

# America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY

AUG. 31- SEPT. 7, 2009 \$2.75



## Notre Dame Revisited

JOHN M. D'ARCY • JOHN R. QUINN

# OF MANY THINGS

**T**his year is one of major transition for editors at **America**. Five of our number are moving on to new assignments: two to new works and three to studies. At the same time, two new lay co-workers will join the editorial board, and three lay people will become officers of America Press Inc.

Father Joseph A. O'Hare, president emeritus of Fordham University in New York, has been part of the editorial team or its leader for 17 years. From 1972 to 1974 he was an associate editor and from 1974 to 1984 editor in chief. In 2004 he returned for a second term as associate editor. Joe, a beloved figure around New York City, headed the city's Electoral Campaign Finance Board and served on the city's Charter Revision Commission. In the past five years he penned many of our editorials and comments on U.S. politics. He could also be relied on for judicious advice on sensitive issues. He now turns to pastoral work, which he loves.

Father Dennis M. Linehan has worked as an associate editor since 1994. Unheralded, Dennis assumed many necessary but tedious jobs, particularly assembling our semi-annual index. In addition, he vetted manuscripts, edited the letters section and oversaw the final proofreading. For the last several years, he also scanned the Catholic press to prepare our weekly Signs of the Times news feature. Around the editorial table, he was always a source of historical perspective as well as "high class" and mostly reliable gossip—a particular gift of Jesuit historians. In September Dennis will move to the Jesuit Center at Wernersville, Pa.

Jim McDermott was known here for his enormous creativity and affability. Always interested in videography, he produced a number of short videos for our Web site, and in the coming year he will be completing some unfinished film and video projects as he applies to film school.

Jim Keane is returning to his home state of California for theological studies at the Jesuit School of Theology, Santa Clara University. Jim, a man of prodigious talent and accomplishment, was our most reliable rewrite man. He worked with Jim McDermott on the historical pieces drawn from the **America** archives. He wrote exceptionally sensitive cultural criticism and some of our best humor. His "Oops!" article was the hit of our centennial issue (4/13).

Matt Malone leaves us at the end of August for theological studies at Heythrop College, London. Matt has served as our art director these past two years and oversaw the magazine's redesign last winter, a major feat which has won acclaim. For the last several months, he has also edited the Signs of the Times weekly news section.

As the Jesuits move on, we are preparing to welcome lay editors. We are pleased to announce that in September Kevin Clarke, formerly of the Claretian publications Salt of the Earth and U.S. Catholic, will join us as an associate editor, returning from Chicago to his native New York. Before too long we hope to announce the arrival of a second lay colleague.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that in this our centennial year, we are completing the transition to a mostly lay board of directors. Elected as officers of America Press Inc. are Albert Pierce, chairman; Kathleen Anderson, vice chairman; and Christina Peppard, secretary. Dr. Pierce is director of the Institute for National Security Ethics and Leadership at the National Defense University. Ms. Anderson is executive director of the Catholic Education Foundation of Los Angeles. Christina Peppard, an ethicist, is scholar-in-residence at the (Episcopal) Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York. I will continue to serve as president of the corporation.

**DREW CHRISTIANSEN, S.J.**

# America

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Cover: President Obama delivers the commencement address at the University of Notre Dame on May 17. Photo: CNS/Christopher Smith.

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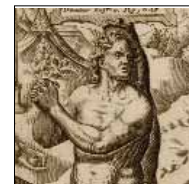
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### Scientist in Chief

It is not surprising that the decision to name Francis S. Collins, an evangelical Christian, as head of the National Institutes of Health has already met with resistance from prominent atheists. In a column on the op-ed page of *The New York Times*, Sam Harris, author of *The End of Faith*, questioned whether a man who has argued that “science offers no answers to the most pressing questions of human existence” should serve as administrator of \$30 billion for medical research. Yet Dr. Collins is a well-respected scientist and administrator who oversaw the mapping of the human genome in his role as director of the National Human Genome Research Institute. These credentials are the chief reason he was named to the N.I.H. post.

By picking a believer, the Obama administration declined to subscribe to the argument that faith and science are necessarily antagonistic. At a time when books by “new atheists” top the bestseller lists, this is a welcome endorsement from a very influential source. Of course, Collins’s appointment will not settle the disputes over evolution or the origins of life, but it should provide an opportunity for reflection, not just about how faith and science are complementary, but also where they part. Harris seems most troubled by Collins’s belief that God sometimes acts “outside of nature.” Yet the origins of the universe remain a mystery, and even the eminent physicist Stephen Hawking concedes that the forces behind the Big Bang are difficult to explain absent a discussion of God. These questions will likely have little impact on Collins’s administrative duties at the N.I.H., nor should they. But perhaps his appointment will prompt more readers to pick up his book, *The Language of God*—and put down *The End of Faith*.

### A Passion for Life

Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who passed away on Aug. 11, one month after her 88th birthday, leaves a rich legacy: the Special Olympics. Through her leadership the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation funded research on finding ways to treat mental retardation. For four decades she campaigned tirelessly for the rights of those with intellectual and other disabilities. It was her passion, her cause, and she was committed to bringing her vision to fruition; now the Special Olympic competitions take place not only regionally and nationally but internationally. These sporting events involve up to three million individuals of all ages. Although she never held public office, she embodied the family’s public service tradition and perhaps had a greater impact on

people’s lives than any of her siblings from the Kennedy clan. Her Catholic faith informed her pro-life actions; and her message is all the more relevant today, in light of scientific/medical experiments and new procedures that seek to screen for genetic defects. (See her article on prenatal testing for Down syndrome in the May 14, 2007, issue of *America*.)

During the 1987 Special Olympics World Games, held in South Bend, Ind., she gave a rousing speech to the athletes: “You are the stars and the world is watching you,” her voice rang out. “By your presence you send a message of hope to every village, every city, every nation.... [You have] the right to play on any playing field...the right to study in any school...the right to hold a job...the right to be anyone’s neighbor. You have earned it!” We applaud Mrs. Shriver, a special lady, for her life of love and service.

### African Focus

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s visit to seven African nations over a period of 11 days in early August shows that the administration takes Africa seriously. Her message was a mixture of encouragement and criticism. Her reception in Liberia by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the woman who has guided that nation’s transition from conflict to peace, was particularly warm.

To the battered, violated women of eastern Congo, she promised \$17 million in aid to strengthen security and provide medical assistance. To those in an AIDS clinic in South Africa she pledged to continue the *Pepfar* policy for the prevention and treatment of AIDS. She urged government leaders in Kenya and Nigeria to rid their nations of corruption and to assure more democratic elections and government. She urged South Africa to take a stronger role in returning normalcy to its troubled neighbor Zimbabwe.

Throughout the trip, the critical tone of Mrs. Clinton’s message to government leaders received strong approval from the crowds, especially the youth. Kenya’s Prime Minister Raila Odinga, who himself had been confined to prison for 11 years, objected that Africa does not need to be lectured about democracy. Later he complimented Secretary Clinton on conceding to President Obama in the Democratic primary. How to concede an election, he allowed, “was a lesson Africa needs to learn seriously.”

In many ways Secretary Clinton’s trip echoed and reinforced the policies enunciated by President Obama in his brief visit to Ghana in July—a willingness to assist as partners working with Africans rather than simply providing charity for Africans.

# Obstacles to Reform

The biggest obstacles to health care reform have little to do with legislation currently being considered by Congress. Obstacles like rising unemployment, a growing number of home foreclosures and the continuing economic instability are currently being magnified by an underlying public fear about the future. That fear is manifest in the ferocious disruptions of town-hall meetings with members of Congress, urged on by opponents of reform. Long exploited to stoke the “war on terror” and to combat “big government,” fear of the future seemed to many to have been conquered with the last presidential election. But now, given the ill effects at home of the global recession, fear is making a comeback.

President Obama’s economic stimulus has kept the financial tsunami from hitting with full force, and some economists claim that the Great Recession has bottomed out. Even so, many people are still suffering from its effects. And suffering is what voters see when they look at the data on foreclosures and unemployment, expected to reach 10 percent nationally in 2010 and already higher than that in some places. Voters still worry about the sagging value of their life savings and their home equity. Many look to President Obama to lead the nation out of the recession, but find it too early to assess his effectiveness. If all the efforts made by Mr. Obama and his team since January have not yet stabilized our economy, many wonder, will his ideas work for health care? The public needs convincing signs of economic recovery. As it waits for an upturn, the public appears to have suspended its hopes for the government’s broader agenda, including health care.

What happened? As recently as mid-June, according to a New York Times/CBS national poll, respondents indicated overwhelming support for substantial health care reform; they also favored a tax increase to extend health coverage to all Americans. Nearly three-quarters, including half of those who identified themselves as Republicans, favored a government-run insurance plan to compete with private insurers. Since then, however, more jobs have been lost, long-term unemployment has grown, and foreclosures have risen despite incentives given to banks to modify loans; many states are in fiscal distress and are considering tax increases. While waiting for the economic stimulus to work, voters have become more susceptible to the spread of misinformation by some opponents of reform, like Glenn Beck, Bill O’Reilly and Sarah Palin, who have taken advantage of the

vacuum of hard information on health care to stir doubts about the president’s leadership.

Both major parties, focused on the coming 2010 Congressional election, know that the failure or success of health care reform, as well as progress on the economy, could determine the outcome of that election. As a result, partisanship is overtaking Congress even as it works on the reform bills. Ideological opponents have resorted to groundless fear-mongering, like the “death panel” rumor, to destroy any chance of success with health care reform, despite the benefits it could bring the country as a whole.

Passage of a strong health care reform bill could allay one of the deepest legitimate fears Americans have: that of going bankrupt because of illness. Currently, insurance companies can refuse coverage, drop coverage or raise premiums beyond reach for those with a pre-existing condition. The proposed House reform bill would outlaw such practices. Just as auto insurance is currently required of vehicle owners, the bill would require health insurance of individuals and employers; it would offer subsidies for those with low incomes and small businesses. It would also cut waste and curb costs. If the majority party were to pass such legislation without the help of Republicans, it might secure Democratic leadership for years. Such reform would also exemplify the change a majority thought they had embraced when they voted for Mr. Obama: a fairer, more compassionate America.

Health care reform would not solve the job or housing crisis, or send stocks soaring. But it would add the United States to the roster of developed nations with universal health care, where no family need be bankrupt or homeless because of illness or injury. Both parties understand that passage of an effective reform bill would have major political significance. That is what drives the misinformation campaigns and the scare tactics now reaching a fevered pitch.

Finally, Mr. Obama is correct to point out the relationship between health care reform and economic recovery. For the soaring costs of health care insurance and delivery, if unchecked, are unsustainable; they will leave us mired in debt. That is one more reason why these obstacles—joblessness, foreclosures, economic instability, fear of the future and partisanship—must be overcome, and why a strong health reform bill must be passed.



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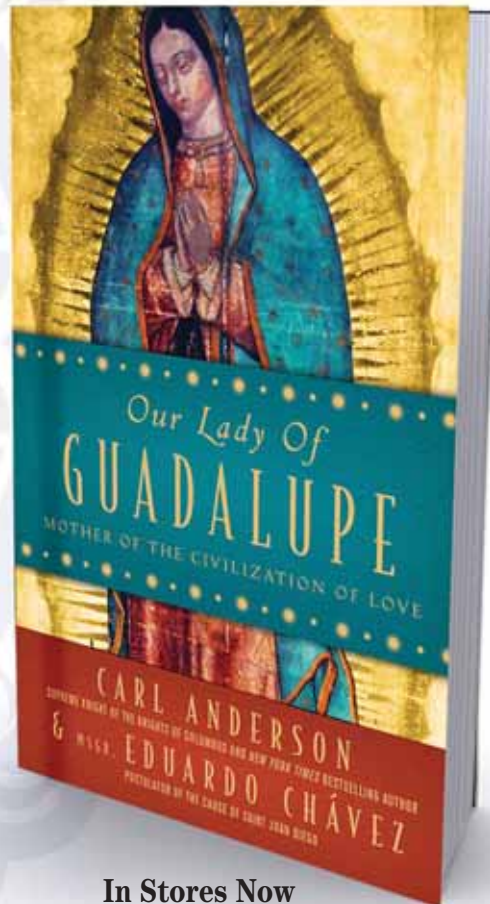
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“Our Lady of Guadalupe is a must-read for all Americans who want to understand why the beloved Patroness of the Americas is rightly called the ‘Mother of the civilization of love,’ and why only under her mantle, the Catholics of this continent will be able to finally carry out the New Evangelization dreamed of by Pope John Paul II and encouraged by Pope Benedict.”

— *Alejandro Bermudez, Editor ACI Prensa and Catholic News Agency*



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# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

LATIN AMERICA

## For Indigenous Peoples, Equality Is a Long Struggle

**R**ecent events in several countries in South America perpetuate the turbulent pattern of progress followed by defeat that has characterized the long struggle for equality for the indigenous peoples of the Andean region. The native populations of Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador, like their counterparts elsewhere in the world, face endemic poverty, illiteracy, ill health and government neglect. In response, 143 countries voted to adopt the U.N. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in 2007. Still, according to advocates, realizing those rights in the daily lives of indigenous peoples will require much time and sustained effort.

**Protest and response.** In Peru, a government prosecutor filed charges on Aug. 12 against several government officials for their roles in a crackdown on indigenous protesters in the northern Amazon region on June 5. At least 24 police officers and 10 protesters were killed in the confrontation, and several hundred peoples were injured. The protests were “the latest part in a long history of resistance and accommodation between indigenous peoples and governments in Latin America,” said José Antonio Lucero, a professor at the University of Washington. “This is not a narrow question about a small swath of the jungle. This is a very profound question about what it means to be a citizen, what it means to have a democratic government, what it means to consult,” Lucero said. Protests had also occurred in Ecuador in the late 1990s and in 2007 in Bolivia, which a year earlier had elected an Aymara Indian, Evo Morales, as president. “I don’t think anybody has the magic recipe, but Ecuador and Bolivia have shaken apart the dominant idea that [indigenous] peoples are living in another age,” Lucero said.

**Immediate causes.** Many of the conflicts between indigenous peoples and their governments center on the environmental and economic impact of extractive industries like mining, oil drilling and logging, or the construction of large development projects like hydroelectric dams. “The Amazon has been important not for the peoples who live there, but for the resources that are there,” Lucero said. While government officials believe that these industries are

important engines of economic growth, the indigenous peoples living near them do not seem to benefit and remain among the poorest communities in Latin America. In fact, government officials in Peru and Chile have referred to indigenous people as obstacles to development because of their proximity to these vital natural resources. In Ecuador, where the indigenous movement lost much of its political power after an ill-fated alliance with former President Lucio Gutiérrez in 2005, the current president, Rafael Correa, has done little consultation with indigenous groups about mining and petroleum, according to Lucero.

**Consultation.** An international treaty, the International Labor Organization Convention 169 (1989), calls for governments to consult indigenous people about development pro-



jects on their lands. Although such consultation is not binding under the pact, politically savvy indigenous groups throughout Latin America are increasingly using the treaty to pressure governments to listen to their views. Indigenous groups “want consultation to mean something,” Lucero said. “They want to be partners in decisions about how natural resources are used and to be part of the discussion about development.”

More countries are also enshrining in their constitutions the rights of indigenous peoples, although that is not an automatic stepping-stone to equality. Colombia was one of the first countries to spell out indigenous rights in its constitution, including a right to education. Still, illiteracy among indigenous Colombians remains at more than 30 percent, according to the United





**Ecuadoran indigenous groups clash with riot police in Ecuador in 2004.**

Nations. In Bolivia the government is in the process of implementing provisions of its new constitution that grant greater autonomy in governance and judicial procedures to indigenous peoples.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

### Advocates See Encyclical as Opportunity

**P**ope Benedict XVI's message about environmental protection, found in his new encyclical, *Charity in Truth* (*Caritas in Veritate*), has applications both in daily life and in the political arena, according to Catholic environmentalists. In particular, the pope's words anticipate an

international meeting on climate change issues in Denmark in December, said Dan Misleh, director of the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change. "There needs to be more robust international agreements on economic life, particularly the ability to have sustainable economic life for all people," Misleh said. "In that context, whatever happens with the climate negotiations, the Vatican and bishops around the world will be looking to see that it is a fair agreement—that it does protect creation, reducing greenhouse gases and such, but [that] people who are most impacted by climate change get enough support to overcome what's coming."

Climate change experts have linked the global increase in turbulent weather systems to global warming. An increase in violent weather activity disproportionately affects the poor. "The reason we're concerned about this is because in Haiti, Cuba, Central America, the rate of disaster—hurricanes, weather-related disasters and the severity of those disasters—has increased, and we as a church are faced with picking up the pieces of those disasters," said William O'Keefe of Catholic Relief Services. "In Africa, rainfall patterns are already having an impact on how small-scale traditional African farmers are making their livelihood and they are coming to us and saying, 'What we are doing is not working. Help us.'"

**Legislation.** C.R.S. conducted a review of its global programming a year ago, according to O'Keefe, and consequently committed \$60 million for adaptation programs to mitigate the effects of climate change on communities. "This is already in response to what our folks on the ground are saying," he said. "Whenever our field people say, 'There is a problem that is

affecting us here,' we are forced to ask the question: What can we do with the policy environment?"

The U.S. House of Representatives has already passed a bill on climate issues, and the U.S. Senate is expected to consider legislation when it reconvenes in September. The current bill calls for an initial outlay of about \$1 billion in "international adaptation" funds to help poorer nations cope with climate change. "It starts small and it doesn't ramp up very fast," Misleh said. "What the bishops are calling for is at least \$3.5 billion and ramping up quickly to \$7 billion within a few years of the bill's enactment."



**Ethiopian farmer faces drought.**

"The people who did the least to cause this are going to suffer the most, both here at home and in other countries where they contribute the least to greenhouse gas pollution," said Walt Grazer of the National Religious Partnership on the Environment. He credited Pope Benedict for putting it "right out there that the nations of the world have to rise above their legitimate but more narrow self-interest. We're going to have to look at our lifestyle... What do I need? What don't I need?"

## Chaplains Share Duties in Afghanistan

On an August evening in Afghanistan, the Rev. Mirek Jordanek, a Czech army chaplain, celebrated Mass in his limited English. A Protestant chaplain preached the homily at the weekend Mass. "One day, we will see him face to face," said the Rev. Brent Sanders, the Protestant chaplain. "Let us be ready." It is a fitting message for the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division. At least 14 soldiers have been killed in action since January, four of them in the last two weeks of July. Where once only 10 of the faithful attended Catholic Mass, their numbers have grown to at least 30 regular attendees. Although one out of five U.S. soldiers is Catholic, there are just 100 Catholic chaplains for the entire U.S. Army. "We are very short," said the Rev. Bradley West, a Baptist assigned to the 10th Mountain Division. "Especially when we deploy, many soldiers will not see a priest the whole time, especially the guys out at command outposts," he said.

## Impact of Minimum Wage Uncertain

Workers in 30 states and the District of Columbia have been affected by the June 24 increase in the federal minimum wage from \$6.55 to \$7.25 per hour, but the question of whether the increase will help or hurt the economy remains to be seen. "Families are relying on low minimum wages more than ever," said Paul Sonn of the National Employment Law Project. "There is a widespread misconception that minimum-wage workers are largely comprised of teenagers working for spare change, but the demographic of minimum-wage workers is overwhelmingly adults." U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis said in a statement that the wage

## NEWS BRIEFS

The Catholic bishops of Florida unsuccessfully urged Gov. Charlie Crist to stay the **execution of John Richard Marek** on Aug. 19 and give him a life sentence instead, saying that "even those who have done great harm are human beings with dignity, created in the image and likeness of God." • An education bill signed into law by Venezuela's **President Hugo Chávez** will remove religious education from the nation's schools, said Cardinal Jorge Urosa Savino of Caracas. Government critics called the law's rapid approval process unconstitutional. • Three U.S. Catholic bishops are **touring parts of Cuba** that were ravaged by hurricanes last year. One participant, Boston's Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley, O.F.M.Cap., said the goal of the visit is "to understand what we can do to further assist the church in Cuba." • Although amendments to a House health care reform bill made some "helpful improvements" in **protecting life and conscience**, some "unacceptable features" remain that must be removed, said Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, who testified on Aug. 11. • The Catholic theologian **Miguel Díaz** was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Aug. 4 as the ninth U.S. ambassador to the Vatican. • **Jim McGinnis**, a nationally renowned advocate for peace and justice, died on Aug. 13. He was 66.



**Miguel Díaz**

increase will generate an extra \$5.5 billion in consumer spending over the next year. The federal increase was the last step in a minimum-wage increase phased in over a three-year period.

## Bible Group Looks at Hispanics and Scripture

The American Bible Society, together with the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism, sponsored "Camino a Emaús: The Word of God and Latino Catholics" from July 30 to Aug. 1 at the University of Notre Dame. The conference addressed expanding the successful Lectio Divina Scripture study program for Hispanic Catholics already in use in several

archdioceses. In his opening address, Cardinal Francis George, O.M.I., stressed the importance of the enterprise for the church in the United States by noting that the Hispanic Catholic community provides a foretaste of what the U.S. Catholic Church will look like in 30 years. Quoting from the proceedings of the Synod on the Word of God, Cardinal George also reminded the conference participants of the importance not only of their meeting but of the larger moment for the church: "The Synod wishes to promote an inspired rediscovery of the Word of God as a living, piercing, and active force in the heart of the Church."

From CNS and other sources.

KYLE T. KRAMER



# When God Shouts, ‘Jump’

I live at odds with the clock. With youth and energy, a type-A personality and multiple responsibilities, I often find myself in a rush, trying to cram a gallon’s worth of activity into a quart’s worth of *chronos*. My neighbor, Jack Schriefer, however, has shown me a more excellent way of relating to time.

Jack and his wife, Marianne, live down the road from our farm in an old white farmhouse with crooked doors and slanting floors. With their own children grown and gone, they have become another set of grandparents for our young children and trusted friends and neighbors to us. Alongside his day jobs, all his life Jack has farmed about 160 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat and hay. At 75, he has far more plans and projects for his farm than he will have enough lifetime to finish. He works hard, but he is unflappable and unhurried; and in fact he is famous around here for being “slow as a mole.” Even when things fall apart around him, I have never seen Jack become frustrated or angry. Somehow he has learned to accept whatever is happening with an almost otherworldly serenity.

While doing some fieldwork recently, Jack accidentally stalled out his rusty, faded-orange Allis-Chalmers 180 tractor. The starter button had broken long ago, so he climbed down carefully on creaky knees and employed his usual hot-wire method of firing up the tractor: shorting out the starter solenoid with a screwdriver.

A blue spark of current arced at the terminals, the starter cranked, and the

tired diesel engine roared back to life with a belch of black smoke. Jack had inadvertently left the tractor in gear, however, so it lurched forward and took off on its own, almost running him over. Jack leaped out of the way and galloped after it, but he could not catch up. So he gave it up for lost and stood watching with Zen-like attentiveness as it bumped its driverless way across a hayfield toward the nearby woods. By his figuring, he told me later, it would eventually hit a tree and stop with, he hoped, just minor damage.

Suddenly, however, the 180 hit some uneven ground in the field and, true to its name, curved around in a wide arc, away from the woods and back the way it had come. With unerring aim, it headed directly for a nearby farm pond. Jack gazed helplessly as it chugged down the bank.

Fortunately, the pond had just been rebuilt and had little water in it.

Jack’s old tractor, which would never run when he wanted it to, now simply would not stop. It churned its way around the muddy bottom of the pond and motored right back up the bank very near to where Jack was standing, taking the whole scene in.

This gave Jack a second chance to catch it, and so on this one splendid occasion, he actually hurried.

Waiting for the right moment, he let the tractor pass by him as it labored over the bank of the pond; then he sprinted just in front of the heavy field roller it was pulling, took a wild, dangerous leap of faith onto the tractor’s rear hitch and clambered up into the seat.

Nonplussed, with no harm done to man or machine, Jack calmly finished his fieldwork and (wisely) shared not a word about the incident with Marianne until days later, as a casual aside.

The story, which Jack now recounts between belly laughs to any willing listener, has quickly become a local legend.

As someone who is usually in a hurry, I often feel that time runs away from me, just as Jack’s tractor did, or besieges me with the many (over)commitments of my life and its various vocations.

I do believe that to befriend time and recognize its sacramental quality means slowing down and “just being.” For this, Jack has long been my model.

But in wrangling with his tractor, Jack has also shown me that the true contemplative does more than just still and wait for revelation, as necessary as such a spiritual practice may be. Sometimes, attending to the transcendent moment demands not relaxation and deep, slow breathing, but a mad rush and great risk. Jack has diabetes and heart problems, and Marianne is battling cancer. I do not know how much more time they have in this world. What I hope is to be fully present to the moments we have been given with them, whether many or few, whether leisurely or at light speed.

With contemplative attention in such moments—or in any moment, really—*chronos* can give way to *kairos*: when God flings open the door to the divine realm and shouts, “Jump!”

The true  
contemplative  
does more  
than just  
sit and  
wait for  
revelation.

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KYLE T. KRAMER is the director of lay degree programs at Saint Meinrad School of Theology in Saint Meinrad, Ind., and an organic farmer.

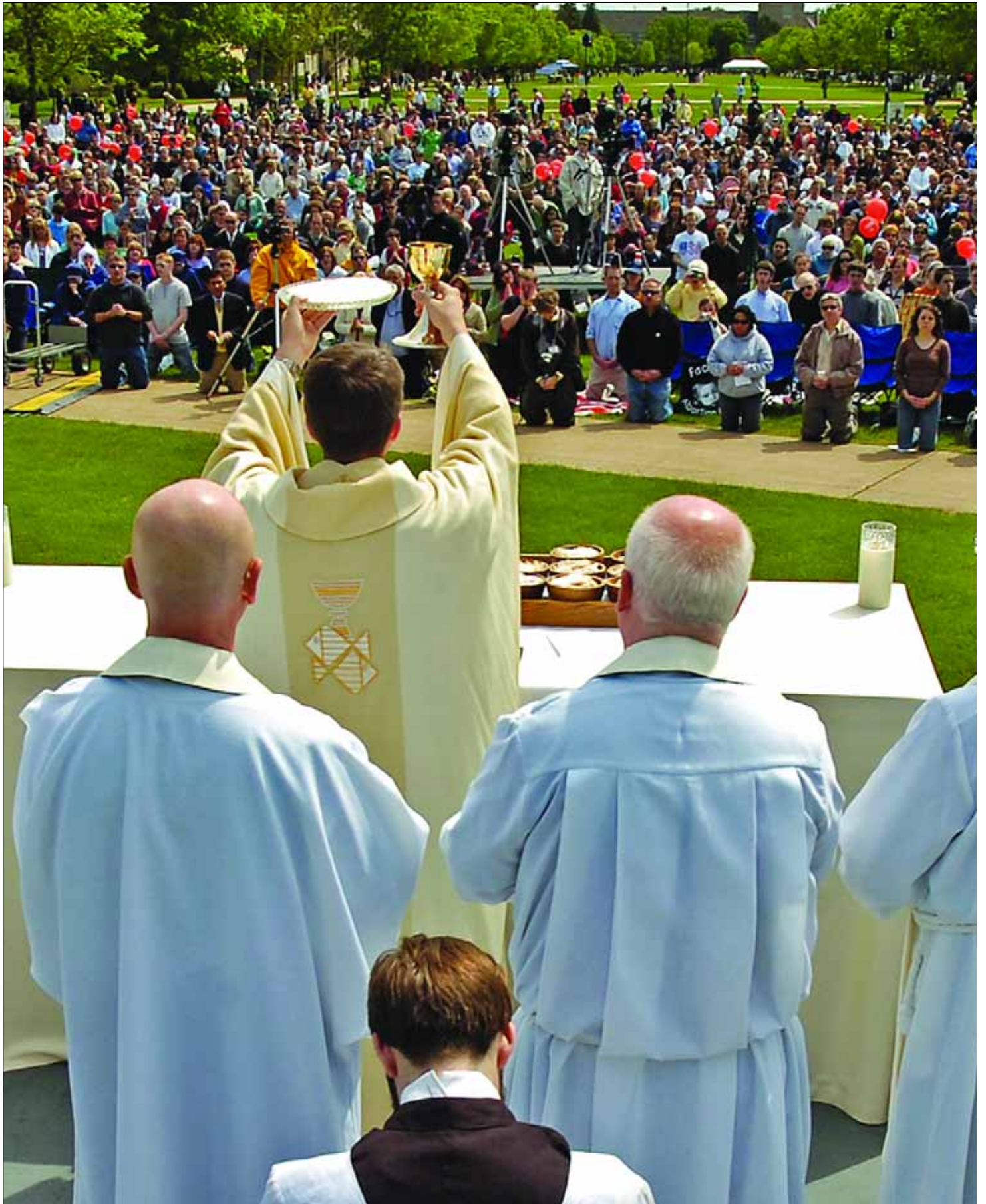
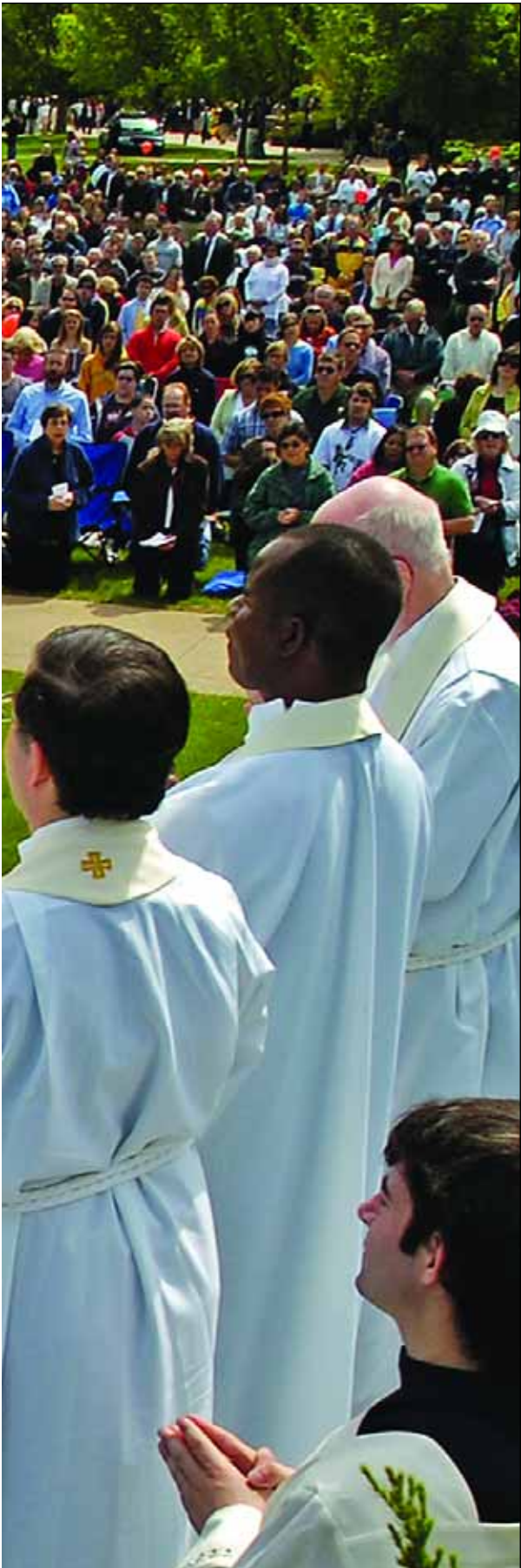


PHOTO: CNS/SCOTT M. BORT



A PASTORAL REFLECTION ON THE  
CONTROVERSY AT NOTRE DAME

# The Church and the University

BY JOHN M. D'ARCY

**A**s summer plays itself out on the beautiful campus by the lake where the young Holy Cross priest, Edward Sorin, C.S.C., pitched his camp 177 years ago and began his great adventure, we must clarify the situation that so Sundered the church last spring: What it is all about and what it is not about.

It is not about President Obama. He will do some good things as president and other things with which, as Catholics, we will strongly disagree. It is ever so among presidents, and most political leaders.

It is not about Democrats versus Republicans, nor was it a replay of the recent general election.

It is not about whether it is appropriate for the president of the United States to speak at Notre Dame or any great Catholic university on the pressing issues of the day. This is what universities do. No bishop should try to prevent that.

The response, so intense and widespread, is not about what this journal called "sectarian Catholicism." Rather, the response of the faithful derives directly from the Gospel. In Matthew's words, "Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good works, and glorify your heavenly Father" (5:13).

## Public Witness

Does a Catholic university have the responsibility to give witness to the Catholic faith and to the consequences of that faith by its actions and decisions—especially by a decision to confer its highest honor? If not, what is the meaning of a life of faith? And how can a Catholic institution expect its students to live by faith in the difficult decisions that will con-

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front them in a culture often opposed to the Gospel?

Pope Benedict XVI, himself a former university professor, made his position clear when he spoke to Catholic educators in Washington, D.C., on April 17, 2008:

Teachers and administrators, whether in universities or schools, have the duty and privilege to ensure that students receive instruction in Catholic doctrine and practice. This requires that public witness to the way of Christ, as found in the Gospel and upheld by the Church's magisterium, shapes all aspects of an institution's life, both inside and outside the classroom.

In its decision to give its highest honor to a president who has repeatedly opposed even the smallest legal protection of the child in the womb, did Notre Dame surrender the responsibility that Pope Benedict believes Catholic universities have to give public witness to the truths revealed by God and taught by the church?

Another serious question of witness and moral responsibility before the Notre Dame administration concerns its sponsorship over several years of a sad and immoral play, offensive to the dignity of women, which many call pornographic, and which an increasing number of Catholic universities have cancelled, "The Vagina Monologues," by Eve Ensler.

Although he spoke eloquently about the importance of dialogue with the president of the United States, the president of Notre Dame chose not to dialogue with his bishop on these two matters, both pastoral and both with serious ramifications for the care of souls, which is the core responsibility of the local bishop. Both decisions were shared with me after they were made and, in the case of the honorary degree, after President Obama had accepted. For the past 24 years, it has been my privilege to serve as the bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. During this time, I have never interfered in the internal governance of Notre Dame or any other institution of higher learning within the diocese. However, as the teacher and shepherd in this diocese, it is my responsibility to encourage all institutions, including our beloved University of Notre Dame, to give public witness to the fullness of Catholic faith. The diocesan bishop must ask whether a Catholic institution compromises its obligation to give public witness by placing prestige over truth. The bishop must be concerned that Catholic institutions do not succumb to the secular culture, making decisions that appear to many, including ordinary Catholics, as a surrender to a culture opposed to the truth about life and love.

**Photo pg. 12: Kevin Russeau, C.S.C., celebrates Mass on Notre Dame University's south quad during a demonstration in defense of life and in protest against President Obama as the school's commencement speaker and honorary degree recipient.**

## The Local Bishop

The failure to dialogue with the bishop brings a second series of questions. What is the relationship of the Catholic university to the local bishop? No relationship? Someone who occasionally offers Mass on campus? Someone who sits on the platform at graduation? Or is the bishop the teacher in the diocese, responsible for souls, including the souls of students—in this case, the students at Notre Dame? Does the responsibility of the bishop to teach, to govern and to sanctify end at the gate of the university? In the spirit of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, which places the primary responsibility on the institution, I am proposing these questions for the university.

Prof. John Cavadini has addressed the questions about the relationship of the university and the bishop in an especially insightful manner. He is chair of the theology department and an expert on the early church, with a special interest in St. Augustine. His remarks were a response to Father Jenkins's rationale for presenting the play mentioned above.

The statement of our President [Father Jenkins] barely mentions the Church. It is as though the mere mention of a relationship with the Church has become so alien to our ways of thinking and so offensive to our quest for a disembodied "excellence" that it has become impolite to mention it at all. There is no Catholic identity apart from the affiliation with the Church. And again, I do not mean an imaginary Church we sometimes might wish existed, but the concrete, visible communion of "hierarchical and charismatic gifts," "at once holy and always in need of purification," in which "each bishop represents his own church and all of [the bishops] together with the Pope represent the whole Church..." (*Lumen Gentium*, Nos. 4, 8, 23).

The ancient Gnostic heresy developed an elitist intellectual tradition which eschewed connection to the "fleshly" church of the bishop and devalued or spiritualized the sacraments. Are we in danger of developing a gnosticized version of the "Catholic intellectual tradition," one which floats free of any norming connection and so free of any concrete claim to Catholic identity?

The full letter can be found on the Web site of the Notre Dame student newspaper, *The Observer*: [www.ndsmcob-server.com](http://www.ndsmcob-server.com).

It has been a great privilege and a source of joy to be associated with Notre Dame in the past 24 years as bishop. In so many ways, it is a splendid place. Part of this is because of the exemplary young men and women who come there from throughout the country. It is also because of its great spiritual traditions. The lines of young people preparing to

receive the sacrament of reconciliation at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, the Masses in the residence halls, the prayerful liturgy at the basilica and the service of so many young people before and after graduation in Catholic education and catechetics, and in service to the poor in this country and overseas, is a credit to the university and a source of great hope. The theology department has grown in academic excellence over the years, strengthened by the successful recruiting of professors outstanding in scholarship, in their knowledge of the tradition and in their own living of the Catholic faith. This growth is well known to Pope Benedict XVI. It is notable that a vast majority has been willing to seek and accept the mandatum from the local bishop.

### Developments on Campus

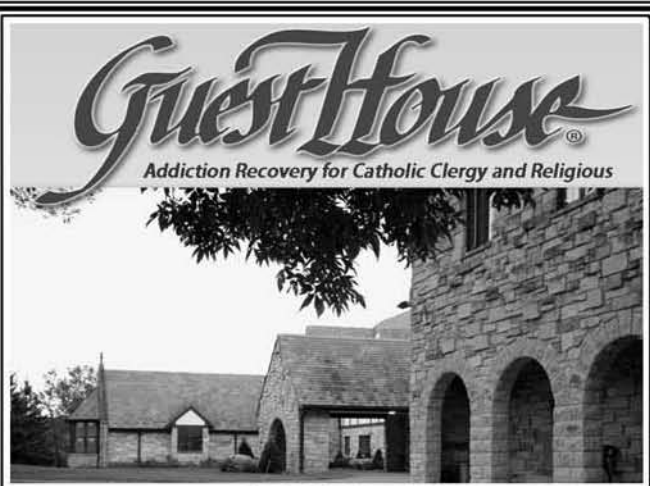
Yet the questions about the relationship of the university as a whole to the church still stand, and what happened on campus leading up to and during the graduation is significant for the present debate about Catholic higher education. I released a statement on Good Friday, asking the Catholic people and others of good will not to attend demonstrations by those who had come avowedly to “create a circus.” I referred to appropriate and acceptable responses within the Notre Dame community led by students. Titled “ND Response,” and drawing a significant number of professors, these responses were marked by prayer and church teaching, and they were orderly.

This journal and others in the media, Catholic and secular, reporting from afar, failed to make a distinction between the extremists on the one hand, and students and those who joined them in the last 48 hours before graduation. This latter group responded with prayer and substantive disagreement. They cooperated with university authorities.

In this time of crisis at the university, these students and professors, with the instinct of faith, turned to the bishop for guidance, encouragement and prayer. This had nothing to do with John Michael D’Arcy. It was related to their understanding of the episcopal office—a place you should be able to count on for the truth, as Irenaeus contended in the second century when he encountered the Gnostics.

I attended the Baccalaureate Mass the day before graduation, for the 25th time, speaking after holy Communion, as I always do. Then I led an evening rosary at the Grotto with students, adults and a number of professors. We then went to a chapel on campus. It was packed for a whole night of prayer and eucharistic adoration.

It was my intention not to be on campus during graduation day. I had so informed Father Jenkins and the student leadership, with whom I was in touch nearly every day. This is the kind of deference and respect I have shown to the Notre Dame administration, to three Notre Dame presidents, over the years. I found it an increasingly sad time, and



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I was convinced that there were no winners, but I was wrong.

As graduation drew near, I knew I should be with the students. It was only right that the bishop be with them, for they were on the side of truth, and their demonstration was disciplined, rooted in prayer and substantive. I told the pro-life rally, several thousand people on a lovely May day, that they were the true heroes. Despite the personal costs to themselves and their families, they chose to give public witness to the Catholic faith contrary to the example of a powerful, international university, against which they were respectfully but firmly in disagreement. Among those in attendance were many who work daily at crisis pregnancy centers on behalf of life.

### The Silent Board

In the midst of the crisis at Notre Dame, the board of trustees came to campus in April for their long-scheduled spring meeting. They said nothing. When the meeting was completed, they made no statement and gave no advice. In an age when transparency is urged as a way of life on and off campus, they chose not to enter the conversation going on all around them and shaking the university to its roots. We learned nothing about their discussions.

### ON THE WEB

More commentary  
on the Notre Dame controversy.  
[americamagazine.org/nd](http://americamagazine.org/nd)

I firmly believe that the board of trustees must take up its responsibility afresh, with appropriate study and prayer. They also must understand the seriousness of the present moment. This requires spiritual and intellectual formation on the part of the men and women of industry, business and

technology who make up the majority of the board. Financial generosity is no longer sufficient for membership on the boards of great universities, if indeed it ever was. The responsibility of university boards is great, and decisions must not be

made by a few. Like bishops, they are asked to leave politics and ambition at the door, and make serious decisions before God. In the case of Notre Dame, they owe it to the Congregation of Holy Cross, which has turned this magnificent place over to a predominately lay board; they owe it to the students who have not yet come; they owe it to the intrepid missionary priest, Edward Sorin, C.S.C., and the Holy Cross religious who built this magnificent place out of the wilderness. They owe it to Mary, the Mother of God, who has always been honored here. Let us pray that they will take this responsibility with greater seriousness and in a truly Catholic spirit.

### Critical Questions

As bishops, we must be teachers and pastors. In that spirit, I would respectfully put these questions to the Catholic universities in the diocese I serve and to other Catholic universities.

Do you consider it a responsibility in your public statements, in your life as a university and in your actions, including your public awards, to give witness to the Catholic faith in all its fullness?

What is your relationship to the church and, specifically, to the local bishop and his pastoral authority as defined by the Second Vatican Council?

Finally, a more fundamental question: Where will the great Catholic universities search for a guiding light in the years ahead? Will it be the *Land O'Lakes Statement* or *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*? The first comes from a frantic time, with finances as the driving force. Its understanding of freedom is defensive, absolutist and narrow. It never mentions Christ and barely mentions the truth. The second text, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, speaks constantly of truth and the pursuit of truth. It speaks of freedom in the broader, Catholic philosophical and theological tradition, as linked to the common good, to the rights of others and always subject to truth. Unlike *Land O'Lakes*, it is communal, reflective of the developments since Vatican II, and it speaks with a language enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

On these three questions, I respectfully submit, rests the future of Catholic higher education in this country and so much else. **A**



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# The Public Duty Of Bishops

Lessons from the storm in South Bend

BY JOHN R. QUINN

*Editors' note: Archbishop Quinn originally prepared these observations for consideration at the June meeting of the American bishops. Circumstances did not make that possible at the time. He has submitted them to America as a contribution to the debate on the role of bishops in dealing with public issues.*

**T**he right to life is a paramount and pre-eminent moral issue of our time. The Catholic bishops have borne a consistent and prophetic witness to the truth that all other rights are anchored in the right to life. When *Roe v. Wade* was handed down in 1973, this conference was nearly alone among institutional voices pointing out the defects and dangers of this decision and calling for its reversal.

Our witness to the sanctity of human life cannot diminish and our effort cannot cease. We must continue to enlist new vehicles of communication to highlight the grave moral evil inherent in abortion. We have to design effective and imaginative strategies to help people see that the choice for life is the most compassionate choice. And we have to speak with courtesy and clarity about why the protection of the unborn is a requirement of human rights and not their diminishment.

There is no disagreement within this conference about the moral evil of abortion, its assault upon the dignity of the human person, or the moral imperative of enacting laws that prohibit abortion in American society.

But there is deep and troubled disagreement among us on the issue of *how* we as bishops should witness concerning this most searing and volatile issue in American public life. And this disagreement has now become a serious and increasing impediment to our ability to teach effectively in our own community and in the wider American society.

The bishops' voice has been most credible in the cause of life when we have addressed this issue as witnesses and

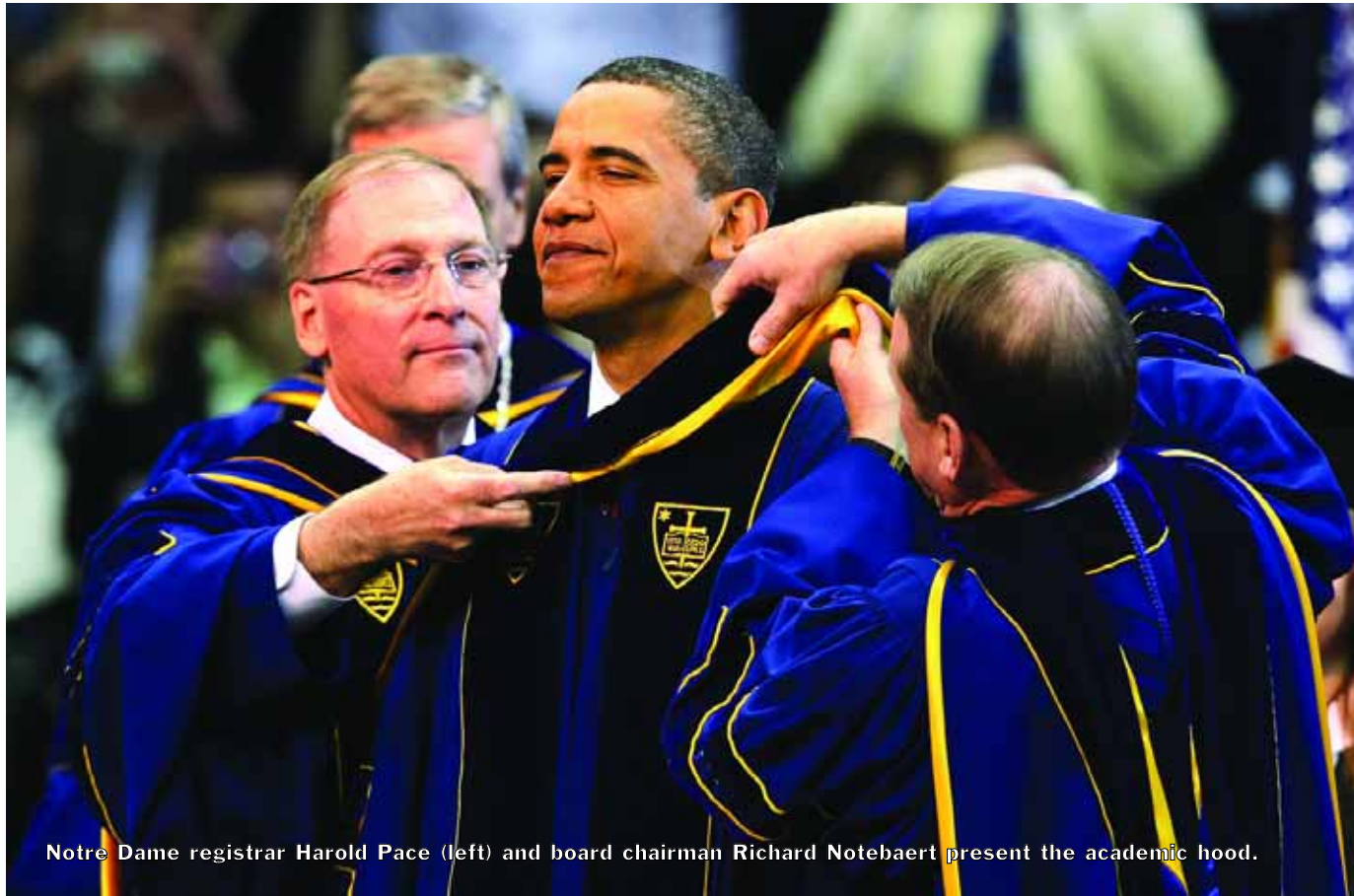
teachers of a great moral tradition, and not as actors in the political arena. Coming out of the Catholic moral tradition, this conference has defended human life in the context of the pursuit of justice, covering the whole continuum of life from its beginning in the mother's womb to its natural end. The Second Vatican Council rightly described abortion and infanticide as "unspeakable crimes." But the council did not stop there. In a coherent moral logic, the council exhorted bishops to be faithful to their duty of teaching and witnessing concerning "the most serious questions concerning the ownership, increase, and just distribution of material goods, peace and war, and brotherly relations among all countries" ("Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church," No. 12). The more recent "Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life" proposes an equally broad spectrum of concerns. This consistent focus over nearly 50 years, as well as the teaching of the popes, including Pope Benedict XVI, underline that neither the bishop nor the Catholic Church can confine itself to one single issue of concern in human society. If we proclaim that the right to life is necessary for the exercise of all other rights, then we must also address and defend those other rights as well.

Consequently, the Catholic Church brings to the defense of life and the pursuit of justice in this world the vision of faith and a living hope that transcends the limitations of what can be accomplished in this world. This comprehensive and transcendent vision must provide the benchmark in weighing proposed pathways through the thicket of public policy choices that confront us. This traditional benchmark provides a challenge to us bishops today in evaluating our future approach to those who disagree with us on issues of fundamental importance.

The dilemma that confronts us today is whether the church's vision is best realized on the issue of abortion by focusing our witness on the clear moral teaching about abortion and public law, or whether it is preferable or obligatory to add to that teaching role the additional role of directly sanctioning public officials through sustained, per-

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Notre Dame registrar Harold Pace (left) and board chairman Richard Notebaert present the academic hood.

sonally focused criticism, the denial of honors or even excommunication.

This dilemma has troubled us for many years now, but it has been crystallized in the controversy over the decision of the University of Notre Dame to award an honorary degree in May of this year to the president of the United States. This is the first time in the history of this conference that a large number of bishops of the United States have publicly condemned honoring a sitting president, and this condemnation has further ramifications due to the fact that this president is the first African-American to hold that high office.

### **False Messages**

The case for sanctioning President Obama by declaring him ineligible to receive a Catholic university degree is rooted in a powerful truth: The president has supported virtually every proposed legal right to abortion in his public career, and abortion constitutes the pre-eminent moral issue in American government today.

Notwithstanding this fact, the case against a strategy of such sanctions and personal condemnations is rooted in a more fundamental truth: Such a strategy of condemnation undermines the church's transcendent role in the American political order. For the Obama controversy, in concert with

a series of candidate-related condemnations during the 2008 election, has communicated several false and unintended messages to much of American society. There are four such messages that call for our serious consideration today.

1. *The message that the Catholic bishops of the United States function as partisan political actors in American life.* The great tragedy of American politics from a Catholic perspective is that party structures in the United States bisect the social teachings of the church, thus making it impossible for most citizens to identify and vote for a candidate who adequately embraces the spectrum of Catholic teaching on the common good. For instance, Republican candidates are, in general, more supportive of the church's position on abortion and euthanasia, while Democratic candidates are generally stronger advocates for the Catholic vision on issues of poverty and world peace.

For most of our history, the American bishops have assiduously sought to avoid being identified with either political party and have made a conscious effort to be seen as transcending party considerations in the formulation of their teachings. The condemnation of President Obama and the wider policy shift that represents signal to many thoughtful persons that the bishops have now come down firmly on the Republican side in American politics. The

PHOTO: ONSCHRISTOPHER SMITH

bishops are believed to communicate that for all the promise the Obama administration has on issues of health care, immigration reform, global poverty and war and peace, the leadership of the church in the United States has strategically tilted in favor of an ongoing alliance with the Republican Party. A sign of this stance is seen to be the adoption of a policy of confrontation rather than a policy of engagement with the Obama administration.

Such a message is alienating to many in the Catholic community, especially those among the poor and the marginalized who feel that they do not have supportive representation within the Republican Party. The perception of partisanship on the part of the church is disturbing to many Catholics given the charge of *Gaudium et Spes* that the church must transcend every political structure and cannot sacrifice that transcendence, and the perception of transcendence, no matter how important the cause.

2. *The message that the bishops are ratifying the “culture war mentality,” which corrodes debate both in American politics and in the internal life of the church.* Both poles of the American political spectrum see our society as enmeshed in a culture war over the issues of abortion, marriage, immigration rights and the death penalty. In such a war, they argue, the demonization of alternative viewpoints and of opposing leaders is not merely acceptable, but required. More intense tactics and language are automatically seen as more effective, as necessary and more in keeping with the importance of the issues being debated. The “culture war mentality” has also seeped into the life of the church, distorting the debate on vital issues and leading to campaigns against bishops for their efforts to proclaim the Gospel with charity rather than with antagonism.

The movement toward sanctions against public officials will be seen as ratifying this trajectory in our political, cultural and ecclesial life. Whatever our intention may be, the acceptance and employment of a strategy that deliberately moves beyond teaching and pointing up the moral dimensions of public issues to labeling those with whom we disagree, will inevitably embolden those who de-Christianize our public debate both within and outside the church.

3. *The message that the bishops are effectively indifferent to all grave evils other than abortion.* Perhaps the most difficult task we face, as teachers on the moral dimensions of public policy in the United States today, is emphasizing the pre-eminence of abortion as a moral issue while defending a holistic view of the rights intrinsic to the defense of the dignity of the human person. This task of balancing arises not only in the formulation of our policy statements, but also in the steps we as bishops take to achieve justice in the political order. The pathway of sanctions and personal condem-

nation will open every bishop to the charge that if we do not use the tactic of sanctions and condemnations on issues such as war and peace or global poverty, we are tacitly relegating those issues to a level of unimportance. And it would indeed be difficult to explain how it is appropriate for a Catholic university to honor those who authorize torture or initiate an unjust war or cut assistance to the world's poor. To assert on the one hand that the tactics of sanction and personal condemnation are legitimate tools for episcopal action in the public order, while on the other hand refusing to employ those tactics for any issue other than abortion will only deepen the suspicions of those in American society who believe that we bishops of the church in the United States are myopic in our approach to Catholic social teaching.

4. *The message that the bishops are insensitive to the heritage and the continuing existence of racism in America.* The election of Senator Barack Obama as President of the United States in November 2008 was a unique and signal moment in the history of racial solidarity in the United States. *L'Osservatore Romano* compared it to the fall of the Berlin Wall. All over the world the election was hailed as ushering in a new chapter in the rejection of racial stereotypes and the enhancement of international relations.

Yet here in the United States, there has been the perception that we bishops did not grasp the immense significance of the moment. African-American priests, religious and lay persons have related that they felt they had to mute their jubilation at the election of an African-American president, and that we bishops did not share their jubilation. Some have expressed deep hurt over this, precisely because they respect the bishops and they love the church.

Added to this, the spirited condemnation of the president's visit and degree at Notre Dame last May have reinforced for many African-American Catholics those feelings of hurt and alienation. It is not that African-American Catholics do not understand that the church must oppose abortion, or that they themselves personally believe that the bishops are acting out of racist motivations. It is rather that when the church embraces a new level of confrontation when an African-American is involved, this readily raises widespread questions about our racial sensitivity. And these questions will only continue to be raised more forcefully if we continue to walk down the path of confrontation with this administration.

## A Policy of Cordiality

As we confront the admittedly difficult task of balancing the need to uphold the sanctity of human life while avoiding the enormously destructive consequences of the strategy of sanction and condemnation, we bishops could profitably

### ON THE WEB

A selection of Archbishop John R. Quinn's articles for **America**.  
[americamagazine.org/pages](http://americamagazine.org/pages)


look to the example of the Holy See, which wrestles with these same complex issues of integrity of witness, fidelity to truth, civility in discourse, and political, national and racial sensitivities every day.

The approach of the Holy See might justly be characterized as a policy of cordiality. It proceeds from the conviction that the integrity of Catholic teaching can never be sacrificed. It reflects a deep desire to enshrine comity at the center of public discourse and relations with public officials. It is willing to speak the truth directly to earthly power.

Yet the Holy See shows great reluctance to publicly personalize disagreements with public officials on elements of church teaching. And the approach of the Holy See consistently favors engagement over confrontation. As Pope John Paul II put it, "The goal of the Church is to make of the adversary a brother."

These principles of cordiality will not make our task as bishops in the public square an easy one. But they do provide the best anchor for insuring that our actions and statements remain faithful to the comprehensive and transcendent mission of the church, our ultimate mandate. Much of this is summed up in the council's decree on bishops, *Christus Dominus* (No. 13):

The Church has to be on speaking terms with the human society in which it lives. It is therefore the duty of bishops especially to make an approach to people, seeking and promoting dialog with them. If truth is constantly to be accompanied by charity and understanding by love, in such salutary discussions they should present their positions in clear language, unaggressively and diplomatically. Likewise they should show prudence combined with confidence, for this is what brings about union of minds by encouraging friendship. **A**



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**THEATER** | JOHN COLEMAN

## CONSPIRACY THEORY

*'Equivocation' scrutinizes the Gunpowder Plot.*

**W**idespread acclaim greeted the world premier of **Equivocation**, a new play by Bill Cain, S.J., that opened in April at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Ore., where it runs until Oct. 31.

The theater critic for a local newspaper waxed eloquent about it, describing it as "one of those major theatrical experiences that succeeds on so many levels it deserves to be widely produced for years to come." Other critics and Ashland's large audiences concur that it was far and

away the best—even mesmerizing—among the eight plays produced this season; some said it was the best play presented here in decades. As a 30-year-long devotee of the festival (which I deem the most consistently excellent repertory theater in the United States), I agree.

When I saw the play recently with a Jesuit friend, we engaged afterward in a spirited conversation about whether there had been any plot. We had in mind not the play itself—a darkly comic and thrilling, if revisionist, history about one of the choicest conspir-

acy theories of all time—but its subject, the so-called Gunpowder Plot. We wondered to what extent Lord Robert Cecil, King James I's chief aide-de-camp and one of history's blood-soaked villains, orchestrated the Gunpowder Plot as a set-up, so that he could crack down on prominent English Catholics and confiscate their property.

Those who have read Antonia Fraser's classic recounting of the incident, *Faith and Treason: The Story of the Gunpowder Plot*, will recall that commentators are deeply divided on the question of whether there ever was any Catholic conspiracy to blow up the king and Parliament in 1605. The foiling of that "plot" is still marked every Nov. 5 in England as Guy Fawkes Day.

The conceit of Cain's play is that



Richard Elmore (foreground), John Tufts and Jonathan Haugen in "Equivocation"

PHOTOS: JENNY GRAHAM

William Shakespeare, who in the play is called Shagspeare, or Shag, is pressed by Cecil to write a propaganda piece to celebrate the government's trumped-up version of the terrorist plot in order to vilify Catholics—and the Jesuits. Shag hesitates to accept Cecil's proposition: writing contemporary history is dicey (and just possibly, a precipitant to imprisonment). At one point in the play, Shag drafts a script that portrays the superior of the Jesuits in England, Henry Garnet, as an equivocating villain. But the playwright thinks this does not really work as theater, since there never was an explosion, and the case against Garnet is not at all clear. When he complains to Cecil that there was no plot, Cecil threatens in rejoinder, "That is treason to say so!"

Shagspeare begins to uncover faulty claims by the government. How could Catholic gentlemen, unused to labor, have engineered and dug complicated tunnels under the Parliament building? Where did the dirt go? Why would Tom Wintour, one of the Gunpowder Plot principals, misspell his name as Winter on his written confession? Other documents abound where the literate Wintour properly signed his name. Also, his confession's handwriting does not match those signatures. There are sordid tales of torture and widespread government denials: King James himself lies to Shagspeare, telling him that torture is not taking place.

Cain's Shagspeare insists on interviewing the tortured Wintour in the Tower of London, and later he orchestrates an encounter with the redoubtable Garnet. Finally, Cain has Shag sum up his own reading of the plot: "The Gunpowder Plot was a terrible thing, and if it had succeeded a great many people would have been killed. Now an unworthy minister and a King who barely speaks the King's English are using that plot to enrich themselves and their friends at the cost

of young men's lives. And it is only starting. By the time they are done, a great many more people will have died



John Tufts in "Equivocation"

than the plot would have killed and fortunes will be made from their deaths. That's the truth. I know it. Everybody knows it."

Good theater entices an audience to hear things it might not otherwise

want to face. "Equivocation" lures viewers into deeper considerations about politics and religion, truth-telling and family relations. The scenes of torture are quite graphic. Yet the play is rife with comic relief. Part of the brilliance of Cain's play about Shagspeare is that it is so Shakespearean in its plot: an attempt to murder a king; villains who mislead and oafs who do not understand; revisionist history that resonates eerily with contemporary events; plays within a play (Shagspeare's troupe, the King's Men, performs scenes the modern audience recognizes from "King Lear" and "Macbeth"); tales of twins (Shakespeare had twin children, one of whom, the boy Hamnet, died young); and a neglected daughter who comes back to save her father. In the play's plot line, Shagspeare's daughter, Judith, from whom he is estranged, saves his version of "Macbeth," which eventually appeases James, the Scottish king.

The title of Cain's play refers to a famous pamphlet written by Garnet to help captured priests—and cooperating Catholics—to equivocate without actually lying when caught in the king's snares. In the aftermath of the

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Gunpowder Plot (where Garnet lost his life, as did the Jesuit brother, St. Nicholas Owen, who crafted many of the hidden “priest-holes” in Catholic mansions), duplicitous government propaganda made much of Jesuit equivocation as an epithet of scorn. In the play, Garnet, who opposed the Gunpowder Plot, which he knew about only under the seal of confession, defends his doctrine as not lying but learning the difficult task of actually telling the truth to dishonest political figures.

Cain spent seven seasons as the founding director of the Boston Shakespeare Company. But no place is more appropriate to premiere his play than Ashland. This season Ashland mounted spirited productions of “Macbeth” and “Henry VIII.” The latter set a tone by which audiences can understand English religious divisions. Shakespeare even alludes to the Gunpowder Plot in the famous comic porter’s scene in “Macbeth,” Act II, where the porter cries out: “Knock, Knock! Who’s there, i’ the other devil’s name. Faith, here’s an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God’s sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven. O come in, equivocator.”

“Equivocation” moves on, this fall, to the Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Geffen Playhouse in Los Angeles. In early spring it will be mounted by the Marin Theatre Company in the San Francisco area and then run Off-Broadway at the Manhattan Theatre Club. I plan to see it again in San Francisco. The play raises many thoughtful questions about family, faith, politics and the need to learn how—to use Henry Garnet’s definition of equivocation—to speak truth in difficult times.

**JOHN COLEMAN, S.J.**, a sociologist, is associate pastor of St. Ignatius Church in San Francisco, Calif.



BOOKS | DAVID CLOUTIER  
**BODY BEAUTIFUL**

**CALLED TO LOVE**

**Approaching John Paul II's  
Theology of the Body**

By Carl Anderson and José Granados  
Doubleday. 272p \$24  
ISBN 9780385527712

One can think about Pope John Paul II's theology of the body in two ways. It can be seen as an introduction to and catechesis on basic themes in Catholic theology (the *imago dei*, the Trinity, creation as gift, the importance of embodiment, persons as made for communion) by way of the ordinary experience of romantic love and marriage. Or it may be an attempt to construct a positive narrative of romantic love that conforms to and reinforces certain highly contested moral norms for sexuality. Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, and the Rev. José Granados, who teaches at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family, have written a follow-up to Anderson's very successful text on John Paul's social vision (*A Civilization of Love*), which can be read in both ways, but which highlights the first.

The present book is organized in three parts, corresponding to the divisions of the original work. The first presents John Paul's phenomenology of the "original experience" of the person as embodied gift, called to communion with another. The second works through the "rifts" that block our access to that original experience, as well as God's remedy for them (Christ). The third then considers the concrete forms in which this original and redeemed experience is lived out (marriage and virginity).

The first and second parts contain much attractive theological "catech-

esis," as mentioned above, in particular explaining the "gift" character of God's creation, of human relationship and of God's own self. The authors also emphasize the characteristic theme that self-giving love is not experienced on some purely spiritual level, but in fact given through and in the body itself. The third part contains some detailed explanations of specific moral problems, notably I.V.F. and contraception, but the authors do not even mention any of these issues until page 184. They keep the focus on John Paul's overall vision.

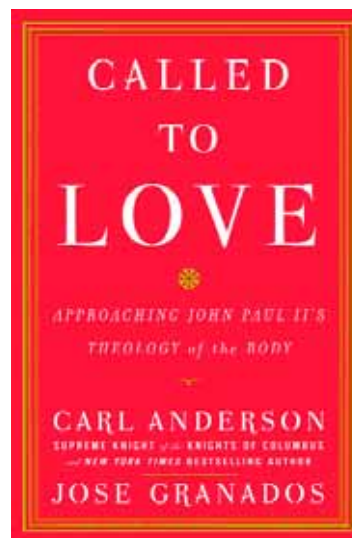
The most striking characteristic of the text is that it is not simply an exegesis of the pope's talks. The authors quote extensively from John Paul's literary corpus, indicating the continuity in the romantic vision found there and John Paul's reading of Genesis. The literary emphasis distinguishes this book from many "popularized" presentations of the theology of the body (by, for example, Christopher West), offering us a far more adult style and reflecting more richly the theological foundations of the work. The authors succeed in placing sexuality within a grace-filled, sacramental narrative of humanity's relation to God. These general theological claims take up far more space than, for example, discussions of "lust." The authors instead describe "concupiscence" in terms of "the logic of domination" or "possessiveness." Not simply excessive sexual desire, concupiscence is rooted in a lack of genuine trust and openness to the other. Thus, the book's overall

vision is likely to appeal to both supporters and critics of theology of the body. Finally, in line with Anderson's prior book, the text closes with a rousing discussion of the mission of the family in the larger world. The authors write that "if the family refuses to go beyond its own boundaries, contenting itself instead with the pursuit of purely private goals, it ceases to be a true family."

Of course, any book indebted to a single thinker, which does not really deal with potential criticisms, cannot help but share in some of the weaknesses of the subject. Two are worth mentioning. First, especially for a theory that claims to resonate with experience, the book is *very* abstract—especially

in its early parts. While the authors offer occasional examples, and do a good job continually repeating summaries of how the argument is proceeding, the pope's description of the dynamics of "original" love sounds detached from reality. Some readers, however, may find resonances with their experience of the joys and pains of romantic love in John Paul's literary characters. Second, the pope's general discussion of theological anthropology highlights the gift character of every person, and our call to communion with all. Examples used include a story of caring for a beggar. But how is all of this displayed most vividly in *spousal* love?

Further, phrases such as "the body entered theology" through the Incarnation, or "Christ's suffering flesh fulfills what we have called the 'nuptial meaning of the body'" suggest that the primary bodily communion offered by Christ is one of eucharistic fellowship, the commu-



nion of the whole church. Certainly this vision includes familial love (appropriately transformed). But familial love is not the foundation. Is not the church's communion in Christ the foundation on which spousal love rests? Isn't that why we marry in church?

These concerns, however, do not

undercut the excellent work Anderson and Granados have done in offering a rich and mature version of John Paul II's work.

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**DAVID CLOUTIER** teaches theology at Mount Saint Mary's University, Emmitsburg, Md., and is the author of *Love, Reason, and God's Story: An Introduction to Catholic Sexual Ethics* (St. Mary's Press, 2008).

WILLIAM C. MILLS

## A MORE HUMBLE READING

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### A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

#### The Other Side of the Story

By Diana Butler Bass  
HarperOne. 368p \$25.99  
ISBN 9780061448706

Diana Butler Bass is probably not as much a household name in most Roman Catholic circles as she is in mainline Protestant ones. She was raised as a Methodist in Maryland and later found a spiritual home in the Episcopal Church. Butler Bass is not just an author and guest lecturer; she is an entire cottage industry. She is perhaps most noted for her previous books,

*Christianity for the Rest of Us: How the Neighboring Church Is Transforming the Faith* and *Strength for the Journey: A Pilgrimage of Faith in Community*, among others. In addition to writing, Butler Bass is a researcher and guest speaker at many parishes, seminaries and national church organizations. Theologically trained as a church historian, she taught at Westmont College, the University of California at Santa Barbara, Macalester College, Rhodes College and Virginia Theological Seminary. For the past

several years, however, she has been touring the United States engaged in research that I like to call "best practices for Christians," investigating what works and what does not in the local faith community. I usually do not consider church history to be stimulating; bad memories from seminary still haunt me, trying to keep *homoousios* and *homoiousios* separate in my mind was no easy task. Much of church history involves reading about the development of doctrine (that is, ideas), but quite often the people behind those ideas or their social fabric get lost in the process.

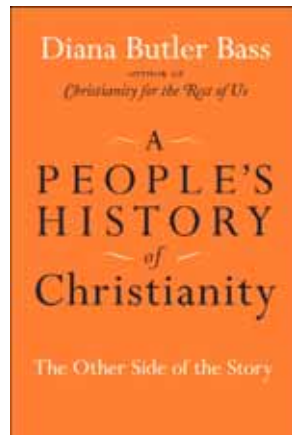
As Butler Bass herself says in the book's introduction, "This history is less a magisterial narrative and more like a collection of campfire tales—discrete stories that embody Christian character, virtue, suffering and commitment as people, 'go and do likewise.'" Friends swapping stories, as it were. What Butler Bass has done with church history, the Byzantine and Lutheran liturgical experts Robert Taft, S.J., and Frank Senn have done for liturgical studies in their books,

*Through Their Own Eyes: Liturgy as the Byzantines Saw It* and *The People's Work: A Social History of the Liturgy*.

This is exactly what *A People's History of Christianity: The Other Side of the Story* is all about: the "other side" of what I learned in seminary, the inspiring and encouraging everyday stories of Christians who have long been forgotten. The book is divided into five parts and is organized chronologically: The Way (Early Christianity); The Cathedral (Medieval); The Word (Reformation); The Quest (Modern Christianity) and The River (Contemporary Christianity). Each part is then divided into three chapters, within which are numerous sub-sections on reading Scripture, honoring the body, peacemaking, neighbors, ethics, freedom and prayer, among other things.

Known for her previous books on Christian practices, the rites and rituals or smells and bells, Butler Bass opens a whole new door to mainstream American Christianity by explaining the importance of the ancient prayer of the hours, the theology and function of the grand cathedrals of Europe, the use of icons as well as the importance of teaching and catechesis. The author's prose is uplifting and positive. Her style is conversational, allowing one to feel she is speaking directly to the reader, not to students in a college lecture hall. This feeling is enhanced by some personal vignettes she has sprinkled throughout the book.

The book, however, is more than a series of fireside chats of bygone days, of kings, popes, saints and sinners. The author views the contemporary renewal of the church through the lens of social history. As with her book *Christianity for the Rest of Us*, Butler Bass is interested in finding areas of renewal in the church. In other words, in the contemporary



#### ON THE WEB

Leo J. O'Donovan, S.J., reviews an exhibit of biblical prints. [americamagazine.org/culture](http://americamagazine.org/culture)

church—and here she means mainline Protestant, although one could add the Anglo-Catholic as well—what stories can we find that offer inspiration, encouragement and nourishment for the soul? How can we be creative by looking at both the big “T” Tradition (faith and doctrine) as well as the small “t” traditions (rites, rituals and devotions)? Who are the inspiring people and their stories in our common Christian past that may help

guide and lead us in the 21st century?

It is easy to look around at the big C church and see everything that is wrong with it: lack of financial resources, administrators who more often than not are ill suited for their respective leadership positions, the lack of interest in parish life by the laity. The list could go on. Yet reading *A People’s History of Christianity* left me with a sense of hope—despite countless scandals, heresies and

wrongdoings, usually by administrators and leaders. My hope is that the church continues to move forward in maintaining the basics of the faith, in the spirit of St. Benedict, who taught that the Christian life is both *laborare et orare*, work and prayer.

---

**REV. WILLIAM C. MILLS** is the rector of the *Nativity of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church in Charlotte, N.C.*, and an adjunct professor in the department of philosophy and religion at *Queens University in Charlotte*.

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## LETTERS

### Ahead of His Time

Re "Teilhard at Vespers" (Editorial, 8/17): A moving and beautiful tribute to a great 20th-century theologian. I had the opportunity a couple of years ago to visit Teilhard's grave in the Jesuit cemetery on the grounds of what is now the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y. Teilhard was clearly a faithful Catholic and priest whose insights were simply ahead of his time and therefore hard for the rest of us to assimilate.

It is not correct to suggest that Teilhard denied any dogma of the church, including that of original sin. To probe a dogma in order to make it more intelligible is not a denial of the dogma, but rather a desire to give it life in the contemporary milieu. I might point out that he was as misunderstood by the fundamentalists of the scientific establishment as he was by the fundamentalists within the church.

Also, Pope Benedict XVI is not the first pope to invoke Teilhard de Chardin in one of his talks. I distinctly recall reading a text by Paul VI from the 1960s in which he quotes Teilhard. In fact I heard a subsequent story to the effect that the pope was contacted by the Holy Office after the text was published, with a reminder that since Teilhard's writings had been censored, it was probably best that the pope not quote him.

DAVID GENTRY-AKIN  
San Pablo, Calif.

### A World of Grace

"Teilhard at Vespers" (Editorial, 8/17) was a lovely but also provocative reminder of how much hope the French Jesuit brought to a secularized world dismembered by two world wars. For all his struggles to show how evolutionary thought was compatible with Christian faith, nothing was more important to him than hope in a future that is open to God's grace evoking human commitment. I once asked Karl

Rahner, S.J., another advocate that ours is a world of grace, what he had actually read by Teilhard. "A few letters and 'The Mass on the World,'" he said. Sometimes a brief text can deeply affect our vision. The Gospels, after all, are very short.

LEO J. O'DONOVAN, S.J.  
New York, N.Y.

### The Bible, Then Teilhard

I am a cradle Catholic, but in my late 20s began to doubt all I had been taught. Through God's grace I had an adult conversion at age 34. After that I read many faith books, starting in the late 70s. When I read Teilhard's *Hymn of the Universe*, I knew I didn't need to read anything else. I referred to it as my penultimate book, the ultimate being the Bible. What eventually became very clear to me was that Teilhard's vision was also Paul's vision, something Pope Benedict also mentioned.

PEGGY KRUSE  
Florissant, Mo.

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CARTOON BY DAVE LONDON

### Cardinal Ratzinger on Teilhard

It may be important to read Pope Benedict's recent acknowledgment of Teilhard de Chardin in light of the pope's earlier writings. As far back as 1969, in his *Introduction to Christianity*, Joseph Ratzinger had already acknowledged the cosmic theology of Teilhard de Chardin. He saw it as making Christology accessible through a modern view. But in that same book he also criticized the strong biological approach of Teilhard. Later, in an interview published in *The Ratzinger Report* (1985), he spoke of a growing Teilhardism that tends to deny the reality of original sin. Perhaps this may help in understanding how

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the pope personally envisions the theology of Teilhard and its subsequent interpretations.

IDAHO SA AMADUSU  
*Leuven, Belgium*

### Thanks to the Web

I am a missionary bishop. To receive Signs of the Times digitally is great since I often receive the printed version one month after publication. Congratulations on a job well done.

(MOST REV.) LUIS MORGAN CASEY  
*Vicariate of Pando, Riberalta, Bolivia*

### Slippery Slope

I am aghast that Gerard F. Powers of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, as quoted in "Is Assassination Ever Justified?" (Signs of the Times, 8/3), explains that "the same criteria that would apply to war would apply to the killings of terrorists." Terrorists by whose definition? I can only hope that he has been misquoted or quoted out of context.

As Americans, we are now in a quagmire of a war because of bad or distorted intelligence and immoral pre-emptive strikes. Using more secret "intelligence" to target terrorists and making arguments or excuses for assassinations speeds our slide down a slippery slope greased by torture. Our country's rule of law and judicial processes must be followed to examine the evidence, determine guilt and protect society, lest we become a terrorist state to fight terrorism. As Christians, do we remember Christ saying, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you"?

MARY RYAN-HOTCHKISS  
*Portland, Ore.*

### A Way Forward

Re "Healing Health Care" (6/8): We have created a health co-op in Ithaca, N.Y. (<http://www.ithacahealth.org>) whose 800 members pay \$100 a year to be covered for 12 categories of everyday emergencies, and to own their own free clinic. Bring together 50 million unin-

ured Americans to demand Medicare for all, and to create their own non-profit health systems, and something will happen.

PAUL GLOVER  
*Philadelphia, Pa.*

### Especially for the Poor

Re: "A Time for Reform" (8/17): It is hard to imagine that any well-formed Catholic could argue in principle against universal health care, especially for the poor and for those who have suffered catastrophes and tragedies, and most especially for those who made poor choices in their lives and need our help now more than ever. As Catholics we stand before God and the world not as individuals but as a community with Jesus Christ as our head. Jesus clearly linked together healing and salvation: "Which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven?' or 'Arise, take up your bed and walk?'"

JACK RAYMER  
*Tucker, Ga.*

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# Be Opened; Take Up the Cross

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), SEPT. 6, 2009

Readings: Is 35:4-7; Ps 146:7-10; Jas 2:1-5; Mk 7:31-37

*“Immediately the man’s ears were opened” (Mk 7:35)*

I recently had lunch with a friend who uses hearing aids. We were in a restaurant, and with all the other voices around us, it was very hard for her to hear the waiter describe the specials of the day. It was only when he came around to her side of the table and leaned close to her that she could hear what he was saying. My friend told me that for a person who uses a hearing aid the hardest situation is to be in a crowd where the din is amplified, which makes it impossible to distinguish any particular voice. Even those without a hearing impairment have difficulty hearing in a noisy crowd.

In today’s Gospel, people bring to Jesus a man with a hearing and speech impairment and beg Jesus to lay his hand on him. The first thing Jesus does is to take the man away from the crowd. When the man’s hearing is restored, the first voice he will hear is that of Jesus, inviting him to greater openness. Like the waiter with my friend, Jesus draws close to the man. Using the same techniques as other healers, Jesus then touches the man’s ears and tongue and pronounces a word that Mark preserves in Aramaic: “*Ephphatha!*” “Be opened!” We follow the pattern today with our sacraments, using not only words, but physical

touch and the tangible signs of oil, water, bread and wine, which have the power to transform. Jesus uses spittle on the man’s tongue. In antiquity, spitting was thought to ward off evil spirits. But Jesus’ power is not magical. Rather, he looks up to heaven to acknowledge the divine origin of his power and directs the onlookers to God as well. Through Jesus’ power the man’s ears are opened and his speech becomes clear. What the man says in response, Mark does not tell us.

The crowd meanwhile becomes even more vociferous, proclaiming with astonishment the marvels that Jesus is doing. Jesus orders them to be silent, but they do not heed him. It is a bit ironic that, as Jesus enables a man with garbled speech to speak plainly, he enjoins silence on the babbling crowd. The crowd is focused on the flashy signs of the inbreaking of God’s reign, such as Isaiah foretells in the first reading for this Sunday. But the crowd misses the deeper meaning—what the signs signify. Jesus is not a showy miracle worker. Unless one becomes open to a deeper encounter with Jesus as the crucified and risen one, and to being transformed into his image, one cannot fully proclaim the mystery of the good news he brings.

The physical ability to hear is not necessary for such an encounter with Christ; nor is the physical ability to speak necessary to proclaim the word of God. It is openness of mind, heart, and spirit to the breath of God within and without, and the willingness to respond wholeheartedly that are essential. In the second reading, it is clear that openness to God also results in our openness to others, especially those who are poor. James insists that all should be given the same welcome. There



## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- What impedes your ability to hear and proclaim the Word?
- Ask Jesus to help you be open to a deeper relationship with him and with those who are made poor.  
...
- What is the cost for you as you choose to follow Jesus more closely?
- How does denial of self take form in your life?

should be no partiality (*prosopolempsia*, literally, “lifting up of the face”), because when we display favoritism it is generally toward the rich. When God, however, “shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34; Rom 2:11), it concerns God’s graciousness that extends to all—Jew and Greek alike. When it comes to those who are poor, all through the Scriptures, God is shown to be like a mother who loves all her children equally but shows partiality to the one who is most needy.

**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 has been named vice president and academic dean.

ART: TAD DUNNE

**TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN  
ORDINARY TIME (B), SEPT. 13,  
2009**

Readings: Is 50:5-9a; Ps 114:1-9;  
Jas 2:14-18; Mk 8:27-35

*“If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me”  
(Mk 8:34)*

Some years ago I was teaching a course on the Gospel of Mark. At the midpoint, Chapter Eight, I was waxing eloquent on what taking up the cross might mean for us, when one of the students raised her hand. She declared this to be the most dangerous text in the Bible and wished we could rip it out. She went on to describe how a majority of the women with whom she worked in a shelter for battered women and children had internalized this text. They thought that by enduring every kind of suffering, including physical and verbal abuse from their batterers, they were faithfully carrying their cross with Jesus. I was appalled at such a misunderstanding of the meaning of “taking up the cross.” I soon discovered that my student’s experience was replicated in vast numbers in most every corner of the globe.

While such a spirituality of the cross has enabled many women to endure great suffering and to give meaning to it, Jesus’ invitation to take up one’s cross actually refers to a very different kind of suffering. He is speaking to his disciples about the suffering that is likely to befall a person for being his follower. Illness or disease is not “the cross” in the sense in which Jesus speaks of it in today’s Gospel. There is nothing particularly Christian about this kind of suffering; it can happen to anyone. Nor is suffering that comes from abuse or injustice something that one should “take up.” Jesus confronted and tried to stop that

kind of suffering whenever he encountered it. The cross consists rather in the negative consequences to which Jesus’ followers willingly expose themselves as the cost of being his disciples.

Hand in hand with taking up the cross is denial of self. This does not refer to ascetic acts, like giving up something you enjoy during Lent. Such practices can feed a spirituality of denial of self; but when Jesus enjoins denial of self, he speaks of a spirituality by which one chooses daily to place the common good and Christ at the center, not one’s own desires. It is a free choice to live a life of ever-deepening self-surrender to love.

Just as people who commit themselves to one another for life must constantly give of themselves out of love for the other, so the love into which Jesus invites disciples is a costly one that asks more and more of us. It is a freely chosen self-surrender in love, which implies that only those

who have a healthy sense of self and the freedom to choose to surrender themselves can authentically deny themselves and take up their cross. The cross of which Jesus speaks is not a suffering imposed on persons who are downtrodden.

The second reading today gives some concrete examples of this kind of costly love. If one encounters a brother or sister without adequate clothing or food or shelter, to deny oneself and take up the cross demands letting go of time and resources in self-surrender to the neediest ones. Simply talking about faith, but not making it visible in concrete deeds of self-surrender, is not authentic discipleship. Trying to skirt the cost of such love, as Peter did when he insisted to Jesus that the cross was not necessary, is an all-too-human way of thinking. To think as God does results in godly action, a lifelong surrender to a free and costly love.

**BARBARA E. REID**

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