

America

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Is This a Religion?

SAM SAWYER ON THE CULT OF APPLE
JOHN ANDERSON ON 'JOBS'



OF MANY THINGS

Wellfleet's outer beach is just about an hour's drive from my boyhood home on Cape Cod. The spot is well known for a steep, 50-foot sand cliff that rises behind it, topped by a gently sloping upland that affords a graceful vista of the Atlantic, exactly the sort of spot that prompted Henry David Thoreau to say of Cape Cod that "a man may stand there and put all of America behind him." There may be a craggy point or two in Maine that's technically farther east, but Wellfleet is about as far east as you can get in the continental United States. "Next stop, Portugal!" my dad would almost always say as he got out of our station wagon and pointed to the ocean.

Wellfleet's relative proximity to Portugal also brought Guglielmo Marconi here in the winter of 1903. From a tower above the outer beach, Marconi successfully completed the first transatlantic wireless communication between the United States and England. The Wellfleet Historical Society placed a bronze plaque on the original site in 1953; and every time we visited the beach, Dad would gather us around it and, in homage to Signor Marconi's genius, he would read the plaque out loud: "Site of the first U.S. Transatlantic Wireless Telegram addressed to Edward VII, King of England, by Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States." If my grandmother were with us, she would add that "Signor Marconi was a Catholic, you know," and we would then descend the steep slope in search of less historically minded pursuits.

Only 100 years have passed since Marconi's triumph, yet he would hardly recognize the contemporary world: Telegraphy gave way to radio, which gave way to television, which gave way to the Internet. Now I can send a text to an iPhone in Lisbon while I'm lounging on the outer beach or bathing in Oahu or fly-fishing in Juneau. "The world got smaller that day," Dad would say about Marconi's broadcast. At the same time, the world became infinitely more com-

plex and frightfully more impersonal. The fathers at the Second Vatican Council addressed this ambivalence in the "Decree on the Means of Social Communication":

The Church recognizes that these media, if properly utilized, can be of great service to mankind, since they greatly contribute to men's entertainment and instruction as well as to the spread and support of the Kingdom of God. The Church recognizes, too, that men can employ these media contrary to the plan of the Creator and to their own loss. Indeed, the Church experiences maternal grief at the harm all too often done to society by their evil use.

So where do Apple and Steve Jobs fit into all of this? Was Jobs another Marconi? In 100 years time will some family on their way to the beach take a detour to Cupertino to read a bronze plaque? If it were left up to John Anderson, perhaps not. In his review of the new Steve Jobs biopic in this issue, Mr. Anderson writes, "Nowhere in the film is a case made that the man made life better for anyone. It would be a hard case to make." Anderson cites the demise of the music industry and the dwindling number of brick-and-mortar bookstores as evidence that Jobs actually made things worse. For my part, I'm not sure that Steve Jobs should be held to account for all that. But neither do I think that he was "a singular genius who remade the world." I tend to think that Steve Jobs was much like the rest of us: an amalgam of lights and shadows. Even Marconi had a dark side: He was not just a committed Fascist; Mussolini was the best man at his wedding.

In the end, only God knows whether Steve Jobs was a good man. What I know is that I could write most of this column on an iPad on a flight from Toronto. That, at least, is a pretty good thing.

MATT MALONE, S.J.

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ON THE WEB

Andrea Vicini, S.J., right, talks about the government's **BRAIN Initiative** on our podcast. Plus, **Fay Vincent** on morality and baseball, and **Mario J. Paredes** on the pope's popularity in **Latin America**. All at americamagazine.org.



Japan's Witness

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is drawing international praise for his innovative policies aimed at reviving Japan's somnolent economy. In July he received a crucial boost from Japan's voters, who helped put his coalition in firm control of the country's legislature. Mr. Abe now has the political muscle he needs to complete his economic program, but his nationalist ambitions are causing some concern.

With control of two-thirds of Japan's Diet (parliament), Mr. Abe now has the votes to revise the country's constitution, which was drawn up under the close supervision of the United States after World War II. Mr. Abe has proposed a constitutional change that would allow Japan to maintain a stronger military. At issue is Article 9, which outlaws war "as means of settling international disputes."

In a statement marking the Ten Days of Peace, the annual commemoration of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Peter Takeo Okada, the archbishop of Tokyo and president of the Japanese bishops' conference, called Article 9 a "world treasure" that "reflects Jesus Christ's teaching of love most abundantly." Indeed, Japan has served as a unique witness to peace over the last 50 years, especially in the area of nuclear nonproliferation.

In making the case for change, Mr. Abe cites a shift in public attitudes about national defense and points with worry to the growing power of China. The power of Article 9, however, lies in its complete repudiation of war, and Japan's bishops deserve support from the international community as they work to protect this "treasure."

Doing God's Work

Perhaps more than any other public intellectual, Robert Bellah, the sociologist of religion who died on July 30 at the age of 86, summarized the American identity in a few words—civil religion—and explained it in a way that both respected the constitutional relationship between church and state and defined the United States as a nation under God. Its principles, articulated by almost every president from Washington to Obama, constituted a tradition, said Mr. Bellah, "to hold the nation in judgment and to assert that it should operate under higher moral standards."

Steeped in popular culture, Robert Bellah called upon Scripture, myths and history to define us. *Habits of the Heart* (1985), of which he was the lead author, warns against individualism's "religious" offshoot, which he called Sheilaism after a woman quoted in the book. Sheila's faith included little more than God and herself, with no link to

public life. Mr. Bellah contrasts the individualism of American folk heroes like cowboys and detectives, loners who never fully belong to society, with loners like President Abraham Lincoln—isolated and misunderstood, but committed to the larger whole and willing to die for it.

Associated with the Communist Party as a Harvard undergraduate, Mr. Bellah was asked during his doctoral studies to identify other party members. He refused and lost his fellowship. In 1973, when he was invited to become a permanent member of the prestigious Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J., his fellow scientists rejected him because religion was not "scholarly enough" to study. The last line of President John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address epitomizes the civil religion about which Mr. Bellah wrote, and it well describes his own achievements: "Here on earth, God's work must truly be our own."

Turning Point in Congo?

When reporters need "art" to accompany stories about the latest violence and refugee exodus in the Democratic Republic of Congo, they can reach into their digital photo morgues and take their pick. They will have little trouble finding images of desperate families in flight from conflict propelled by the continuing struggle over the riches beneath the soil—and soon to be in your cellphone or computer—in the eastern province of North Kivu. It seems every few months there is a new outbreak of violence as a nearly incomprehensible array of warlords and antigovernment factions operate with relative impunity.

The International Committee of the Red Cross estimates that some 40,000 people remain displaced near the border with Uganda, fleeing attacks by the Allied Democratic Forces in July. Elsewhere Congolese villagers have been driven from their homes by the various offensives of the March 23 Movement, a rebel group. Too often U.N. troops sent to keep the peace have watched impotently from the sidelines.

Now a new U.N. force, an unprecedented "intervention brigade" of 3,000 soldiers from Tanzania, South Africa and Malawi, has been deployed. Better trained and equipped than typical U.N. multinational peacekeepers, the brigade will even be assisted by drones tracking activities in warlord or rebel-controlled territory. The brigade has been charged with taking the fight to the peacebreakers who have been a plague in the region for decades. The deployment has been billed as a turning point in Congo by U.N. officials. But if it will be a turn that finally breaks the vicious cycle of conflict and flight in North Kivu or a turning point that mortally diminishes the U.N.'s credibility remains to be seen.

A Call for Compassion

North African migrants seeking refuge in Italy face a perilous journey across Mediterranean waters. In the past two decades some 6,000 have perished at sea en route to Lampedusa, a tiny Italian island 70 miles off the coast of Tunisia. Pope Francis, in his first trip outside Rome as pope, visited Lampedusa on July 8 and dropped a wreath of flowers into the Mediterranean as a sign of mourning. In his homily that day, the pope decried a “globalization of indifference,” which has “taken from us the ability to weep” for those immigrants who died, including young mothers with babies and young fathers trying to support their families.

Pope Francis’ poignant witness and call for compassion and action are especially timely for Americans as the fate of comprehensive immigration reform hangs in the balance in the House of Representatives. Cardinal Roger M. Mahony, retired archbishop of Los Angeles, writes in *America* (“After Lampedusa,” Web only) that Francis’ homily in Lampedusa “challenges people everywhere to drastically reconsider our conversations about the immigrants living and working in our midst.” As the House debates border security measures, legal protections for immigrant workers and whether to extend legal residency or citizenship status to undocumented immigrants, it is essential to keep in mind how these policies will affect the lives of our immigrant sisters and brothers.

The prospects of revamping the nation’s immigration laws received a boost on June 27 when the Senate passed a reform bill, 68 to 32. John McCain of Arizona, Marco Rubio of Florida and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina—all members of the Senate’s Gang of Eight who initially drafted the legislation—were among 14 Republicans who voted for it. The comprehensive landmark bill allows more visas for skilled laborers, a new visa program for farmworkers, greater workplace protections, a significant increase in border security and an arduous 13-year pathway to citizenship for most of the 11 million undocumented immigrants now in this country. The security measures, introduced late to draw additional Republican support for the bill, come with a \$46 billion price tag. The bill adds 20,000 border agents, completes 700 miles of fence along the U.S.-Mexican border and invests \$3.2 billion in technology upgrades.

Some believed that this legislation, by including a pathway to citizenship and increased border security, represented a grand compromise that could win support in the Republican-controlled House. The House, however, seems

intent on passing separate pieces of legislation rather than one comprehensive bill, and at this point none include a pathway to citizenship. There is a bipartisan Gang of Seven in the House, but they have yet to unveil their own bill.

Diverse interest groups have united to support an overhaul of the current system. Labor unions have joined with business interests, recognizing that immigration reform will strengthen the economy. Prominent conservative activists and donors, including the tax reform activist Grover Norquist, have voiced support for reform. Religious groups have inspired pro-reform efforts. Polls indicate there is overwhelming, bipartisan support for reform, including a pathway to citizenship, among Americans.

After the presidential election in November, in which 71 percent of Hispanic voters supported President Obama, many Republicans believed it was past time for the party to shed its anti-immigrant reputation and favor reform. Considering the recent popular support for reform and the political incentive to woo a growing Hispanic electorate, one wonders why House Republicans are hesitant to support the Senate’s compromise bill. Some political observers point to the recent Congressional redistricting. Many House Republicans represent increasingly conservative districts where supporting a pathway to citizenship is regarded as rewarding criminal activity. These representatives might support immigration reform but fear being labeled an “amnesty candidate” in a tough primary challenge.

Three quarters of the undocumented immigrants in the United States have lived here for more than a decade, and the group represents 5.2 percent of the U.S. labor force. They pay taxes but cannot vote or obtain a driver’s license. They have families but live in fear of deportation and separation from children. Some politicians propose legalization without citizenship for undocumented immigrants. This path, however, would create a second-class group that contributes to society but receives little protection. Senator McCain, speaking at an A.F.L.-C.I.O. event last month, said that “without the protections of citizenship,” many of these immigrants could be “exploited and mistreated in a broad variety of ways. That’s not what America is supposed to be all about.” This is the compassion Pope Francis described in Lampedusa. This is why the House needs to pass a comprehensive bill that includes a pathway to citizenship.



REPLY ALL

Not Convinced

In “Beyond the Fortnight” (7/1), Archbishop William E. Lori addresses some issues quite clearly. I appreciate that. However, there are numerous issues that he has not made so clear for me to understand.

For example, Archbishop Lori demands that companies and individuals receive conscience-based exceptions to public policy. However, it is much too easy in this country to come up with a variety of “issues of conscience.” I could say, “I don’t want to serve a Mormon, or a Muslim, in my business because I don’t want anyone to think that I condone their beliefs.” Isn’t that essentially the argument when a florist refuses to do the flowers for the wedding of a same-sex couple? We’re giving people more opportunities to repeat the discriminatory practices of the past.

I don’t think I am much different than many other thoughtful Catholics on this subject of religious freedom. There are a lot of ambiguities and intertwined issues.

VINCENT GAGLIONE
Yonkers, N.Y.

Prior to the Fortnight

Back in the days of my youth, the 1940s, the thought occurred to me: Why is the Catholic Church seeking public contracts? I knew, as I thought everyone else did, that once you take money from someone you are no longer your own master. Certainly there is enough history in the church to bear witness to that. I guess the fact that we were living in a democracy changed the guidelines.

How do we go back to the days when whatever we accomplished we accomplished on our own? My suggestion is to gather a group of our brightest young Catholics and have them study how we did it before public contracts and how we can apply those

principles now. Perhaps this is an impossible task, but I consider it more likely than coming to an acceptable agreement with our federal government—no matter who is in office.

JOHN TOOHEY
Red Bank, N.J.

Inappropriate Reference

Archbishop Lori’s use of the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life report of government infringement of religious beliefs and practices around the world was inappropriate. While it is true that the United States does appear on the Pew score card, showing “moderate” restrictions on religion, almost all the cases cited relate to the practice of the Muslim faith (for example, regulations against wearing a beard or converting to Islam while in prison).

The H.H.S. mandate and the redefinition of marriage described by Archbishop Lori as challenges to religious liberty in the United States would never be included on the Pew list. Why? Because, in the irony of religious freedom, these same items can be seen as lifting restrictions on persons who do not agree with the Catholic Church on contraception or same-sex marriage.

(MSGR.) JOHN ROWAN
Southold, N.Y.

Other Infringements

The essay “Beyond the Fortnight” is troubling. As a lifelong practicing Catholic, what I needed to hear from Archbishop Lori was an exposition of why (our Catholic) religious freedom is infringed and our consciences violated by the demands of the Affordable Care Act—but apparently has not been so violated by any other legislative action that directly or indirectly requires participation and/or acquiescence of the church or of individuals.

Why has the urgency to protect religious freedom come to the fore in fortnights of prayer now—when the topic is sexual activity? Not endless, senseless wars. Not raw acts of oppression of the poor. Not the unapologetic crushing of labor. Not over policy that protects “investment” in Asian sweatshops so our clothes are cheap. God knows these actions violate God’s word. Do they not assault the consistent teaching of the Gospel (if not of the church!)?

If the church has any legitimate stance on eroding religious freedom triggered by health care mandates, it sadly has squandered a credible defense of it by failures to challenge with the same vigor its participation in violations of all manner of human



BLOG TALK

In response to “Pursuing the Truth in Love,” by Matt Malone, S.J. (6/3), and the interview with Father Malone in *The Washington Post* (6/28), the editorial page editor of *The Citizen Times of Asheville, N.C.*, wrote, “Dropping the Labels” (7/5). Here is an excerpt, edited for length.

Here’s a little game I like to play: Switcheroo. Reading political commentary, watching the news, listening to talk radio, what have you, when I hear the word “Obama,” I’ll insert the word “Bush.” For “conservative,” I’ll

hear “liberal.” I find it’s a good grounding experience, a sort of baseline gut-check.

Others are trying a different tack to jump the ideological hurdle. I’m intrigued by what **America** has decided to do: “**America** will no longer use the terms *liberal*, *conservative* or *moderate* when referring to our fellow Catholics in an ecclesiastical context.”

It’s an intriguing approach. Let’s face it, people use those words as shields, sometimes as bludgeons. It will be interesting to see how the magazine’s new policy plays out.

JIM BUCHANAN
The Asheville Citizen-Times

rights and the common good—both as citizens and as an institution.

RITA HESSLEY
Cincinnati, Ohio

A Good Man

Re “Of Many Things,” by Matt Malone, S.J. (7/1): I am sorry to read that James S. Torrens, S.J., has retired as poetry editor of **America**. We here in Fresno are still able to see him and enjoy his company. Every community of faith deserves to have a man like Father Torrens as one of its members.

(MSGR.) JIM PETERSON
Fresno, Calif.

Who am I?

“Pursuing the Truth in Love,” by Matt Malone, S.J. (6/3), is a wonderfully written piece and the best “examination of conscience” I can ever recall reading. It should be required reading in all Jesuit educational institutions. As our feet touch the floor every morning, it just might make us ask, in the lyrical words of Jean Valjean, “Who am I?” Thanks, I’m better off today than yesterday.

JIM TOLAN
New York, N.Y.

Soaring Spirit

My advanced age does not permit me to navigate the technology field of a “log in!” However, I feel compelled to write to someone at **America** and applaud “Citrus Paradisi,” by Chelsea Wagenaar (6/3), winner of the 2013 Foley Poetry Award. It made my spirit soar, higher and higher. What a radiant picture she has created.

I will cut it out and paste it in my daily journal, so that one day my children will read it and say, “Wow!” It

Letters to the editor may be sent to America’s editorial office (address on page 2) or letters@americamagazine.org. **America** will also consider the following for print publication: comments posted below articles on America’s Web site (americamagazine.org) and posts on Twitter and public Facebook pages. All correspondence may be edited for length and clarity.

STATUS UPDATE

Readers respond to “Beyond the Fortnight,” by Archbishop William E. Lori (7/1).

The church already is legally required to recognize marriages of those who are not married according to church law—e.g., by providing spousal employment benefits. The only difference now is that gay people as well as straight people can have marriages recognized by the state but not by the church.

(Deacon) Eric Stoltz

sure “wowed” me, an 82-year-old Irish dreamer.

MARY C. PHILLIPS
Tiffin, Ohio

Praise for Thatcher

As a longtime subscriber to **America**, I was very disappointed by “The Divided Kingdom,” by James Hanvey, S.J. (5/20). To call the article biased and one-sided is an understatement.

Many policy analysts on both sides of the Atlantic credit Margaret

The concerns expressed by Archbishop Lori are much more subtle and nuanced than the public debate on this topic would suggest.

Niall McShane

I wish there were a Fortnight for Freedom for the poor, the elderly, who go largely unacknowledged in our culture, for women brutally used as sexual objects, for victims of sexual abuse and violence, and the disenfranchised. I wonder what that rally would look like.

Victoria Witherspoon Cortese

Thatcher with the rescue of Britain from a near economic meltdown. She also had a role, with Pope John Paul II and President Reagan, in bringing about the collapse of the Soviet Union, and she negotiated with President Reagan a truly historic nuclear arms reduction.

Unfortunately, these signature achievements were somehow overlooked in Father Hanvey’s article.

DOROTHY C. MATERN
Chicago, Ill.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

LABOR DAY

Persistent Unemployment an Affront to Human Dignity

Millions of workers are being denied the honor and respect they deserve because of a lack of jobs, underemployment, low wages and exploitation, according to the chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development. "Earlier this year, Pope Francis pointed out, 'Work is fundamental to the dignity of a person.... It gives one the ability to maintain oneself, one's family, to contribute to the growth of one's own nation,'" said Bishop Stephen E. Blaire of Stockton, Calif., in the U.S. bishops' annual Labor Day statement.

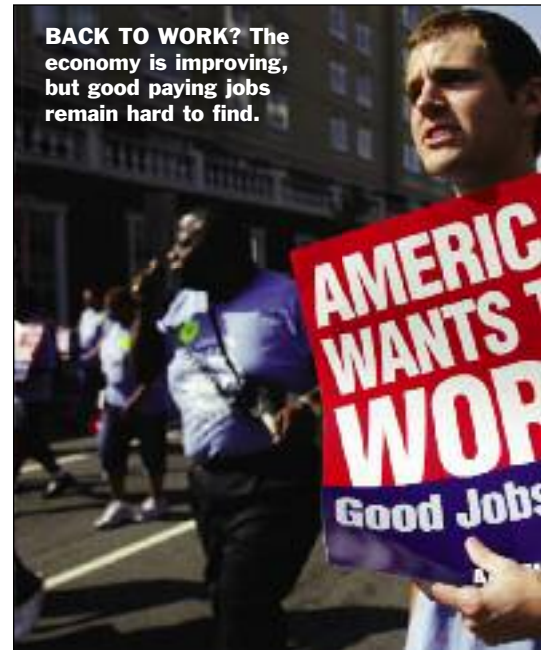
"Unfortunately, millions of workers today are denied this honor and respect as a result of unemployment, underemployment, unjust wages, wage theft, abuse and exploitation," Bishop Blaire said.

"The economy is not creating an adequate number of jobs that allow workers to provide for themselves and their families," Bishop Blaire said. "More than four million people have been jobless for over six months, and that does not include the millions more who have simply lost hope.

For every available job, there are often five unemployed and underemployed people actively vying for it. This jobs gap pushes wages down. Half of the jobs in this country pay less than \$27,000 per

year. More than 46 million people live in poverty, including 16 million children."

In his message on behalf of the bishops' conference, Bishop Blaire quoted from the Second Vatican



BACK TO WORK? The economy is improving, but good paying jobs remain hard to find.

Council's "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World": "While an immense number of people still lack the absolute necessities of life, some, even in less advanced areas, live

MIDEAST PEACE

Stakes Are High in Revival Of Israeli/Palestinian Negotiations

Secretary of State John Kerry and the U.S. State Department significantly raised the bar for both the ambitions and the expectations for upcoming negotiations between West Bank Palestinians and the State of Israel. One wild card in the new discussions, which have set the laudable but so far elusive goal of a comprehensive Middle East peace deal, will be the response of Palestinians in Gaza and the strip's political leadership, Hamas. No peace agreement can be truly comprehensive if it leaves out Gaza, Robert M. Danin, the Eni Enrico Mattei Senior Fellow for Middle East and Africa

Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, stressed during a discussion of the renewed negotiations on July 30.

Palestinian and Israeli representatives finished an initial two days of talks on July 30 at the State Department after prolonged shuttle diplomacy by Secretary Kerry brought them back together for the first time since 2010. Speaking from Washington, Kerry said: "The parties have agreed here today that all of the final status issues, all of the core issues and all other issues are all on the table for negotiation. And they are on the table with one simple goal: a view to

ending the conflict."

Danin was impressed by how high Kerry had set the bar for the Obama administration and how much trust and authority President Obama had placed in Kerry's hands. Negotiators will be trying to resolve not only the conflict of 1967, but also the "existential" conflict of the 1948 war, Danin said. "That's a more ambitious goal [than an agreement on borders and security], but the only one that will end the conflict in all ways."

But in an indication of just how fragile progress in the Middle East can be, just days after the hopeful presentation in Washington, the negotiations were threatened by the preliminary approval given by Israel for the construction of over 1,000 new settler homes in the West Bank. The chief Palestinian nego-



in luxury or squander wealth.”

“How can it be said that persons honor one another when such ‘extravagance and wretchedness exist side by side?’” he asked. Those words, Bishop

Blaire noted, “seem to be just as true today.”

Bishop Blaire also quoted from Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical “Charity in Truth” (2009), which also dealt in part with the specter of inequality. “The dignity of the individual and the demands of justice require, particularly today, that economic choices do not cause disparities in wealth to increase in an excessive and morally unacceptable manner,” Pope Benedict said, “and that we continue to prioritize the goal of access to steady employment for everyone.”

The bishop noted how workers’ issues are tied to other issues. “High unemployment and underemployment are connected to the rise in income inequality,” he said. Such inequality erodes social cohesion and puts democracy at risk. “The pain of the poor and those becoming poor in the rising economic inequality of our society is mounting,” he added.

“Whenever possible we should support businesses and enterprises that protect human life and dignity, pay just wages and protect workers’ rights,” Bishop Blaire wrote. “We should support immigration policies that bring immigrant workers out of the shadows to a legal status and offer them a just and fair path to citizenship, so that their human rights are protected and the wages for all workers rise.”

Bishop Blaire also commented on the importance of unions in the bishops’ statement, noting that the “rise in income inequality has mirrored a decline in union membership.” He said, “Since the end of the Civil War, unions have been an important part of our economy because they provide protections for workers and more importantly a way for workers to participate in company decisions that affect them. Catholic teaching has consistently affirmed the right of workers to choose to form a union.”

tiator, Saeb Erekat protested the move in a letter to Kerry, deploring the decision as proof of “Israel’s bad faith and lack of seriousness.”

Danin, who has had firsthand experience with the difficulties involved in Mideast negotiations during a two-decade career at the State Department, was generally approving of Secretary Kerry’s strategy so far. Danin believes the tight ship and diplomatic ambiguity maintained thus far by Kerry and his staff should prove valuable assets to negotiations. The most productive final status discussions can only be conducted in secrecy, he said, so that both sides can frankly explore strategies for compromise on neuralgic issues, like the fate of Palestinian refugees and the disposition of East Jerusalem, that would provoke howls of outrage from hardliners

in Ramallah or Jerusalem.

Danin suggested that Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel may have been motivated to return to negotiations by two factors: a realization that Israel’s growing international isolation had reached a critical point and perhaps a desire to leave power with a “legacy” achievement. A comprehensive peace deal with the Palestinians would be a diplomatic success unmatched by his predecessors. Also the time is coming closer, Danin points out, when supporters of Israel in America will have to ponder seriously the effects of its occupation and settler policy on the nature of the State of Israel itself. “What kind of Israel do

we [Americans] want?” Danin asked. “An occupying state is not the kind of Israel we want; it’s not the kind of Israel Israelis want.”

KEVIN CLARKE



TABLE FELLOWSHIP. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry hosts an Iftar, the meal at sundown that breaks the Ramadan fast, at the U.S. Department of State in Washington.

Almost 15,000 Deacons Active in U.S. Church

The number of permanent deacons in the Catholic Church in the United States continues to rise, according to a national survey conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, at Georgetown University. Nationally there are more than 18,000 deacons, about 3,000 of them retired. Many permanent deacons hold jobs outside of the ministry. An estimated 21 percent of active permanent deacons are also compensated for ministry. A small percentage of deacons work full-time in pastoral care in a parish or at a social services agency. Ninety-three percent of active deacons are currently married; 4 percent are widowers and 2 percent never married. About a quarter are in their 50s; 43 percent are in their 60s; and 25 percent are 70 or older. “The statistics are encouraging,” said Archbishop Robert J. Carlson, chair of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. “But they also alert us to the fact many of the deacons will soon reach retirement age. This suggests a need for bishops to recruit a greater number of men to join the ranks of the permanent diaconate.”

Cardinal Condemns Sri Lanka Shooting

Cardinal Albert Malcolm Ranjith of Colombo, Sri Lanka, expressed “shock and distress,” accusing the Sri Lankan military of storming a Catholic church and firing on those inside. They had sought refuge in the church after a protest over the pollution of a local water source was violently dispersed. The cardinal condemned the army’s action in a strongly worded statement read on Aug. 7 during the funeral for one of three people who died in the

NEWS BRIEFS

Italy’s foreign minister, Emma Bonino, told reporters on Aug. 6 that “it seems” the Italian Jesuit priest Paolo Dall’Oglio, missing more than a week in Syria, “has been kidnapped by...a local version of Al Qaeda.” • The attorney Frances X. Hogan, Jane Marie Klein, O.S.F., and the diocesan leader and social worker Barbara Thorp received the U.S. bishops’



Paolo Dall’Oglio in 2008

People of Life Award for lifetime commitment to the pro-life movement on Aug. 4. • On Aug. 7 Secretary of State John Kerry appointed the **ethnologist Shaun Casey** of Virginia to head the new State Department Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives. • Msgr. Robert Weiss, pastor of St. Rose of Lima in Newtown, Conn., and the parish’s St. Virgilius Knights of Columbus Council 185 received the **first Caritas Awards** from the national Knights of Columbus in recognition of their extraordinary efforts in the aftermath of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School last December. • Pope Francis’ orders restricting the **use of the Latin Mass** in communities of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate “do not intend to contradict the general instructions” of Pope Benedict, but respond to the congregation’s “specific problems,” said Federico Lombardi, S.J., the Vatican spokesman, on Aug. 2.

incident on Aug. 1 at St. Anthony Parish in Weliveriya, a village just outside the capital. Authorities said more than 50 people were injured during the assault. “It was sacrilege for anyone to enter such sacred precincts with arms in their hands and to behave in a violent manner there,” Cardinal Ranjith said at the funeral of Ravishan Perera, 18, a student at St. Peter’s College in Colombo who died after being shot in the head. Cardinal Ranjith demanded that the “those found guilty [should] be punished without consideration of rank or status.”

Vatican Toughens Financial Controls

As part of the Vatican’s ongoing efforts to ensure that all its financial activity complies with international standards, particularly those aimed at preventing

money laundering and possible financing of terrorism, Pope Francis has expanded the role and the reach of the Vatican’s Financial Intelligence Authority. Pope Francis issued new rules on Aug. 8 broadening Vatican City finance laws to cover all the offices of the Roman Curia, including non-profit organizations operating out of the Vatican, like Caritas Internationalis and Aid to the Church in Need. Pope Francis also added “the function of prudential supervision” to the responsibilities of the F.I.A. The Vatican spokesperson, Federico Lombardi, S.J., explained that the Vatican is trying to ensure that it is not a “potential weak spot” in international efforts to crack down on money laundering, terrorism financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

From CNS and other sources.



Save Our Sisters

For me, the tipping point in my awareness of the crisis facing women religious came by way of Twitter and a phone call.

The tweet alerted me to an alarming news item about the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield, Mass. An article headlined “Sisters of St. Joseph Face Dire Financial Situation With Hope, Faith,” reported that a storied group of sisters, who educated generations of Catholic children and young adults and are much beloved in Massachusetts, would be bankrupt within five years. “The bottom line,” said a report from financial consultants, according to MassLive.com, “is that if the congregation continues business as usual, it will be without cash assets within a half-dozen years.”

How did this happen? The plight of the S.S.J.’s, who have served the Springfield Diocese for 130 years, is not attributable to laziness. Has there ever been a harder working group of people than Catholic sisters? Nor can it be chalked up to extravagance. Sister Maxyne D. Schneider, the congregation’s president, described several cost-saving measures taken by the order, like saving on food preparation at the mother house, selling the members’ cars and asking sisters to reduce their already tight budgets. Still, the report predicted “financial ruin.”

On the heels of that news came a phone call from a Catholic sister I’ve known for some time. After a discernment process, her order had decided to sell the house in which she was living. So she and another sister were search-

ing for a new place. But as a religious sister, she has no savings, and her order could not locate affordable rental space anywhere within 100 miles. Even though she does not need medical care, her only option was to move to the only place available, a retirement community in another state.

Most Catholics know that religious orders (for both men and women) are struggling financially. But why? For the women’s orders, the easiest explanation is that even when their congregations were filled with sisters in active ministries earning a salary, those salaries were low. Now, with declining vocations and many sisters retiring from income-producing jobs, even those meager salaries have almost disappeared. Yet when I mention this to some Catholics, they ask, “Why doesn’t the diocese help, or the Vatican sell off some of those statues?” Or, “I heard about some sisters who sold off a lot of land, and they’re rich.”

To answer those questions I turned to Janice Bader, C.P.P.S., the executive director of the National Religious Retirement Office at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Why don’t the dioceses help? Every religious community is financially autonomous, said Sister Bader, and the income, earnings and expenses have always been managed separately from the dioceses. Besides, she said, “Each diocese has its own financial responsibilities.” Just think of the closing of parishes and schools. Even if the dioceses were positioned to help, they do not have sufficient funds to provide for

the “retirement fund shortfall.”

Why doesn’t the Vatican help? Like the dioceses, the Vatican too has financial responsibilities and helps to support many organizations, especially in the developing world. “While the needs of religious in this country are great,” said Sister Bader, “there are many other portions of the globe that have tremendous needs but fewer opportunities for assistance.”

How about all those orders selling off property? While a few orders have sold off property, Sister Bader noted that buildings are often a liability, expensive to maintain and “extremely difficult to renovate for other uses.” Because of asbestos contamination, it can cost millions to demolish a

Some groups of women religious are facing financial ruin.

building, and buyers are far more interested in the land, anyway. Even if a sale is possible, the cost of building a new, smaller facility to house retired and infirm sisters can be “staggering” and would consume most of the earnings from a sale.

Prospects are bleak. Perhaps the best way to help these generous women is to contribute to the religious orders that have made a difference in your life. The Retirement Fund for Religious and Support our Aging Religious are also fine places to start.

The sisters do not despair. They never have. “As leaders, we can’t give others hope unless we have hope ourselves,” Sister Schneider said. “We have always had a sense we are together and we are about God’s work. That is a sense of hopefulness.”

JAMES MARTIN, S.J., is editor at large of *America* and author of the new e-book *Together on Retreat: Meeting Jesus in Prayer* (HarperOne).

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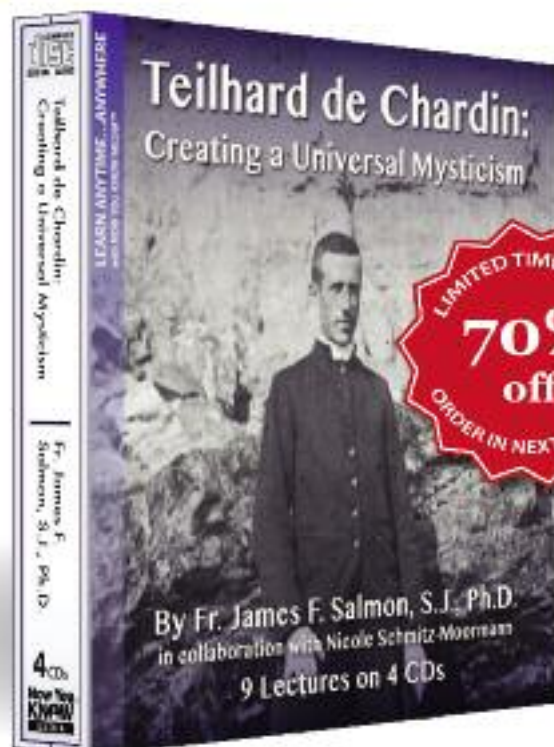
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On being baptized into a technological religion

Eating the Apple

BY SAM SAWYER

I did not expect to convert. I spent my youth as a committed PC user; I understood technology, could build my own computer and was not going to be shackled to Apple's attitude of "we know what you need even better than you do." Yet as I emerged from the strict laptop-less poverty of the Jesuit novitiate and needed to buy a computer, I drank the Kool-Aid: I bought a MacBook.

I told myself at the time that I had not completely betrayed my allegiance to real, geek-quality technology. The new MacBooks ran standard Intel processors, so I still had the option of installing Windows. I never did. Two months later I stood up from my desk, shut

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the laptop, saw the soothing slow pulse of the sleep indicator and realized I was not going back. I had not worried about my computer for weeks. I knew that when I came back and opened my laptop it would wake up with everything exactly as I had left it, all of it working perfectly. I have not recommended a PC purchase to anyone since that day, and the initial conversion has been repaid with more road-to-Damascus (or Cupertino) moments. My laptop broke in the middle of writing a thesis, and the Apple Store fixed it within an hour. After I showed a friend the four-finger swipe to switch between apps on the iPad, he texted the next day (well, actually, he iMessaged) to say that it had “changed his life.”

Product Devotion

Arthur C. Clarke said, “Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.” Under the leadership of Steve Jobs, dedicated to making “insanely great” computers, Apple proved something subtly but importantly different: any sufficiently well-designed technology is indistinguishable from reality—it “just works.” We might call it magical when we stop to think about it, but we do not often have to stop to think about it. They got it right. Or, as Jobs himself put it: Design is “not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.” And it does work, over and over again, exactly the way we want it to.

For those who have seen the light (gently glowing within the Apple logo on the back of every MacBook at the local Starbucks), the experience of using Apple products has conditioned us to expect elegance, reliability and even serendipity in the use of our technological devices. If they are going to surprise us, it will not be with crashes and cryptic error messages, but because they work even better than we thought they would. In other words, we have faith in Apple. Yes, “the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:1). The next time I buy a new phone it will be an iPhone 5S or 6, not because I will have read the reviews or tested it in the stores, but simply because I trust Apple to get it right.

Comparisons of Apple allegiance (or pejoratively, “fan-boyism”) to religious devotion are easy enough to find. One of the many, many Apple fan-blogs is called “Cult of Mac.” Apple invented and continues to employ people in the role of “technology evangelist.” In 2012 an anthropologist watching the iPad Mini unveiling commented, “A stranger observing one of the launches could probably be forgiven for thinking they had stumbled into a religious revival meeting.” It has even been proven scientifically: a BBC documentary in 2011 confirmed with magnetic resonance imaging tests that Apple products stimulate in fans the same brain centers

associated with religious belief. James Martin, S.J., has compared the response to Steve Jobs’s death to the cult of the saints (“Steve Jobs and the Saints,” In All Things blog, americamagazine.org, 10/7/2011).

Extending the Apple-as-religion allegory works disturbingly well. The cathedrals (Apple stores) have a distinctive sacred architecture, and their clergy (Apple geniuses) wear color-coded vestments (though I still have not figured out which T-shirt color means “I can help check you out now”). The liturgical calendar culminates in the annual celebration of the Worldwide Developers Conference, usually held in early June. There are lower liturgies as well: product launches, days-long vigils in line awaiting new phones or iPads, and “unboxing videos” when they finally arrive. The high priesthood (Apple executives) have hidden and esoteric knowledge (about Apple’s future plans), but they cannot completely defuse crises of faith like concerns over working conditions at Foxconn factories in China or Congressional questions about complicated tax-avoidance schemes. Apple even has a messiah figure in Jobs and his triumphant return to the helm in the 90s, and a passion narrative: Jobs’s battle with cancer was watched by the whole country, if not the world.

Apple and its products inspire devotion, and that devotion shapes our lives at basic and often unconscious levels. I admit with some chagrin that my own hands are better practiced at the swipe that unlocks my iPhone than they are at the beads of my rosary. When I make a retreat and set the phone aside, its absence from my pocket is discomfiting; and when I suggest to students on a retreat that they might do the same, I am confronted with incomprehension: “You’re asking me to do what?”

Dogma Worth Embracing?

In his (justly) celebrated commencement address in 2005 at Stanford University, Jobs told the graduates that in order to pursue their dreams, they would “have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever.” He spoke about what he learned from getting fired from his first stint at Apple, but even more eloquently about what he had learned by facing the reality of his own impending death from cancer. Calling on the graduates to have courage to live their own lives, he said, “Don’t be trapped by dogma—which is living with the results of other people’s thinking.”

As earnest as Jobs’s advice was, his own contributions through Apple reveal a very different possibility for understanding what dogma really is—a possibility with which religious believers are already familiar. Dogma, as Flannery O’Connor said concerning its effect on writers, does not shackle the mind but frees us to observe; it makes it possi-

ON THE WEB

Sam Sawyer, S.J., talks about Apple from his Mac. americamagazine.org/video

ble to see further, to grasp what we could not have invented on our own. All of us, Apple fans or not, are now “trapped” by Jobs’s dogma and live with the results of his thinking and his passion for technology that “just works.” And we are better off for it: freer to innovate, to communicate and to imagine how we might use the tools we have been given to change the world.

The dogmatic thinking that convinced us that a phone could (should!) be a sheer piece of glass, that a swipe of a finger on a screen should feel like moving a real object, and that the Internet should be in our pockets has opened up tremendous possibilities. While the App Store may be the most obvious evidence of it, the more profound change is the space that is opened up within consumer culture for products that are more than the sum of their specifications—that are, dare we say it, beautiful, in form and function both.

Believers know—even if they do not stop to think about it very often—that theological dogma works in much the same way. Take, for example, the definitions about the Incarnation: Jesus is fully human and fully divine, and any attempts to focus on one nature at the expense of the other fall into heresy. Far from being a trap, that “constraint” has fired imaginations for millennia. Making sense of it in practice has led not only to theological innovation, but also to the commitment and desire to see God at work in every human life—a beauty that, absent the dogma, would not have been grasped.

St. Augustine described prayer as the “school of desire.” To the degree that devotion to Apple has schooled even our consumer desires toward greater beauty, we may have reason to be grateful. The taste for such beauty in created things can be, of itself, education. It can awaken us to dissatisfaction and restlessness where it is lacking, and help to sharpen and deepen the desire—as it has for me—for that singular Beauty, “ever ancient, ever new.” Perhaps.

Or perhaps Apple’s kind of beauty is a trap, offering satisfaction at the cheap price of \$200 and a two-year service contract and anesthetizing our restlessness by distracting us from looking within ourselves or out at the real world. It schools desire only by fulfillment, and not by discipline; it neither strengthens us for justice nor deepens our hunger for love. Perhaps.

Steve Jobs ended his commencement address at Stanford by advising the graduates: “Stay hungry. Stay foolish.” In other words: desire powerfully. Good advice, as Job’s life attests. His desire and vision changed the world—or at least the part of it we can see through a touchscreen. Greater changes will require broader vision and bigger hopes to tell us what is worth being hungry for or foolish about, and a better school of desire than anything Apple has on offer. **A**

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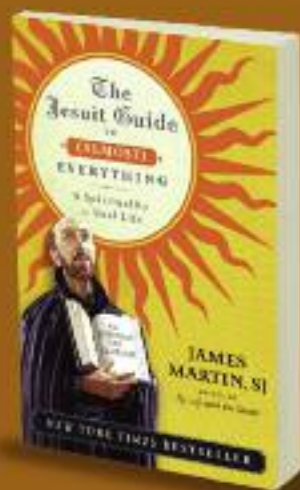
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Unnatural Gas

The spiritual implications of fracking

BY KEN HOMAN

The word *greater* is a tricky one. We frequently hear the phrase, “for the greater glory of God,” for example. As the *de facto* motto of the Society of Jesus, the expression appears across Jesuit institutions in the United States. I grew up around the Jesuits at Saint Louis University, went to Jesuit schools and am now a Jesuit brother. I try to find God in all things and strive for the greater glory of God.

There are plenty of things that work for the glory of God in the world. But *greater* is sneaky. It forces me to go deeper in my faith, to break past the surface. Building a world of justice—the kingdom of God—demands a radical depth. The quick answers and easy solutions may reach some glory, but usually not that “greater” one.

Fracking in Our Future?

In New York State the issue of hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” is a sensitive one. Fracking is a method of drilling for natural gas. Supporters of the process favor natural gas as the clean energy of the future, a “bridge energy” to renewable solar and wind

KEN HOMAN, S.J., is currently studying history and theology at Fordham University in the Bronx, where he also volunteers with Food and Water Watch, an environmental advocacy group.



DIGGING DEEP. An oil derrick at a fracking site near Williston, N.D.

power. City buses tout natural gas on traveling billboards, and television commercials sing the benefits of the resource’s clean burning and low emissions. The very name even has *natural* in it! I was an early believer. But how do we go about retrieving this resource? That involves going a little deeper as well.

Fracking demands the use of millions of gallons of water, blasting sand and a scary cocktail of lead, benzenes, volatile organic compounds and other chemicals—many of which remain publicly unidentified because they are considered industry secrets. Companies drill down thousands of feet, below the water table. There the drilling continues in a horizontal

direction, and the high-pressure injections of water, sand and solvents fractures rock and releases pockets of natural gas. The gas then rises to the surface along with about half of the chemicals and water that had been sent down. The recovered material must be carefully retained and restored. It sometimes is not.

Fracking advocates praise the new industry as an opportunity for job creation and energy independence. Television commercials supporting fracking promise new jobs, environmental sensitivity and a bright future. But fact-checks by Food and Water Watch, an organization with which I am a volunteer, reveal a far bleaker story of long-term minimal job growth

PHOTO: REUTERS/SHANNON STAPLETON

and the potential for massive environmental degradation.

North Dakota is undergoing a fracking boom that is drawing thousands of workers and displacing current residents. National Geographic reports that “thousands of people are converging on the area, looking for work, looking for redemption, looking for trouble.” All this leaves me wondering—is hydraulic fracturing leading toward the greater glory? Is it contributing to building God’s kingdom or just a temporary, earthly one?

I find the beauty of the kingdom in nature. I discerned my vocation while hiking the Missouri River bluffs. My best family memories come from state and national parks. Heaven must be spectacular if it is more beautiful than the mysterious American mountains, plentiful lakes and bountiful plains I hold so dear. I can imagine few things uglier than roaring tanker trucks and gas burn-off spewing chemical pollution and soot in the Catskills the way

the semis do that currently crowd North Dakota’s landscape. We would be fracking the Promised Land.

Unnatural Gas

Amid the promises of jobs, environmental stewardship and economic growth, I have to ask, “Is this truly for the greater glory of God?” Given the non-industry-funded studies I have seen, the answer is absolutely not.

The gas-burning required and encouraged by fracking contributes to climate change. A study in Nature reported that up to 9 percent of the methane produced in the Uinta Basin drilling fields in eastern Utah was lost through leakage into the atmosphere. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that “pound for pound, the comparative impact of methane on climate change is over 20 times greater

than CO₂.” With an international water crisis looming, the waste of water required by fracking is disturbing, and the many possible health impacts of the industry are disconcerting. We cannot afford to take the route of hydraulic fracturing.

After a decade-long expansion of fracking, we have already begun to see direct and indirect effects across the country, both on the environment and on people. Chemical and gas spills haunt the land, endangering the very livelihood of farmers and ranchers. On some rural properties, residents and their livestock must drink water brought in by tanker trucks because fracking has contaminated the ground water.

We cannot afford to lose the farms, the ranches or the water. We cannot afford the burning of more fossil fuels. Where does this leave us then? How do we search out the greater glory? How do we build the kingdom?

I do not have all of those answers. I look toward a clean energy future of solar and wind power and know it will take real commitment and dedication. Other countries have begun making this commitment. In the United States, we have found excuses to lag behind, to develop “transition fuels” and exhaust every last drop of oil before we open up to other forms of energy. The greater glory demands that we put effort, research and sacrifice into clean energy.

These big changes can be somewhat scary and daunting; they can be difficult. But they are also necessary, good and just. I refuse to give a broken world to the next generation, a world in which we might one day hold up a photo of a beautiful dairy farm knowing the land it once rested upon is now littered with rusting rigs. I will not frack the Promised Land. I will fight for the greater glory of God. **A**

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BOOKS & CULTURE

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CUTS TO THE CORE

The complicated life of Steve Jobs

At the risk of planting a self-replicating virus into everyone's viewing experience, I would like to suggest approaching the opening of *Jobs*—director Joshua Michael Stern's biography of Steve Jobs, the co-founder of Apple—with three little words in mind: “Chariots of Fire.” In fact, try *not* thinking of “Chariots of Fire.” The music by John Dabney (currently at work, just F.Y.I., on an adaptation of Anne Rice's *Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt*) simply won't let you. Nor will the heightened sense of

grandeur, which is accompanied by the feeling that somewhere behind the screen people have been drinking a lot of Kool-Aid.

Instead of running down a beach carrying dreams of Olympic gold, the graying, apparently cancer-stricken Jobs who first appears in the film is carrying far greater treasure to his acolytes at Apple: He is bringing the iPod. As far as director Stern is concerned, it might have been loaves and fishes. Cue the music, and try not to care if the iTunes file skips.

One hopes against hope that these opening moments in the film, which stars Ashton Kutcher as the late computer-marketing genius, are tongue-in-cheek, a lampooning of the cult image Apple developed while Jobs was alive and well and presenting the world with iMacs, iPhones, iPads and questionable grammar (“Think different”). But no, the film seems to be taking itself pretty seriously. And that is a problem.

Hollywood, by which I mean the mainstream film industry, has always played fast and loose with both history and source material. Cole Porter was turned into a heterosexual by Cary Grant in “Night and Day” (1946); World War II films featured Nazi officers with English accents; “The



GARAGE BAND. Ashton Kutcher as Steve Jobs and Josh Gad as Steve Wozniak in “Jobs”

Natural" (1984) had its ending totally flipped on its head; and the movie of "The English Patient" (1996) was made without the ending of the novel, an essential and eloquent statement about racism and Hiroshima. This is not to imply that tampering with facts leads to bad movies. The problem for Stern and the screenwriter, Matt Whiteley, is that Jobs is too immediate a character, too recently gone, his flaws too well known, and the founding of Apple too fraught with betrayals to do the kind of whitewash that would have made for a better film. "Jobs" has to tell the truth and yet at the same time make its subject a hero. The result is the sort of cognitive dissonance that makes for messy, tedious cinema that also feels like part of a marketing scheme, or an infomercial.

Of course, Jobs was a marketer, first and foremost. As the film indicates, although without much fervor, it was Jobs's fellow Apple founder, Steve Wozniak (Josh Gad), who knew what

needed to go into the box. Jobs knew how to sell the box (and how to design it). He also cheated Wozniak, kicked his own pregnant girlfriend out of his house and cut his early supporters out of a stock plan that would have made them millionaires. Even as played by the boyish Kutcher, Jobs is impossible to like or even admire.

Nowhere in the film is a case made that the man made life any better for anyone. It would be a hard case to make. The music industry is a wreck, bookstores have vanished, interpersonal communications are in tatters. One of the better moments in "Jobs," thanks to the source material, is a scene introducing the iconic "1984" ad directed by Ridley Scott that ran during Super Bowl XVIII promoting the then-new Macintosh computer. As the narrator in the commercial says, the Mac would show why "1984 won't be like 1984."

No indeed. It's 2013 that seems like 1984, thanks to government surveillance and a loss of privacy that could only have become possible through personal computers. It's not all Jobs's fault. But it is a pretty ironic moment in a film that doesn't seem to notice.

Jobs's supporters will claim he was a singular genius who remade the world, but even this very pro-Jobs movie cannot really make a case for that. It's watchable, largely thanks to Kutcher, although his is a performance that reflects more research than absorption. In long shots, the actor gives Jobs his trademark hunch and rolling walk; elsewhere in the film, the posture problems disappear. He affects a ferocious temper when Whiteley's script calls for one of the man's repeated outbursts at friends and confidantes, but no one wants to watch a dislikable character for two hours; so when he's not screaming, Kutcher swings back and forth between brilliant mastermind and California hipster.

The supporting cast, with a few exceptions, is solid. Gad, a member of the original "Book of Mormon" cast who, just coincidentally, played a Google bigwig in this summer's "The Internship," is a terrific Wozniak, sweet, brilliant and terribly naïve.

"That's what friends do," he says while helping Jobs, who is more than ready to shaft his pudgy friend. Lukas Haas,

playing another Apple mainstay, Daniel Kottke, gives a memorably wounded performance as a member of Apple's legion of human collateral damage. J. K. Simmons is a bit of a caricature as Arthur Rock, who heads the Apple board of directors, a group with the temerity to exert some control over its profligate figurehead. Matthew Modine does not have the gravitas to play someone like John Sculley, who would engineer the takeover of the company from Jobs (who would later wheedle it back), but Modine does play a pretty convincing weasel. And Dermot Mulroney is a bit of a sad sack as Mark Markkula, who brings Apple its first injection of real cash and ends up cashiered—like anyone who finds himself remotely in Steve Jobs's way.

Another Jobs movie is reportedly in the works, with a script by Aaron Sorkin from the book by Walter Isaacson, to be produced by the prolific Scott Rudin. Rudin was also involved, with Sorkin, in "The Social Network," another movie about an uncharming billionaire who has been of dubious benefit to his fellow man. The movies have always been attracted to famous characters. What's troubling about "Jobs" is that the film industry can't seem to distinguish anymore between who's a hero and who's a villain—or simply doesn't care.

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JOHN ANDERSON is a film critic for *Variety* and *The Wall Street Journal* and a regular contributor to the Arts & Leisure section of *The New York Times*.



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GOOD SPORTS

Everyone expected a short homily—and we got it. My childhood priest knew the Mass needed to finish on time since everyone was about to rush to the next liturgical rite: game day in Green Bay, Wis. Growing up 20 miles south of Tittletown, U.S.A., the nickname for the city of 104,000 whose famous football team boasts 13 National Football League titles, I lived for football Sundays.

Before Mass, my family prepared the necessities: team apparel, seat cushions, a charcoal grill, packs of bratwurst and coolers full of beer and soda. When Mass ended we zoomed home, dressed up, loaded up and headed for the shrine, Lambeau Field, to meet 60,000 of our friends for the noon kickoff.

Now 31 and living far from home, I still feel a rush of excitement as the N.F.L. regular season begins on Sept. 5. But things are different now. The innocence is gone. Recent headlines have reminded me of the shadow side of professional sports.

Since 2006 more than 50 N.F.L. players have been suspended for using performance-enhancing drugs. This might be small news, however, compared to another developing story: 4,000 retired players have filed a class action lawsuit against the N.F.L., claiming that the league knew for decades about the long-term health consequences of hits to the head but concealed this information from its players. One recent study suggests that players in the N.F.L. between 1959 and 1988 were more likely than the general population to develop Alzheimer's disease or Lou Gehrig's disease, and players with greater exposure to high-speed collisions on the

field were three times more likely to die from a neurodegenerative disease.

In the world of baseball, the Biogenesis scandal—named after a Florida clinic that provided performance-enhancing drugs to some of the game's biggest players—has resulted in the longest slate of suspensions in the game's history. Alex Rodriguez is currently appealing a 211-game ban; Ryan Braun accepted a 65-game ban. Twelve others, including three all-stars, were given 50-game bans. Our national pastime's steroid era is not yet behind us.

Maybe at one time sports fans could simply enjoy the helmet-smashing hits and record-breaking home runs and look the other way when our favorite team benefited. Those days are over. This raises important questions: Is it enough for me to be a passive consumer, simply looking for entertainment, with little concern for the internal business of these sports? Or must I now become a more conscientious and responsible consumer? Sports are big business, of course—the N.F.L. brings in more than \$9 billion annually, and baseball is close behind (\$7 billion)—and fans drive this machine by spending big bucks on game tickets and team apparel and by sending television ratings and advertising revenues through the roof.

Do fans have the power to help shape professional sports? Remember the swift resolution of the labor dispute between the N.F.L. and its locked-out officials in September

2012. In a nationally televised "Monday Night Football" game, replacement referees affected the outcome with a botched call on the final play. Fans decided they had had enough. That night the league office reportedly received 70,000 voice mail messages demanding an end to the lockout. Within 48 hours, league officials and the referees reached a tentative agreement, and the regular referees were back on the field.

This mass action makes me wonder what else might be possible if sports fans become genuinely concerned about player safety and are willing to do something about it or are able to channel their outrage constructively over the continued use of P.E.D.'s.

FIFA, soccer's world governing body, has required all its athletes to have "biological passports," documentation of a combination of urine and blood testing, by 2014. What if fans demanded similar testing in every major sport, or demanded that the N.F.L. release more information about the long-term effects of concussions?

I savor the epic stories that sport offers, especially those that highlight humanity at its best (look up the stories of Jason McElwain, Sara Tucholsky and Jack Hoffman). I love watching world-class athletes play at their highest level. I marvel at what the human body is capable of. I revel in the drama of big games. But sports need to be safe and fair for all involved. It is time to call the commissioner.

Must I now
become a
more
engaged
and
responsible
fan?



LUKE HANSEN, S.J., is an associate editor of *America*.



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RACE STILL MATTERS

WOUNDS THAT WOULD NOT HEAL Affirmative Action and Our Continuing Racial Divide

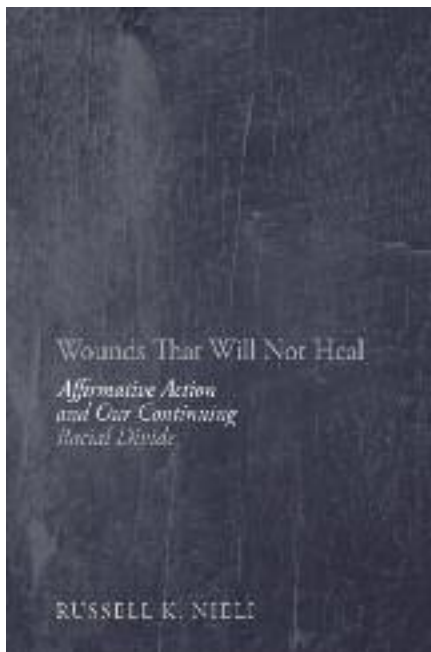
By Russell K. Nieli
Encounter Books. 456p \$29.95

This sprawling work by the Princeton lecturer and political scientist Russell Nieli addresses “the continuing controversy over racial preference policies in America, particularly those in university admissions and in employment.” Nieli proposes to provide an explanation of the “continuing sense of outrage and betrayal” felt by many Americans toward racial preferences (so-called quotas or set-asides) for blacks and Latinos, to highlight research that critically contests pro-affirmative action arguments and to draw attention to the condition of the black urban underclass—“the wound that will not heal.”

To accomplish these goals, Nieli surveys and engages some of the more important and controversial social science research on race and affirmative action (E. Franklin Frazier, Daniel Moynihan, Thomas Sowell, William Bowen, Derek Bok, Charles Murray, Shelby Steele, Claude Steele, William Julius Wilson). The book comprises an introduction and six chapters; citations and explanatory notes are set helpfully at the foot of the page. The book’s “most original” contribution, Nieli thinks, is the deployment of contemporary evolutionary psychology, which seeks to determine, identify and examine human psychological traits that are evolved adaptations that support survival.

The first chapter traces the discomfort, anger and resentment over affirmative action to the scare tactics of Southern Congressional opponents of

1964 Civil Rights Bill (HR7192). Several Southern senators promoted the falsehood that the section of the bill prohibiting discrimination in employment would lead to federal imposition of racial quotas favoring



blacks. Senator Hubert Humphrey, the majority whip, along with Senators Joseph Clark and Clifford Case, repeatedly reassured their colleagues that these racial quotas would not only be prohibited; they would be illegal. This dispute, Nieli suggests, reflected two ways of thinking about national civic life—“tribalism” and “personalism.” Tribalism denotes the principle of group representation and group identity and in intergroup relationships disregards the uniqueness of individuality and prefers stereotyping. Personalism refers to the principle of unique, distinct (persons) individuality capable of engaging with other human beings on the basis of mutual equality and respect.

Following the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, according to Nieli,

“the federal bureaucracy, led by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (E.E.O.C.) and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (O.F.C.C.), aided and abetted along with the federal courts, simply rewrote through ‘interpretation’ Titles VI and VII as well as President Johnson’s antidiscrimination Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, substituting ethnic-tribal categories (e.g., ‘Hispanic,’ ‘Oriental,’ ‘black,’ etc.) for the personalistic language of the documents in question.” This reinterpretation by the federal bureaucracy blatantly contradicted the plain meaning of the Civil Rights Act and “certain moral and ethical precepts that have deep roots in America’s liberal and Christian past.”

In 1971 proponents and defenders of preferential hiring in the federal bureaucracy issued Revised Order No. 4 of the Labor Department’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance. This document employed language of “‘goals,’ ‘timetables,’ ‘deficiencies,’ ‘good-faith efforts,’ ‘underutilization,’ ‘results-oriented’ policies, and the like, and helped set the style for the mystification and double talk that would become the stock-in-trade of most affirmative-action programs.” Disclosing the discreditable behavior of members of Congress and that of middle-level bureaucrats reminds us just how difficult it has been to achieve real fairness, justice and equality in our democracy.

The second chapter reprises a lengthy commentary on a manuscript circulated by a colleague of the author in order to consider whether racial preferences offer an antidote to racism. Nieli chides his colleague for failing to provide a precise definition of racism and proffers not one, but two. On the one hand, racism functions as ideology, a “type of thinking” that imputes negative characteristics to members of a diverse social or cultural or racial or ethnic group and those characteristics are attributed to “innate, biogenetical-

ly determined factors.” On the other hand, racism “refers to any of a variety of enmities, hostilities, or hatreds of people of a different race, ethnicity, or tribe, regardless of the extent to which such enmities, hostilities, or hatreds are related to any ideology of inferiority or any cognitively deficient process of overgeneralization or stereotyping.”

In the formulation of public policy, Nieli prefers the latter definition, which will not increase racism either in the sense of negative stereotyping or in the sense of interethnic hostility or bitterness. Further, this definition obviates interest group politics and potential interethnic or racial or cultural tensions, acknowledges the diversity of unique individual persons as citizens and seeks to promote the common good through adherence to the norm of fairness and reciprocity as well as cooperation, understanding, and friendship. To this reviewer, the lack of any analysis of the role and function of power in the structuring of any given society is a glaring omission.

The third chapter probes the effectiveness of racial preferences in college admissions and calls attention to the “underperformance” of black college students, who not only perform less well academically than whites, but also perform below levels predicted by their own SAT scores. The fourth chapter considers the value of “the contact hypothesis,” that is, intentionally bringing racially and culturally diverse undergraduate students together to encounter one another in order to dismantle stereotypes and misconceptions. The fifth chapter argues that affirmative action breaches the norm of fairness and reciprocity, thus provoking in whites and Asians intense opposition to affirmative action programs, intense dislike of blacks and “self-protective ethnic solidarity and defensive rage.” Racial preferences breach “the

norm of interethnic fairness and reciprocity—a norm that is the linchpin holding together nonauthoritarian, multiethnic, multiracial societies like the United States.”

The final chapter seeks to explain the historical and demographic circumstances that coalesced in “the explosive growth of a downwardly mobile inner-city black underclass” in the 1950s and 1960s following the mechanization of Southern agriculture. Nieli focuses on “the problem of

second-generation maladaptation and delinquency.” Here insights from evolutionary psychology seem to be in play, insinuating negative adaptation to a congeries of circumstances, including decreased demand for unskilled labor in an increasingly high-tech economy, generous monetary increases in public housing assistance, expanded welfare policies, rising rates of incarceration, etc. The perhaps unintentional racism lurking in the bowels of evolutionary psychological inference formed either a safety net too soft to support bounce into the mainstream or a slippery slope of lower and lower expectations, prompting lower and lower maladaptive unequal behavior.

Nieli offers a stringent critique of affirmative action and excoriates liberals—white and black—who fail to acknowledge the flawed conclusions and gaps in their own research on affirmative action policies. Moreover, he skewers black students from the middle and upper classes not only for taking advantage of policies that should have aided the truly disadvantaged, but for intentional poor performance. Nieli is insistent: “racial and ethnic preferences have no place in contemporary America.... Both wisdom and justice cry out for their repeal.”

Nieli eschews solutions and policy prescriptions for diagnosis—aiming to

clarify the ironies of racial preferences. At the same time, he makes two suggestions: The federal establishment of a Civilian Infrastructure Corps modeled on the New Deal-era Civilian Conservation Corps could enlist hundreds of thousands of young people in the sorely needed rebuilding of the nation’s crumbling infrastructure. It could also teach them self-discipline, self-respect, and the value and dignity of regular work. If school vouchers were made available to poor families, the black church could build a nationwide Christian school system capable of forming and teaching youth in much the same way the Roman Catholic school system has done for more than a century.

There are blemishes. Certainly, Nieli points to the devastating impact of “three centuries of unimaginable mistreatment” (the phrase is Moynihan’s—slavery, Reconstruction, de jure and de facto Jim Crow segregation—but a fuller account would have

ON THE WEB

The Catholic Book Club discusses
a new biography of St. Francis.
americamagazine.org/cbc.



provided deeper context and the rehearsal of prison statistics more than two decades old. There are omissions—black G.I.'s returning from World War II were excluded, routinely, although not completely, from receiving low cost mortgages, low-interest business loans and cash payments for tuition and living expenses (1944-56). And despite the author's avowal of regard and respect for the

black underclass, something in the tone of the book strikes this reviewer as ungenerous.

This book is sober reading for any educator, urban pastor, minister, parishioner or person of good will concerned about the common good and the future of humanity.

M. SHAWN COPELAND is a professor of systematic theology at Boston College.

FRANCIS A. SULLIVAN

RETHINKING EAST AND WEST

EVER ANCIENT, EVER NEW Structures of Communion in the Church

By Archbishop John R. Quinn
Paulist Press. 64p \$9.95

Archbishop John R. Quinn is uniquely qualified by his experience as archbishop of Oklahoma City and of San Francisco, and as president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, to deserve a hearing when he writes about structures in the church. After an opening chapter on the nature of the church as a communion, in each of the following chapters he recalls how a particular structure has served the church's communion in the past and suggests how it could be used more effectively as a structure of communion in the church today.

Using the term *synod* for regional meetings of bishops, he notes that the most common form of synods in the early church were known as provincial synods after Diocletian had organized the empire into provinces. Before that, Roman bishops were already meeting in synods at which the bishop in the principal city of the region would preside.

Archbishop Quinn cites a decree of the Council of Nicaea that shows that a bishop was accountable to the other bishops of his provincial synod. His remark that "today there are relatively

few explicit requirements for bishops of the Latin Church to participate in the provincial structure of their region," suggests his regret that there is no similar accountability among Catholic bishops today.

He begins his chapter on patriarchates by citing Canon 6 of the Council of Nicaea, which confirmed the ancient customs whereby the bishops of Alexandria, Rome and Antioch had authority beyond the limits of their own provinces. He sees in this canon an early stage of what would become the patriarchal structure of the church. During the first millennium, the patriarchal authority of the bishop of Rome came to extend over the western half of the empire, with a clear distinction between his patriarchal authority in the West and the strictly papal authority with which he judged questions about the faith of the universal church.

During the second millennium, the authority that the popes exercised continued to have the character of patriarchal administration, and through missionary expansion this kind of papal

government became extended over the world-wide Catholic Church. However, as Archbishop Quinn points out, a different way of exercising papal authority was seen in the relative autonomy that the popes recognized the Eastern churches in communion with Rome to have in matters like the election of their patriarchs. The difference between the pope's administration of the Latin Catholic Church, where he appoints all the bishops, and his exercise of papal authority over the Eastern Catholic churches is spelled out in the Code of Canons of the Eastern churches.

In his chapter on the "Modern Catholic Patriarchates," Archbishop Quinn first describes them as they are currently realized in the Eastern Catholic churches. With the canons of those churches as his source, he explains the functions of the patriarch, the permanent and the patriarchal synods of bishops and the patriarchal assembly. He notes that the patriarchal synod makes laws for the patriarchal church, elects the patriarch and appoints all the bishops. Observing that both Ratzinger and Congar favored the creation of patriarchal structures in the Latin Church, he agrees that this could be very beneficial for the whole church.

In his chapter on deliberative synods, Archbishop Quinn recalls that at Vatican II, the Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV Saigh proposed the creation of a synod of diocesan bishops that would meet regularly with the pope to participate in the government of the universal church. Knowing that many bishops at Vatican II favored this proposal, Pope Paul VI created the Synod of Bishops



at the opening of the final period of the council. He explained that while it was the task of this synod to give information and advice to the pope, it would have deliberative power when such power was given to it by the supreme pontiff. Archbishop Quinn suggests that this deliberative power would best be given to extraordinary synods, whose members are the presidents of the episcopal conferences in the Latin Church and the patriarchs and major archbishops in the Eastern Catholic churches.

In his chapter on ecumenical councils, he notes that while seven councils of the first millennium are recognized as ecumenical by both the Catholic and the Orthodox churches, the Orthodox do not recognize any councils of the second millennium as ecumenical. Since Vatican II teaches that an ecumenical council is one in which the college of bishops in communion with the pope exercises supreme authority over the whole church, Archbishop Quinn holds that according to Catholic doctrine these councils, like those of Trent, Vatican I and II are ecumenical.

The historical detail with which Archbishop Quinn has described the origin and development of five structures of the church shows that this book is the fruit not only of his many years of experience as archbishop, but also of the study of the church and its history that he has undertaken since his retirement. His knowledge of how those structures have strengthened the church's communion in the past gives weight to his proposals as to how they could work even more effectively as structures of communion in the future. He has continued to serve the church by devoting his later years to the research that went into the writing of this book.

FRANCIS A. SULLIVAN, S.J., *professor emeritus of theology at Boston College, is a writer in residence at Campion Center, Weston, Mass.*

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The City of the Living God

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), SEPT. 1, 2013

Readings: Sir 3:17–29; Ps 68:4–11; Heb 12:18–24; Lk 14:1–14

“When you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind” (Lk 14:13)

Most readers of this column have been in a position of authority at some time, I’m sure; and some of us, this writer included, enjoy a constancy of authority because of education, ordination, position or wealth. Though we might not speak of it often, even quietly to ourselves, it is a delight to have honor and prestige. This delight is not denied by Jesus, but in a parable found in today’s readings he turns it on its head.

To understand the parable, we must understand the function of honor and shame, not just in ancient Palestine, but in our own lives today. It is true that honor and shame function differently in our day than in Jesus’ day, but there is something profoundly human about our need for the one and our aversion to the other.

Jesus uses two examples from a banquet to illustrate our desire for honor and our loathing of shame, yet even as he does this, he recalibrates the meaning of both. In the first example, he instructs his hearers not to seek seats of honor at a banquet, since they might be shamed if someone with greater honor appears and demands his rightful due. In the second example Jesus encourages his audience to seek out the weak, the poor and the lame for their banquet, not their friends and relatives, since to invite those nearest and dearest just leads to reciprocation, a repayment of hospitality in the here and now. The recalibration comes in learning the true source of honor and shame and

the true means of repayment.

The first example Jesus offers does not deny the desire for honor or the longing to avoid embarrassment, but he suggests that humility is the best path for both outcomes. Instead of reclining “at table in the place of honor” at a banquet and then being humbled when “a more distinguished guest” arrives, Jesus instructs that “when you are invited, go and take the lowest place so that when the host comes to you he may say, ‘My friend, move up to a higher position.’ Then you will enjoy the esteem of your companions at the table.”

Ben Sira echoes this point: “My child, conduct your affairs with humility, and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts.” People do appreciate humility—not abject self-negation or self-hatred—because it does not place itself at or as the center of attention, seeking to have all needs met by others or ignoring the claims of others.

This remains suitable advice for those embarrassing dinner party moments even today—just consult Miss Manners—but Jesus’ point lies deeper. He says that “everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” Humility will save you from embarrassment today and might even lead to a higher position at the banquet, but the exaltation Jesus is speaking of has to do with the Messianic banquet at the end of time—that is, places at table in the city of the living God.

Why this is the case can be seen in the second example Jesus gives. Jesus offers the strange advice—imagine Thanksgiving or Christmas—not to invite “your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment.” But “when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Reflect on a banquet to which all have been invited, including the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. Do you see yourself as a part of the family or set apart from the crowd?

ART: TAD DUNNE

blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” Jesus instructs us to expand our notion of God’s family to include those most in need of food, those most in need of honor since shame has been forced upon them.

True honor is found in humility, and true humility is located in seeking the needs of others, not one’s own. Honor might never be gained in this world for seeking out the poor and the needy, and repayment might come only in the new age, when honor and shame, like poverty and wealth, are burned up in the glory of God. At the banquet in the city of God, all sit in positions of equal rank and all share in the grace that reveals us all to be members of God’s one family.

JOHN W. MARTENS is an associate professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn.

Do the Right Thing

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), SEPT. 8, 2013

Readings: Wis 9:13–18; Ps 90:3–17; Phlm 9–17; Lk 14:25–33

“Welcome him as you would me” (Phlm 17)

The common understanding of the relationship between Onesimus and Philemon in Paul’s letter to Philemon is that Onesimus was a slave of Philemon. Though it remains a debated issue, Onesimus had either run away from Philemon or had been sent by him to render service to Paul while he was imprisoned. During this time, Onesimus had become Paul’s “child” and Paul his “father,” Pauline language which indicates the conversion of Onesimus to the Christian faith. Paul and Onesimus were now part of the same family.

This spiritual conversion also indicated for Paul a necessary change in the relationship between Onesimus and Philemon. Philemon was to receive Onesimus back “no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a brother, beloved especially to me, but even more so to you, as a man and in the Lord.” Paul offers this loaded assessment of the necessity of Philemon’s compliance: “So if you regard me as a partner, welcome him as you would me.” Onesimus might have left home as a slave, a “living tool,” in the language of Aristotle, but he was coming home as a beloved son and brother, “as a man.”

The story of Onesimus is a challenge when we consider the ancient reality of slavery and the fact that Christians in the first centuries of the common era owned slaves, but the continuing challenge is that we allow our Christian faith to work on

social evils that enslave people still today. Our conversions of heart must allow us to see people as potential brothers and sisters and not things to be used for our benefit. While slavery does not exist today *de jure*, there are many forms of *de facto* slavery and experts in modern slavery and human trafficking suggest that there are more slaves today than ever before in history.

Paul’s treatment of Onesimus offers us a model for treating every person as a potential child, sister or brother. In a short time, Onesimus had become, in Paul’s words, “my own heart.” A number of commentators have wondered why Paul would not simply demand that Philemon release Onesimus from slavery instead of await his “consent, so that the good you do might not be forced but voluntary”; but because slavery was legal in the Roman Empire, Paul had little legal standing to make demands. What he did have, however, was standing as a moral guide and teacher, and he called on his “brother” to do the right thing. He called on Philemon, that is, to be converted and to welcome back a brother and not a slave.

We, however, do not face the conundrum of the legality of slavery or human trafficking as Paul did; they are illegal. Yet slavery flourishes underground, hidden away or hidden in plain sight. Our response is, therefore, clear and obvious: we must not engage in activities that allow the

dehumanization of our brothers and sisters to continue, whether that is participating in pornography, the sex trade or other forms of exploitation of human beings. Our task is to work toward the conversion of both exploiter and exploited, just as Paul did, so that both human and spiritual freedom can be enjoyed by all. When we say no to sin, the cement of injustice starts to crumble.

It is in this context that the shocking, even bewildering, teaching of Jesus on the nature of discipleship might be unraveled. Jesus says, “If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.” *Hate* is a strong word, best understood to mean, “You cannot love anything more than me.” But this linguis-

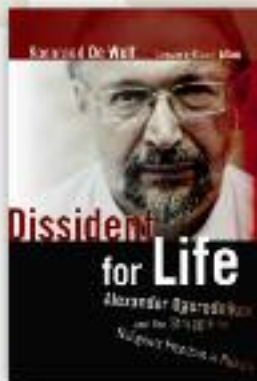
PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Imagine yourself listening to Jesus’ teaching about family. What do you need to let go, so your understanding of family can grow?

tic adjustment does not dilute the theological teaching. Calculate the cost of discipleship and measure it against all that you hold dear. Are you willing to turn away from the comforts of social propriety to follow Jesus? Are you willing to challenge the unjust structures of sin? Are you all in? Just as Jesus suggests for his disciples, Paul was all in. He was able to challenge his brother in the Lord to see in a slave the face of God and the face of family. In the enigmatic teaching of the Gospel, when you begin to “hate” your family, the true extent of family is revealed and your brothers and sisters multiplied beyond counting.

JOHN W. MARTENS

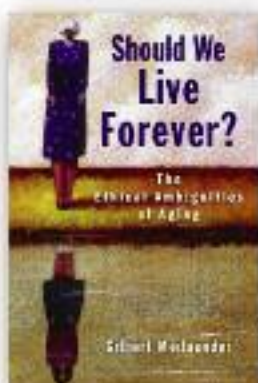
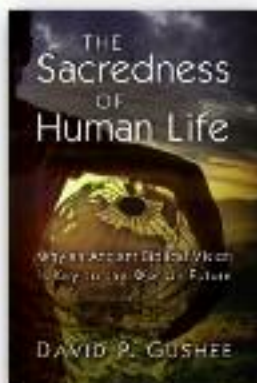
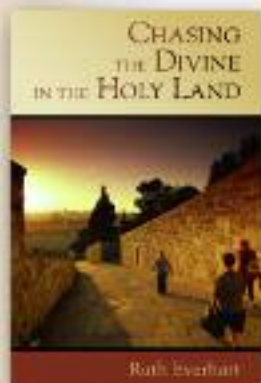
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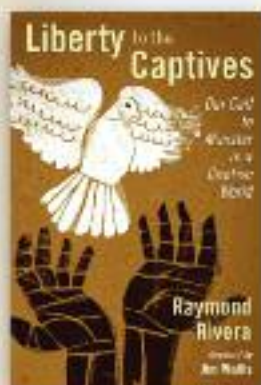
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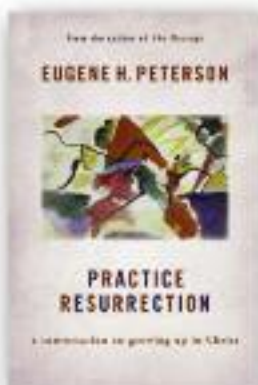
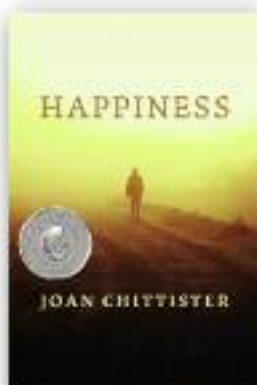
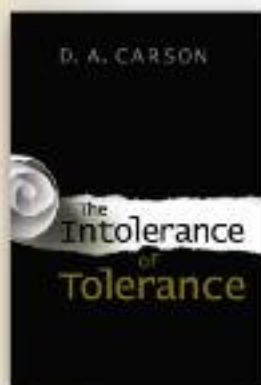
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