? What are the costs, in dollars and discomfort? Do the patient and family members agree? In an emergency, what attempts should be made to resuscitate? Should life-support measures be started, continued or discontinued?

At Charles's hospital in Wausau, Wisc., these questions are discussed by the physician and other caregivers, including physician specialists, nurses, social workers and chaplains. In especially challenging situations, the hospital ethics committee may be asked to consult.

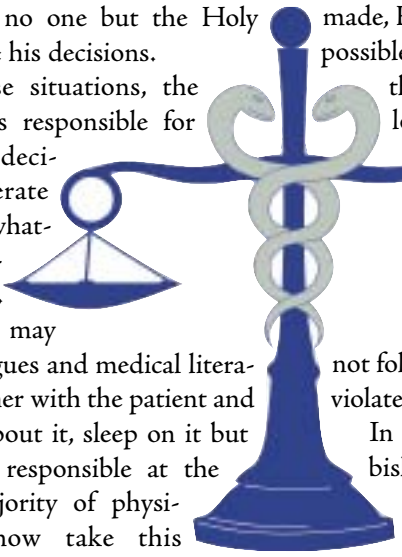
In a remote jungle hospital, Father John often has found himself working as the only physician—de facto chief of medicine, surgery, obstetrics and pediatrics, hospital C.E.O., chaplain and sole member of the ethics committee—with no one but the Holy Spirit to guide his decisions.

In all these situations, the physician feels responsible for making the decision—to operate or not, etc.—whatever the situation demands. The physician may consult colleagues and medical literature, talk further with the patient and family, pray about it, sleep on it but will still feel responsible at the end. The majority of physicians we know take this responsibility very seriously. They ask themselves what they would do if the patient were their father, mother, sibling or child. They know that their decision may turn out to be wrong, even when they are "certain" they are doing the right thing.

The one step the physician probably does not take is to ask the opinion of the bishop, unless the bishop is a personal friend or has participated in ethics committee discussions, bedside conferences with the patient and family hospice care discussions or has otherwise indicated a willingness to share the burden of complex medical decision making. Even then, the physician would not abdicate his decision making role to the bishop. We can not imagine saying to a patient, "I have talked to the bishop about this...." The response would be: "The bishop! What does he know about this? You are my doctor. What do you think I should do?"

If the bishop offers an opinion or judgment after the decision has been made, Father O'Rourke suggests two possible responses. First, to accept the bishop's statement and follow it, while disagreeing. Second, to "accept the authority of the statement but *disagree* with its reasoning and so not follow it because doing so would violate one's own conscience."

In those rare instances when a bishop's opinion is known before a medical decision is made, we believe the first option is not valid. We see no justification for abdicating our responsibility as physicians to the bishop or anyone



ART: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/ELNE

else. And we consider the second option as not only a right but a responsibility of the physician. We will do our best to educate ourselves and seek advice from others who may be more knowledgeable. But each patient has a right to our best advice for them, and we accept that responsibility.

We place our confidence in Sister Margaret McBride and the physicians and others on the hospital ethics committee who decided to do what they thought was best under very difficult circumstances. Our hope is that Bishop Olmsted will become a part of the discernment process for difficult medical ethics decisions in his diocese and that other bishops will also do this. It may give them some sleepless nights, but it will give them empathy for those making difficult medical decisions, allow them to share their ethical insights as decisions are made, and it could offer a lesson in humility about the limits of ethical "certainty" in medical decisions. A

ART | LEO J. O'DONOVAN

IMAGINING JESUS

Rembrandt's haunting view of Christ

In all likelihood, Jesus of Nazareth was shorter and darker-skinned than most of us imagine—if, in today's image-glutted culture, we imagine him at all.

St. Ignatius Loyola, in his Spiritual Exercises, recommended that one "compose the scene" about which one is praying, seeing the figures involved and their surroundings in intimate detail. It is part of his approach to prayer as a conversation among friends. Yet even the most ardent hearts may draw back these days from picturing the eye color, length of nose and chin-line of someone they may call friend but whose mercy also burns, as Flannery O'Connor wrote.

"The Supper at Emmaus" (1648), Musée du Louvre, Paris

Early Christian writers like Justin, Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria supposed that Jesus was not striking in appearance. With the Gnostic impulses in the third century, however, the image of a youthfully perfect Jesus emerged, yielding then to the Christ of Byzantine icons, with a prophet's beard, his hair parted in the middle and a mysterious, sideways glance.

The Byzantine influence continued into the early Netherlandish art of Jan van Eyck and Robert Campin. Even more influential were Veronica's Veil (or the Sudarium) and the Mandylion of Edessa: the former, which artists commemorated in the Latin West as the veil Veronica pressed to Jesus' face; the latter, venerated in the Byzantine East, a cloth Jesus was believed to have sent to Edessa to heal its king. A letter purportedly written by Publius Lentulus, governor of Judea before Pontius Pilate, was published in Cologne in the 14th century by Ludolph of Saxony in his *Vita Christi*. It described Jesus as having hair "the color of a ripe hazelnut, parted on top…his eyes…clear and commanding, never apt to laugh, but sooner inclined to cry. In sum…the most beautiful of all mortals."

Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus, a finely focused exhibition that originated at the Louvre, is at the Philadelphia Museum of Art until Oct. 30 and will move to the Detroit Institute of Arts (Nov. 20 to Feb. 12). The show tells the story of how the greatest artist of the Dutch Golden Age responded to inherited imagery of Jesus, and especially of his face.

Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1606-69), born in Leiden to a prosperous miller's family, was gifted as a draftsman and painter but knew great personal sorrow as well. After moving

ART: REMBRANDT VAN RIJN. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART

from Leiden to Amsterdam in 1631, he met his future wife, Saskia van Uylenburgh, there in 1633 and grew successful enough to buy a large house for them in the center of the city's Jewish quarter. Sephardic Jews had come the century before as refugees from the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal. Ashkenazi Jews began to arrive in the 1630s, fleeing oppression in Poland and Central Europe. Fascinated by their dress and manner, Rembrandt drew them all.

A gem-like painting from these years, "Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery," comes to the United States from London's National Gallery for the first time. The lower third of the densely populated canvas shows the repentant woman kneeling in a brilliantly lit white dress, just left of center, as a central accuser points her out to Jesus—barefoot, with long, light-brown hair and a plain brown robe. The contrast between the woman's downcast shame and Jesus' calm compassion grips the viewer. But Jesus here is the traditional, generalized and idealized Christ who had figured in the artist's earlier biblical scenes, including the "Passion of Christ" series, a crucial, early commission for Frederik Hendrik, the Stadtholder (or leader) of what was then called the United Provinces.

"Head of Christ" (c. 1648-56), Philadelphia Museum of Art

"Head of Christ" (1648-54), Detroit Institute of the Arts

Drawings and etchings—of Christ in the house of Martha and Mary or raising Lazarus, for example—also show Jesus as a vigorous but not highly individualized figure. In two charcoal drawings made around 1648, however, Rembrandt uses a young Jewish man, likely Sephardic, as his model.

About the same time, in a series of perhaps eight oil sketches of which seven have survived, he and his studio worked from a similar model in highly personal studies of expression and pose. The exhibition brings six of the extant panels together for the first time since 1656, and the Jesus they imagine is arrestingly pensive, empathetic, interior. Dark eyes beneath dark brown hair open you into Jesus' meditative mood. In a great panel from Berlin he even seems puzzled, fully human but strangely alone. The viewer is drawn to him, but also hold back. Another, showing him with clasped hands, was perhaps a study for a Mount of Olives scene. If this is indeed the prayer of testing, one does not wish to be found with the sleeping disciples.

ON THE WEB
Additional images from the Rembrandt exhibit.
americamagazine.org/slideshow

Philadelphia's fine example is closest to Berlin's and suggests a moment

just before such prayer. In a panel from Harvard's Fogg Museum the prayer has become anguished, almost tortured.

One of the panels, from the Detroit Institute of Arts and "Attributed to Rembrandt," has a soft, searching face that may have been a model for Jesus' face in the Louvre's "Supper at Emmaus" (in the United States for the first time since 1936). At table with his disciples in a high, rounded alcove—one of those grand empty spaces with which Rembrandt evokes the world—Jesus is pulling apart a loaf of braided challah. The younger disciple to the left folds his hands in prayer; his older friend at the right pushes back his chair; behind him a young boy, unaware, brings food to the table. But your eye returns always to the rapturous expression on Christ's face. Yes, the story of the disciples who did not recognize their Lord has reached its climax in their sudden recognition of him over broken bread. Once more he communes with his brethren. But he is now glorified—and still more clearly communing with his God. This is the Rembrandt, as Simon Schama writes in *Rembrandt's Eyes,* "who could make the things of this world hymn the sanctity of the world to come, yet manage, somehow, not to trespass impiously across its borders."

About a year later, using etching, engraving and dry point on paper, Rembrandt produced his greatest print, "Christ Preaching: Bring Thy Little Children Unto Me," known as "The Hundred Guilder Print" because of the remarkable sum paid for it. Blending scenes of Jesus healing the sick and rebuking the disciples for dismissing the children, Rembrandt's skill in composing the scene and rendering its depths of light and darkness is astonishing. Together, the print, the oil sketches and the Louvre painting represent a watershed period of creativity. Now the viewer is drawn to the human, individual face of Jesus—and sense his healing command less in dramatic action than in sheer presence. As

Darkness: For Mother Teresa

I am a small ugly woman
whom God, for reasons known only to him,
decided to persecute with holiness.

I have attempted to lose myself
all my life, but he who never forgets
held mirrors up everywhere I turned.

Now I've died and they have found the "darkness"
I knew since Calcutta, the absence that sat
like an ugly child on my chest.

I became their narrow fingers reaching out
from filth, their stench no water
could rinse away, their deaths held too tightly

for too long. I became their blank eyes
and finally saw everything. Yet I
knelt beside them dry-eyed and tireless.

I prayed when I had nothing left
but words. I brought back rags
in cardboard boxes that would not burn.

I became an old woman, tired
beyond sleeping. The dead had become
my arms, my breasts, my dry tears.

I was alone. I wished for certainty
more than life. I had neither.
Only old hopes from old stories.

When I tried to pray, ashes flew
around my face. The sign of the cross
blessed my shallow breathing.

Then the old priest blessed me instead.
I was too stubborn to run into the light.
I will outwit my lover a little longer,

I said to the thin air inside my mind.
I thought I heard another one outside the door,
raised my arms toward him, and was gone.

MICHAEL D. RILEY

MICHAEL D. RILEY, *emeritus professor of English at Penn State University, has published three books of poetry in recent years, including* Circling the Stones *(Creighton University Press, 2007).*

Master, he teaches us to pray. As anchor of our faith, his own prayer draws ours within his own.

From this time on, with the greater freedom of his so-called "rough style," Rembrandt remained committed to a realistically imagined, meditative image of Jesus; and the show closes with a stunning, almost life-size bust of "Christ with His Arms Folded" (c. 1657-61), for which the Berlin "Head of Christ" may have been a model. In a brown cloak and russet tunic, the Lord turns to meet the viewer's gaze fully. Uncommonly handsome, with long brown hair, dark eyes, an aquiline nose and sensuous lips, he addresses each of us individually and searchingly. What you might feel and say is between the two of you.

The serenity of the contemplative ideal has been achieved. Could it be taken any further? Or, with Rembrandt and his contemporary Velázquez, have the possibilities of realism for religious representation been taken as far as great art can reach? In these two artists, sobriety and serenity meet, painterly skill and holy mystery are one. Many paintings of Jesus that come afterward risk being moralistic, didactic or sentimental. For an increasingly critical and skeptical world, it is no wonder that the burning clarity of rediscovered early Flemish and Italian art (the so-called "primitives") was such a revelation early in the 20th century, or that, mid-century, the elemental art of someone like Georges Rouault became plausible, or that Abstract Expressionism could then claim attention for its "spiritual intentions."

Perhaps the purity and simplicity of some abstract art today or to come may suit our longing for visual religious expression. But in Philadelphia for the moment, and soon in Detroit, the face of Jesus is hauntingly present—even if it is three and a half centuries old.

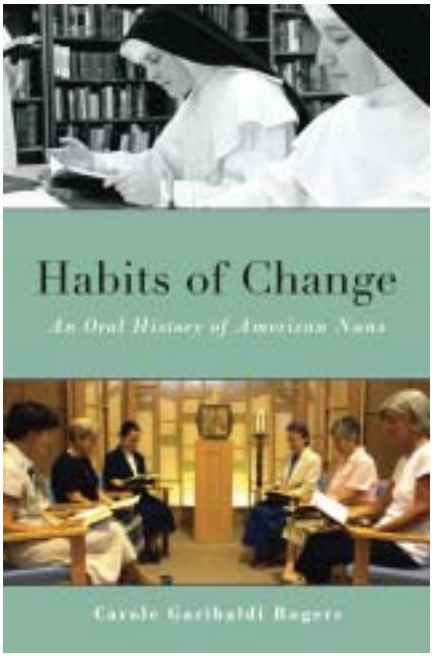
LEO J. O'DONOVAN, S.J., *is president emeritus of Georgetown University.*

BOOKS | KATARINA SCHUTH

THE SISTERS' STORIES

HABITS OF CHANGE
An Oral History of American Nuns

By Carole Garibaldi Rogers
Oxford Univ. Press. 344p $27.95



Anyone who is curious about the life of women religious in recent years will be informed and inspired by *Habits of Change*. Through oral histories collected between 1991 and 1995 and again in 2010, Carole Garibaldi Rogers not only opens the doors of convents but also reveals what was in the hearts and on the minds of almost 100 women religious from 1960 onward.

Coming from more than 40 widely assorted religious congregations with both traditional and progressive leanings, these women were interviewed in 15 states representing most regions of the United States. In the 1990s the interviewees ranged in age from their 40s to their 70s; by 2010 some were in their 90s. Only seven had left the convent in the intervening years, and a few have died. Through skillful editing of much longer narratives, the author offers readers a realistic and poignant portrayal of the "uncommon change" sisters experienced from the 1960s to the present. Each sister discloses her struggles and conveys her sense of fulfillment as she navigated those turbulent years in church and society.

The first section of Part One, "From the Past into the Present," includes narratives of sisters who served primarily in what Rogers labels "evolving ministries." Though these were the traditional works of teaching, health care, missionary efforts, spiritual leadership and parish service, the sisters' innovative insights and fresh approaches instilled new life. In the second section, "changing attitudes," the themes are different as some sisters moved into more cutting-edge activities—from social and religious protest, to creative arts, to ecumenical engagements. Part Two, "From the Present into the Future," features the reflections of sisters who "stayed the course" until their deaths in the 1990s; others are "living in the present" in enlivening new ways; and some are "envisioning the future" in dramatically changed circumstances.

The heart and soul of the book are the forthright revelations found in individual narratives. A sense of progression is evident in the lives of these dedicated women. Early along, their focus on spiritual development was superseded by the demands of ministry, with the pressure of teaching large classes and nursing for long hours dominating their lives. One sister who is now in her 80s recalls how exhausted she was all the time with

class preparation, sacristy work and convent upkeep. Though she remained faithful to communal observances, she never really had time for prayer on her own. Many years later, when she told a Trappist retreat director that she wanted to spend her retirement learning to pray, he said, "You've been in the convent 60 years, and you don't know how to pray? I am appalled." Though the comment lacked sensitivity to the demands made on her, she said it shook her to the core. Like many others facing similar situations, she resolved to do what she could to feel God's presence and listen to God's voice in her remaining years. For many sisters, priorities eventually shifted and ministry took its proper place in conjunction with prayer, but this balance came years after they entered religious life.

The disproportionate emphasis on interminable work and the pressure to do more is exemplified in many stories. The impact of the collective efforts leap from the pages as sisters recall developing health care clinics for thousands in poor neighborhoods, starting schools for children in nearly abandoned inner cities and remote lands without educational opportunities, leading spiritual renewal in retreat centers and parishes for people hungering to know God, and marching for causes of justice and peace throughout the country. These achievements and contributions to the life of the church are remarkable and bring to mind the great loss the church is enduring as more and more sisters retire. The author wonders, "What would it mean for the Catholic Church—and American society—if nuns were no longer around?"

Perhaps to the surprise of some, the interviews reveal unwavering dedication to community even as living arrangements and ministries changed. For some it is integral to their monastic and contemplative way of life, but even for those in active ministry outside the convent, loyalty to community and church becomes deeper and more precious through the years.

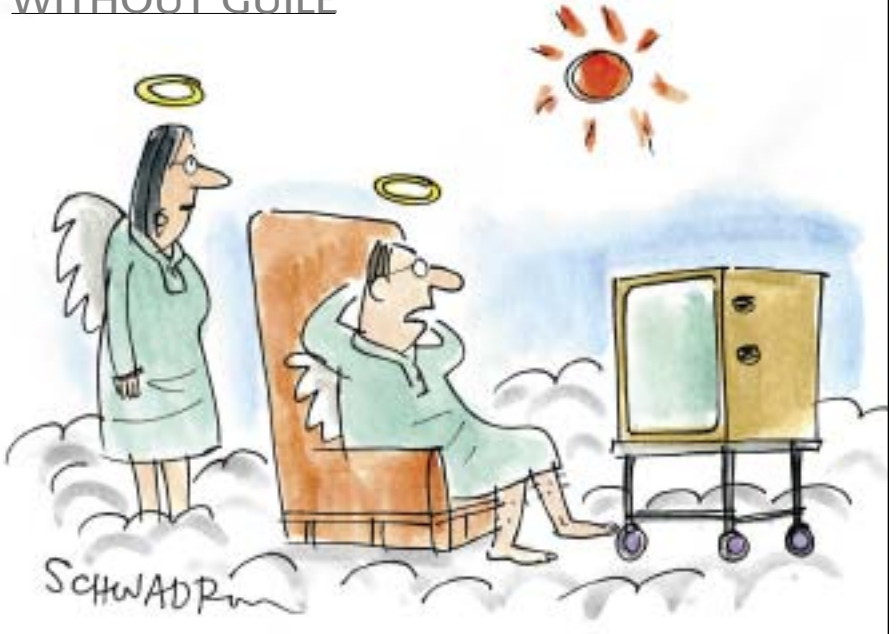
Nonetheless, communal restraints in the form of obedience or custom vexed and infuriated some sisters, especially those who engaged in cutting-edge ministries long before the community was ready to embrace them. Almost all of these well-educated women maintain their commitment to their communities even as some of them speak out for a greater role for women and against both public policy and church directives that prevent participation and muffle their voices.

Almost always the author gets her interpretation just right. She understands and portrays the diversity and complexity of contemporary Catholicism through the all-encompassing interviews. In the prologue, "Where They've Been," she provides a compact recent history of religious life, touching on such key developments as the Sister Formation Conference, the Second Vatican Council and the women's movement, even up to the recent Apostolic Visitation and Doctrinal Investigation. In the epilogue, "Where They Are Now," she reflects on the essentials of religious life: cherishing the contemplative dimensions of life, maintaining communitarian bonds, caring for the underserved and remaining grounded in the Gospel. These values are strongly represented in the sisters' stories of the past.

Neither Rogers nor her interviewees say much about younger religious in new communities and the paths they are following. We would all benefit if she took up the task of finding out.

KATARINA SCHUTH, O.S.F., *holds the Endowed Chair for the Social Scientific Study of Religion at The Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity, University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, Minn.*

WITHOUT GUILE



"It's really nice up here, but I miss all the negative political ads."

CARTOON BY HARLEY SCHWADRON

THOMAS J. SHELLEY

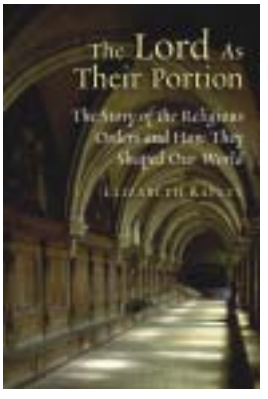
THEY LED THE WAY

THE LORD AS THEIR PORTION

The Story of the Religious Orders and How They Shaped Our World

By Elizabeth Rapley
Eerdmans. 352p $24

Forty years ago David Knowles, who was a Benedictine monk prior to his appointment as the Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, wrote a splendid popular survey of Christian monasticism. Elizabeth Rapley, who quotes Knowles with respect, has set a more ambitious goal for herself with this popular history of the religious orders of the Catholic Church. She has succeeded admirably in this informative, judicious and fast-paced narrative that is a pleasure to read.



The first impression one brings away from this book is the seemingly endless variations that religious life has assumed in the church over the course of almost two millennia as devout Christians sought to perfect their spiritual life through the traditional vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. At least one religious order even gave a unique spin to the seemingly inflexible vow of chastity. The Spanish military Order of Santiago welcomed married knights, allowing them to substitute a vow of conjugal fidelity for the usual vow of celibacy.

Rapley acknowledges that some forms of religious life offend every modern sensibility, especially the medieval military orders like the Templars and the Teutonic Knights, whose spirituality had little in common with the Sermon on the Mount or the contemporary preaching of St. Francis of Assisi and his followers. Even the theologically astute David Knowles threw up his hands in bewilderment rather than try to explain the spectacle of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the oracle of his age, blessing the Second Crusade and sending thousands to their death. In 1187 the Spanish military order of Calatrava affiliated with the Cistercians without abandoning their own bellicose charism, leading one observer to declare that "they were wolves at the sound of the trumpets, lambs at the sound of the bells."

An unusual and welcome feature of this book is the attention that the author gives to women religious, who have a long if neglected history. The origins of Christian monasticism are usually traced to the Desert Fathers in fourth-century Egypt. Rapley informs us that when Antony arrived in the desert to establish his hermitage, he found that his sister was already there. Pachomius founded communities of women as well as of men. When St. Jerome ("one of the church's original misogynists," according to Rapley) decamped to the Holy Land to lead a quasi-monastic life, he was accompanied by two aristocratic Roman ladies.

For most of Christian history, male religious far outnumbered female. Not until the 19th century was the ratio reversed. Because of the lowly legal status of women in medieval society, the Poor Clares, and even St. Clare herself, found it considerably more difficult to embrace a life of apostolic poverty than did the male followers of St. Francis. Perforce for a thousand years nunneries were largely aristocratic institutions where social class sometimes trumped gender even in liturgical celebrations. Professor John McManners tells the revealing story of a convent of snobbish Benedictine nuns in 18th-century Angers. At Mass each day, before Communion, the priest was obliged to leave the altar and appear before the choir stall of the abbess, who presented him with the key to the tabernacle.

Not until the foundation of the Daughters of Charity by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac in 17th-century France did it become possible for poor women without a dowry to serve other poor people as religious in schools, hospitals and other charitable institutions. Even then, in order for these women to accomplish their good works, it was necessary to circumvent the restrictive legislation of the Council of Trent that would have confined them to the cloister. The Ursulines and Visitandines, to say nothing of the indomitable Mary Ward and her "English Ladies," had tried to do so earlier and failed.

A recurring theme in the history of the religious orders is the disappointing

but all too human experience that nothing fails like success. Rapley provides abundant evidence of this phenomenon. One of the great events in the history of medieval monasticism was the founding in the year 1098 of the Cistercians, an order of reformed Benedictine monks who were dedicated to recovering the poverty and asceticism of the Desert Fathers. But despite their best efforts to remain true to their ideal, and ironically because of their efficient work ethic, within a century the "poor men of Christ," as the Cistercians originally called themselves, became the most successful agricultural entrepreneurs in medieval Europe. "Proto-capitalists," Rapley calls them.

Nevertheless, a few centuries later, the Cistercians produced their own reform movement, which is forever associated with the abbey of La Trappe and its thundering abbot, Armand-Jean de Rancé. Perhaps the best example of the phoenix-like ability of religious orders to rise from the ashes is their recovery from the catastrophe of the French Revolution. The 19th century witnessed a remarkable and totally unexpected flourishing of religious life. For much of the century in France at least one new religious order appeared each year. In officially anticlerical Italy Don Bosco established a new religious order dedicated to St. Francis de Sales that became the third largest order in the Catholic Church.

Rapley, adjunct professor of history at the University of Ottawa, regrets that she was unable to devote more space to the history of the religious orders in her native Canada. She gives generous attention to the role of women religious in the United States, but she might also have mentioned that that they were largely responsible for the creation of what Sister Patricia Byrne, C.S.J., has called (without exaggeration) the largest system of private education in the history of the world.

One can hardly fault the author, however, for failing to cover every aspect of this vast topic in a modest survey of a little over 300 pages. There are no footnotes or bibliography, and unfortunately no mention of monasticism in the Eastern Orthodox Churches, but there are helpful suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter and a glossary of technical terms.

At a time when virtually all religious orders in the United States are in steep decline, this book supplies needed historical perspective and spiritual encouragement. It reminds American Catholics of their debt to the religious orders and offers hope for the future because of the legendary ability of men and women religious to revitalize not only their own communities but the church itself during some of the darkest moments of its history.

MSGR. THOMAS J. SHELLEY, *a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, is professor of church history at Fordham University.*

LETTERS

The Dead Canary

In response to Signs of the Times, "Pope Promotes 'Unworthy' but Open Church" (10/10): Being a voice in the world but not of the world is a tough road to follow. The church will change; even the decision not to change produces change, because the worldly context in which the church serves is changing. So does the church pretend not to change or does it accept that it does and finally embrace change as a way to serve God?

Does the church really believe it had everything figured out in the 13th century? The failure to embrace progress—to embrace women and end the arrogant clericalism—has led to the decline of church attendance and the priesthood worldwide. The church is like the canary in the coal mine. If the canary dies, the miners are in danger. As the church's influence declines so does the sense of God in the world. Yet its inability to be a voice is a self-inflicted wound. Jesus showed that service to the weak and vulnerable is the path of the righteous. The church must embrace that teaching or decline.

CLIFF SIMMONS
Columbus, Ohio

Call on the Classics

In response to "Catechesis or Theology" (Current Comment, 10/10), here is an idea that would enrich Catholic content without changing core requirements. Introduce Catholic and Christian classics into the required reading lists of appropriate literature, political science, economics and history courses. There are plenty of books available, including ancient classics in modern translations. In addition, add distinguished lecturers to lead discussions of these books and how they apply to modern issues.

C. R. ERLINGER
San Antonio, Tex.

Don't Quit

Re Valerie Schultz's "Raised On Faith" (10/17): Although each generation is different, there are some eternal truths about God, human nature and the relationship between them. The critical question for us all is, "Who do you say I am?"

When my son was in his teens, he told me it would be hypocritical for him to receive Communion because he no longer believed in God, his years in Catholic school notwithstanding. My

wife and I were convinced we had failed in some way, and comments from several priests that he was "seeking and testing" were not reassuring. In college he did not go to Mass, and when he transferred to a highly secular college in California we wondered if he was lost forever. But we did not abandon him.

One day he began to inch back, to answer the question, "Who do you say I am?" As he sat in his apartment, overwhelmed with his graduate studies, he had an interior locution: "If you don't serve me, you will have wasted your life."

He returned to Mass and the Eucharist and became a Jesuit priest. He could still rail against poor homilies, insensitive bishops and Vatican rigidity, and he still deepened his relationship with Jesus and served him in Central America, East St. Louis, Nigeria and Rwanda.

In Africa he became aware of an esophageal cancer. As he died he prayed that through his illness his love of God would be manifest, and he raised his withered hand to bless us.

St. Paul lists things that might separate us from the love of Christ but cannot: death, life, angels, powers, etc. One could add the issues of women priests, pedophile priests and bishops who fail in their duties. These are not inconsequential, but neither are they reasons to leave the church. God does not abandon the unworthy, nor do we abandon our children. The invitation will always be there.

ROBERT LUCHI
Mission, Kan.

What Happened to C.F.M.?

Reading Richard K. Cross's "Just Parenting"(10/17), we can say without embarrassment that we have been "movement" groupies, starting in the 1900s—Legion of Mary, Vincentians, Marriage/Engaged Encounter, Voice of the Faithful and others; but the Catholic Family Movement was the best. The couples we bonded with all remained married.

Pundits suggest that the encyclical "Humanae Vitae" was the beginning of the church slide. Maybe. But because C.F.M. leaders, Pat and Patty Crowley, were on the birth control commission, it did cause the C.F.M. slide. Our pastor at the time "homilied" that C.F.M. stood for Communist Front Movement. This caused the 15 members in our parish to bail out to other parishes.

"Observe, judge, act" have been the core values of lay involvement, from Aquinas to Cardinal Joseph Cardijn. Without these prudential steps, movements can become just pious associations.

ED AND PEG GLEASON
San Francisco, Calif.

No More Pope Saints, Please

In response to Mo Guernon's "The Forgotten Pope" (10/24): I have read Pope John Paul I's book, in which he writes letters to dead people. It was pastoral but plodding. He comes across as a humble man, and the church needs humble men.

That said, I have no wish to see another pope canonized. Pacelli, Montini, Roncalli and Wojtyla are all on the way; and within two seconds of his death people will call for the canonization of Pope Benedict. Since the emphasis today is on political correctness, Luciani is going nowhere fast. The others were fascinating, filled with goodness, sophisticated and almost mystical. But saints? The papacy requires both political sense and honesty. Of all the recent popes, Roncalli was the most capable of looking reality in the eye. As for Luciani, we may never know. But I hope his biographer will tell about his relationship with Jesus.

DAVID POWER
Paris, France

This Will Take Some Time

I was pained at reading "Time of the Preacher" (Current Comment, 9/12). Another expert gauging effective preaching with a stopwatch! I cannot imagine St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine, Billy Graham, Martin Luther King Jr. or Fulton Sheen—all effective preachers—submitting to this norm.

I taught homiletics in seminaries for more than 20 years. In addition to graduate studies in theology, I have a graduate degree in public speaking. Father Roy Shelly cannot claim to have invented the "one-sentence summary."

Furthermore, no one-week or six-week workshop will teach people how to preach any more than workshops can teach the piano or guitar. Preaching demands time and practice. Seminaries should require a course in homiletics every semester.

RICHARD J. KEHOE, C.M.
St. Vincent's Seminary
Philadelphia, Pa.

Face It!

Re "Jesuits Urged to Protect Creation" (Signs of the Times, 10/10): Any discussion of protecting creation that does not address the growing human population, now over six billion and rising, is simply a feel-good discussion. The article suggests that our sensitivity to the mystery and vastness of life has been blunted. No amount of clean energy or greenhouse gas and pollution reduction will overcome the impact of several billion more people on this planet. Face it. Natural family planning is not the solution to this huge explosion of people. It is an alternative for a small group in a position to use it, but to address the growing worldwide population, it will not be effective.

JIM OKRASZEWSKI
Land O'Lakes, Wis.

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Inexhaustible Light

THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A), NOV. 6, 2011

Readings: Wis 6:12-16; Ps 63:2-8; 1 Thes 4:13-18; Mt 25:1-13

"Those who were ready went into the wedding feast" (Mt 25:10)

I am always prepared. When I travel I pack extras of everything just in case I or someone I am with has a need. I readily identify with the wise virgins in today's Gospel. But there is something deeply disturbing as the parable plays out. The women who come prepared for the long vigil will not share their oil with their needy sisters. Instead, they send them off on a fool-hardy mission at midnight to go buy their own. How can such seemingly selfish hoarding be laudable?

Many biblical commentators explain that parables are meant to make only one point, and selfishness versus sharing is not the point of this one. It is a parable about the end time, which speaks about how each person needs to be accountable for his or her own good deeds, or lack of them, at the time of judgment. Just as in the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus says, "Let your light shine before others so they may see your good works and give glory to God" (Mt 5:16), so in today's Gospel the oil that fuels the light is also to be understood as good deeds, and no one can share theirs with someone who has none.

Nonetheless, there is still a disturbing dynamic set up by the parable. It constructs a dichotomous world in which some are wise and some foolish, some are completely prepared and some not at all; some are welcomed in to the feast and some are locked out. Matthew has a penchant for binary oppositions like this: weeds and wheat; sheep and goats; a house built on rock and one built on sand; the wise and the foolish. But real life seems always to be somewhere in between: each of us a little bit foolish in our growth toward wisdom, all of us somewhat prepared, but never completely.

When placed in the context of the whole Gospel, instead of inducing fear, the parable gives assurance that when we are responding all along to the lifelong courtship by the Bridegroom, we will be ready for the moment of consummation. We prepare for the critical moment of meeting the Beloved face to face with all our daily choices for living justly. Every time we resist hoarding oil for ourselves, not stockpiling so that others are left wanting, we allow Christ's light to fill us and spread to others.

It is as Isaac of Nineveh, a seventh-century Nestorian bishop quoted by John Shea in *The Spiritual Wisdom of the Gospels for Christian Preachers and Teachers*, describes: "There is a love, like a small lamp, fed by oil, that goes out when the oil is ended; or like a rain-fed stream which goes dry when rain no longer feeds it. But there is a love, like a spring gushing from the earth, never to be exhausted." Wise ones become one with the inexhaustible river of Christ's love; their oil is continuously replenished as it is consumed.

Being wise also means knowing, as the first reading describes, that it is not our efforts alone that make for the light. Wisdom herself, who is unfading resplendence, seeks us out. Long vigils through times of darkness end at the dawn with Holy Wisdom sitting right at one's own gate, wanting to be found. Moreover, a closed door is never the final act. Just as God's power burst through the stone door of the tomb, Holy Wisdom can daily open the door of our hearts, transforming our lack of oil into an inexhaustible river of light and love.

BARBARA E. REID

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- How do you keep vigil for the arrival of the Beloved?
- How is Holy Wisdom keeping vigil for you?
- How do you keep the lamp of hope trimmed and burning?

ART: TAD DUNNE

BARBARA E. REID, O.P., *a member of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Mich., is a professor of New Testament studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Ill., where she is vice president and academic dean. Her latest book,* Abiding Word: Sunday Reflections for Year B *(Liturgical Press), is a compilation and expansion of articles that first appeared in* ***America****.*

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