RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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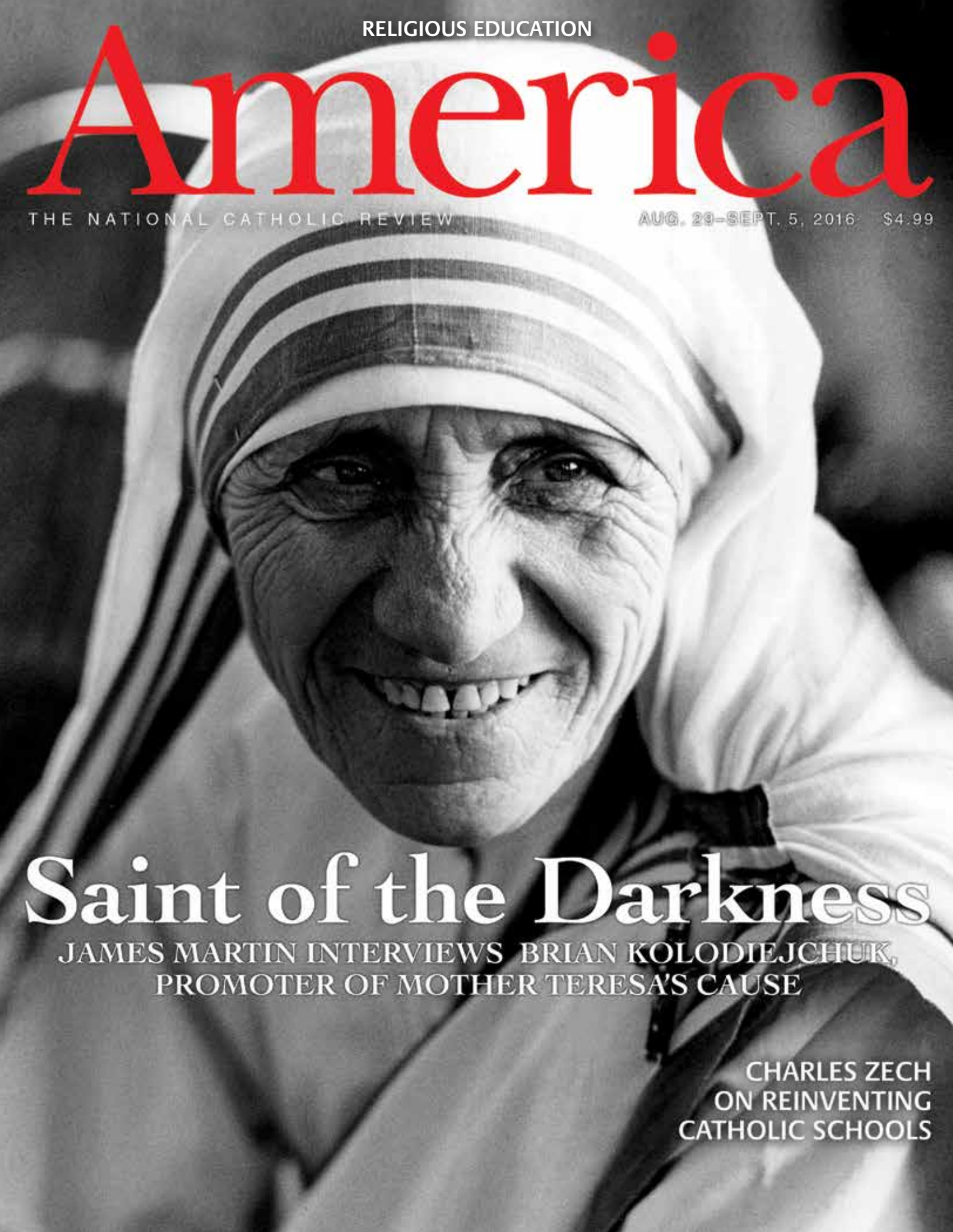

Saint of the Darkness

JAMES MARTIN INTERVIEWS BRIAN KOLODIEJCHUK, PROMOTER OF MOTHER TERESA'S CAUSE

CHARLES ZECH ON REINVENTING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

OF MANY THINGS

More than halfway through the general election, Donald Trump's presidential campaign is imploding. The Republican flagship resembles Jonah's boat to Tarshish: the tempest-tossed and panic-stricken passengers are looking for someone to blame, someone they can sacrifice to their angry god.

Mr. Trump's favorite scapegoat these days is the national media. "If the disgusting and corrupt media covered me honestly and didn't put false meaning into the words I say, I would be beating Hillary by 20 percent," he recently tweeted. That is highly unlikely, given the rock-solid polarization that characterizes most of the national electorate. And it's just as likely that Mr. Trump bears at least some of the blame for his predicament.

But there is an element of truth in Mr. Trump's comments. There is a fairly well documented left-leaning bias among national political reporters and commentators. But having personal opinions is a far cry from having an ideological agenda that masquerades as objective reporting. And the more troublesome bias in news reporting is not ideological but economic. If journalists and their editors are motivated by something other than the noble pursuit of the truth, then it's more likely market share, not partisan advantage. The stories they tell are the stories that sell.

There are exceptions, of course, even on television—news organizations that, while still driven by profit motive, are acting foremost in the public interest. Among the more reputable and respected is CBS News, the birthplace of television journalism and the home of Edward R. Murrow, Walter Cronkite and "60 Minutes." In a dangerously cynical television news environment, outfits like CBS News are still delivering consistently high-quality, thoughtful and sober coverage of news events. They are not without their biases—surely, none of us are—but the attempt to get the story that matters most rather than the story that simply sells is clearly evident in much of what they do.

Scott Pelley, the veteran anchor of the "CBS Evening News," may not be the most exciting personality on television, but he is undoubtedly the best journalist, a worthy heir to the legacy of Paley, Murrow and Cronkite, something that Mr. Pelley takes seriously. He has avoided blurring the line between news and entertainment, saying that "there's too much of a risk for the audience to think 'Wait a minute—is it scripted? Is it not? Are you telling me the truth? Is it acting?' That's a big red line for me, and I never have crossed it."

That same reputation for being a stickler with stick-to-itiveness characterizes the host of "Face the Nation," CBS News's Sunday public affairs program. John Dickerson, son of the late and great path-breaking CBS journalist Nancy Dickerson, has also established himself as one of the most respected figures in the news business. The key to good journalism, Mr. Dickerson recently told Politico, is delaying final judgment as long as possible. When you hear something from a politician or an interviewee that doesn't make sense, rather than simply saying, "They're dumb," he says, ask: "Does that make sense to me? And if it doesn't make sense to me, why are they saying that? And what is it about what they're saying that tells me something about either the issue we're talking about or where they come from?' That's a better way."

Asking intelligent questions with an open mind and a courageous spirit is not only the better way; it's the only way to do journalism that is worthy of the name. For more than 60 years, CBS News has led the way. It still does. Does it lead the ratings? No. Both Mr. Pelley and Mr. Dickerson, though they have dramatically increased their audiences, routinely finish third in the ratings race among the big three networks. But they are doing the best work in television journalism today; and, as Mr. Trump might say, that's huge.

MATT MALONE, S.J.

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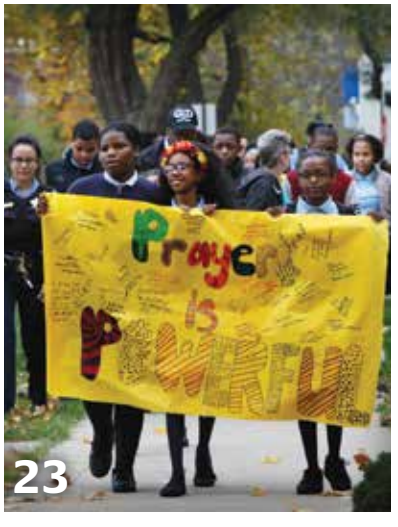

ARTICLES

COLUMNS & DEPARTMENTS

BOOKS & CULTURE

ON THE WEB

Submissions are open for **America Media's social justice short film fest** for college students. Plus, Judith Valente talks to a sister who taught **Mike Pence** and a Jesuit who mentored **Tim Kaine.** More digital highlights on page 39 and at americamagazine.org/webfeatures.

EDITORIAL

Commending Phoebe

"I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae," wrote St. Paul in the Letter to the Romans (16:1). What did Paul mean when he referred to Phoebe as a deacon? What kind of ***diakonos*** was she? How did she serve the church? Was she ordained as a deacon? And if so, what did her ordination mean? These questions, which may once have seemed arcane, have taken on greater urgency in the wake of Pope Francis' recent decision to appoint a commission to study the historicity of women deacons.

We should note that the ordination of women to the priesthood is not under consideration. In "Ordinatio Sacerdotalis," the apostolic letter promulgated by St. John Paul II in 1994, which Pope Francis has endorsed on several occasions, the late pontiff declared "definitively" that only men can be ordained to the priesthood. While St. John Paul II made no definitive pronouncement on the separate question of women deacons, the apostolic letter forestalled consideration of the issue in some quarters out of concern that discussion of women deacons would inevitably lead to talk of the ordination of women to the priesthood. We welcome Pope Francis' decision to reopen the question of women deacons, which manifests his faith in the Holy Spirit to guide the discernment of the people of God.

This is not the first time in recent history that the Vatican has examined the role of deacons. In 2002 the International Theological Commission concluded a study of the diaconate that included commentary specific to women deacons. For example, the document concluded that in Phoebe's case, the Greek word *diakonos* was meant in the broadest sense, as "one who serves." The commission noted that "the deaconesses mentioned in the tradition of the ancient Church—as evidenced by the rite of institution and the functions they exercised—were not purely and simply equivalent to the [male] deacons."

At the same time, the commission said that "there is a clear distinction between the ministries of the bishop and the priests on the one hand and the diaconal ministry on the other." In other words, while all three are sacred orders, essential differences among them may allow for women deacons. In the words of Bishop Emil Wcela (see **America,** 10/1/12), the commission left "the ordination of women to the diaconate an open question."

The question took a new turn in May, when a woman religious asked Pope Francis about women deacons during a meeting with the heads of women's religious orders from around the world. The pope in his response promised to set up a commission, whose members were appointed in July. Among them is the scholar Phyllis Zagano, author of *Holy Saturdays: An Argument for the Restoration of the Female Diaconate in the Catholic Church*.

Professor Zagano's book considers the historical evidence of women deacons, much of which might surprise many Catholics. As she wrote in **America** in 2003 (see Vantage Point in this issue, page 30), "While the work of women deacons—always rooted in the word, the liturgy and charity—differed regionally, the fact of women deacons is undeniable." She is not the only reputable scholar to sift through the historical record. In their book *Ordained Women in the Early Church: A Documentary History*, Kevin Madigan and Carolyn Osiek, R.S.C.J., sum up the ministries that women deacons performed in the Eastern churches: "Female deacons…exercised liturgical roles, supervised the lives of women faithful, provided ongoing care for women baptizands, and were seen going on pilgrimage and interacting with their own families and the general population in a variety of ways."

Other scholars disagree, averring that *diakonos*, when applied to women in New Testament times and in the early church, was more likely to have referred to service in general, according to cultural norms for women at the time. Moreover, they argue, "ordination" ceremonies for women in the early church cannot be equated with the contemporary understanding of ordination.

As indispensable as it is, the historical data is neither wholly conclusive nor ultimately dispositive. The church's discernment regarding women deacons must be guided, in the words of the International Theological Commission, by "a greater knowledge of both historical *and* theological sources, as well as of the current life of the Church" (emphasis added). We should also bear in mind this additional insight of the commission: "Nowhere did the [Second Vatican] Council claim that the form of the permanent diaconate which it was proposing was a restoration of a previous form.… Vatican II never aimed to do that. What it re-established was the principle of the permanent exercise of the diaconate, and not one particular form which the diaconate had taken in the past."

This raises a question: If the church discerns in light of its reflection on the historical and theological data and the

current life of the church that, at a minimum, it enjoys the freedom to admit women to the permanent diaconate, then should we do so? Yes, we should. What might that mean for the church today?

To begin with, while acknowledging the myriad ways in which women already serve the church, "ordaining women as deacons who have the necessary personal, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral qualities would give their indispensable role in the life of the church a new degree of official recognition, both of their ministry and of their direct connection to their diocesan bishop for assignments and faculties," as Bishop Wcela has written. The church would be enriched by women's leadership in its sacramental life. Like their male counterparts, women deacons could preside over some of the sacraments. Women deacons could preach at baptisms, weddings and funerals, providing the church with powerful models of women leading the community during some of life's most important moments. That alone—the more complete inclusion of the voices of half the church in a sacramental setting—would be a great source of apostolic creativity and energy. While Pope Francis has said that ordained women deacons would not be permitted to preach at Mass, he has yet to offer a compelling reason why this must be so. It seems that if we are to have women deacons, then they should be permitted to perform all the functions that their male counterparts do.

It is also important to consider the possible ways that women deacons might serve as models for young women—and men. If it is true that some people have written off the church as a "patriarchal" institution, then imagine what it would mean to see a woman presiding at a liturgy. Many women in particular might feel more invited into a community in which the sacramental leadership includes them.

Ordination, of course, is not the sole way to exercise leadership, nor even the most significant. In the current church, however, the only one in which we live, ordination is an important entree into leadership. Thus the discussion of women deacons also affords us an opportunity to reflect on the nature of ecclesial governance. While some have suggested that the ordination of women as deacons will lead to their "clericalization," the true challenge in the church today is not the possible clericalization of women but rather the urgent need to declericalize ecclesiastical power and authority. There are too many offices in the church today that require the office-holder to be a cleric, with little or no theological justification for this requirement. The discussion of female deacons should not therefore forestall a much-needed discussion about promoting laywomen, and laymen, to leadership roles with real decision-making authority—as heads of Vatican dicasteries, presidents of pontifical institutes or chancellors of dioceses.

What would the ordination of women deacons mean for the local churches? For one thing, Pope Francis would likely recognize that not every diocese or parish has the same need for and openness to the ministry of deacons generally or women deacons specifically.

As the International Theological Commission stated in its report, "the true interest" of the fathers at Vatican II "was in opening a path to the restoration of the permanent diaconate which could be put into effect in a plurality of ways." Should the church decide to ordain women deacons, therefore, the Holy See should render the practice licit but not mandatory. Owing to the wide variety of social, ecclesial and political situations throughout the world, discernment as to how, and when, female deacons can be integrated into the life of a local church should respect the autonomy of local churches under the leadership of the local bishop (in accordance with the call for greater subsidiarity that Pope Francis made repeatedly in "The Joy of Love").

Regardless of local custom and choice, however, we are certain that the church would be greatly enriched by expanding roles for women at every level of service and governance. Almost 50 years ago, in 1967, the Second Vatican Council restored the permanent diaconate to the church. For several centuries before that, the only form of the diaconate was a "transitional" one—that is, for a man en route to the priesthood. In the early 1970s, it was a surprise for many Catholics to see a married man proclaim the Gospel and preach at Mass. Half a century on, this development is not yet finished, and the church is still coming to understand how best to put this ministry at the service of the community. Even though the restoration of the permanent diaconate has not been without challenges, it has been a blessing for the church. The addition of women to their ranks could be an equal blessing. With that in mind, we look forward to the results of the pope's commission on women deacons and pray for its members as they begin this important work.

In the Letter to the Romans, St. Paul asks the community to "welcome" Phoebe and "help her in whatever she may require from you." Even after the commission publishes its final report, scholars will likely debate what kind of *diakonos* Phoebe was. What is clear already, however, is that many women have the necessary personal, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral qualities to serve in this ministry, as well as a true sense of calling to follow the pattern of Phoebe. The question remains: Does the church have the freedom to admit women to this ministry and, if so, how should it proceed? One part of that question has been entrusted to the commission, but the larger challenge and opportunity belong to all of us.

REPLY ALL

Not So Different

In "Longing for Communion" (7/18), Timothy P. O'Malley presents an important view on our relationship as Catholics with Lutherans, Anglicans and Methodists and on our different approaches to the Eucharist. Many of the comments on this article take me back to discussions I was involved with as a younger student. Now I wonder how important these differences are. We are all Christians. We all seek the truth and look to God for daily assistance. Most Christians pay little attention to the differences. We could resolve these differences next year, or in another 500 years, and from the pews you will hear an "O.K." and people will move on.

I am not minimizing the great work of those within the church who seek to learn and guide us with these great mysteries. But in this age, when we see a great decline in worshipers in all Christian churches, we need to unify. I have a granddaughter and grandson who are members of the Anglican Church. When I visit them, I will attend and participate in their Communion service. It is important that I do so. Naturally, as a Catholic, I will also attend a Catholic service. Best to play it safe.

JOE BLISS
Online Comment

A Price to Pay

Re "To Love and Protect," by Archbishop Blase J. Cupich (7/18): As long as the clergy and religious responsible for the sexual abuse of children do not have to pay for the wrongs they enabled or tolerated, or in some cases committed, and as long as it is the infinitely long-suffering faithful who have to pick up the tab for the crimes of others, the archbishop's words will be nothing but a hollow and insulting mockery.

Dioceses should not have to be crippled, or their parishes destroyed, because of the crimes of the "evil shepherds" to whom they were entrusted. It would do the clergy and religious no harm if they were to be reduced to beggary for what they have done, instead of continuing in the cushy life of today's mendicant friars—who are mendicant in name only. Every penny should be paid by the offenders. For money collected from the faithful to be used to pay for the crimes of others is a further infamy in this unspeakably vile saga.

MICHAEL COBBOLD
Online Comment

Don't Dismiss Spirit

Re "A Pastoral Vision," by John W. O'Malley, S.J. (7/18): I always enjoy Father O'Malley and agree that Francis is putting the spirit of the Second Vatican Council into practical action. Many have criticized the phrase the spirit of Vatican II; but, lest we forget, that very spirit is the Holy Spirit.

We must never dismiss Vatican II as not a "serious" council. In so many ways it was much more serious than Vatican I, which, yes, did define a doctrine, but was interrupted and adjourned for almost a century until it was officially closed just before Vatican II. The Second Vatican Council involved four autumns of inspired, lively, spiritual, ecumenical, contentious and wonderful debate, discussion, composition and promulgation by the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic church.

TIMOTHY REID
Online Comment

A Small Price

Re "A Rite of Service," by Bill McGarvey (7/18): We have today in the United States a lot of *pluribus* but little *unum*. Mr. McGarvey is absolutely right about the value of a national service initiative. Young people lucky enough to be born here are inheriting a great country that, despite its shortcomings, offers unique opportunities. A stint in national service is a small price to pay.

KEVIN DOYLE
Online Comment

The Jesuit Elite?

Re Of Many Things, by Matt Malone, S.J. (7/18): In my many years of friendship with the Jesuits, including my brother, and of reading material by Jesuits, I have not heard or seen a claim like the editor's "elites (among whom I surely count myself)." Elite is defined as "a group of people considered (by others or themselves) to be the best in a particular society or category, especially because of their power, talent, or wealth." Why would a Jesuit count himself among the "elite"? What would Pope Francis say?

MARIJA STANKUS-SAULAITIS
Online Comment

A Rude Awakening

Re "Duterte's Tough Talk," by David T. Buckley (7/4): The new president of the Philippine's has zero tact and obviously does not follow the church's teachings on mercy and forgiveness. But I am happy that he is pointing out how wrong it is that our bishops drive S.U.V.s and have iPhones—considering our constitution exempts them from taxes so they could do more of their missionary work.

I think while the church ought to take a stand over how foul-mouthed President Rodrigo Duterte can get, the church should also take a look in the mirror. Pope Francis wrote, "You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those

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in ignorance and error." This is the Philippine Catholic Church's rude awakening.

LIM VANESSA
Online Comment

Mercy and Obedience

In "Ordinary, Holy Families" (6/20), an analysis of the "Kasper approach" toward mercy, Julie Hanlon Rubio forgets the command that follows Christ's extension of mercy as he went out to bring the prostitute, the tax collector and all the other sinners back to the life of grace: "Neither will I condemn thee. *Go now and sin no more*" (Jn 8: 11).

The author also omits some of the very comforting words of Christ, "Therefore shall you pray: Our Father who art in heaven" (Mt 6:9). Are we not called to be sons and daughters of God? What greater family is there than this? And yet it requires obedience to God: "Not every one that says, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 7:21).

It is a sad and shallow sign of the times that obedience is equated with servitude. St. Ignatius demanded absolute obedience from his Jesuits—in fact, the Jesuits take a special vow of obedience—and that obedience is not out of servitude but out of love of our father God, and then love of neighbor.

PATRICK MURTHA
Online Comment

Bathroom Deliberations

Among the "many things" that Matt Malone, S.J., could not fit into the limited space of his column on North Carolina's transgender bathroom wars is the notion that it is the obligation of the federal government to assure that civil rights are equally accorded to all citizens in all states (Of Many Things, 6/6). His assertions of "executive overreach" by the federal executive branch in response to "legislative overreach" by North Carolina are both overwrought.

The notion of "reasonable people reaching accommodations in their own community" is built upon the assumption of a perfectly representative democracy with an actively involved citizenry—a model of American government that is far from actual practice either today or in an idealized past. Rather, our participation is generally limited to changing the roster of our representatives every two to six years, a system with a built-in lag time, but one that also attempts to balance the dual needs of stability and responsiveness. Thus, the bathroom mentality of the North Carolina legislature is not particularly amenable to a timely restructuring by "the cool and deliberate sense of the community."

It is in this context that we must rely on the federal executive to carry out its constitutionally mandated responsibility promptly and decisively, as a last resort to the inertia and demagoguery of other branches and other levels of our national government.

ROBERT LEVINE
Online Comment

The Catholic Voter

"Throne and Altar Time," by John J. Conley, S.J. (6/6): I read with interest Father Conley's complaint that he is getting "Catholic" voter guides that try to skew his vote toward Democratic candidates. The one's I see are generally skewed toward Republican candidates, and focus solely on pro-life and pro-family issues and question President Obama, Hillary Clinton and the "radical" Supreme Court justices who "legislate from the bench."

My response to them is that there are no "Catholic" candidates in either party. The Catholic Church has positions on life and family, and on immigration, climate change and the poor. As voters, we often do not have a good candidate to vote for among the choices. But we must sift through the rhetoric, claims and misinformation and vote. And we must always vote for the common good.

I pity the Catholic who gets elected because no issue is simple and their service is pledged to all the people who elect them. So, please do not tell me how to vote. Tell me the church's positions on life, family and social justice. I can do the rest.

MARY ANN SABIE
Albuquerque, N.M.

CARTOON WRITTEN BY JAKE MARTIN, S.J.; ART BY BOB ECKSTEIN

HUMAN RIGHTS

Street Killings Spike in Philippines, Duterte Challenged by Bishops

Deploring a campaign of extrajudicial killings that has, according to local media, claimed more than 800 lives, the president of the Philippines bishops' conference issued a direct challenge to President Rodrigo Duterte and his supporters in his Sunday homily on Aug. 7. "Will you kill me again and again on the social media for saying this?" asked Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan.

"At this point. I do not care. I am ready to die.… A part of me has died a hundred times in every killing I have seen these past weeks. What is another death for me?… Barbarism will not have the last laugh. Reason will prevail. Humanity will win in the end."

Describing himself in "utter disbelief" before the continuing police and vigilante violence against people suspected of drug peddling and other crimes, as well as the president's professed indifference to human rights concerns, the archbishop wrote: "Both the guilty and the innocent are humans.… For the killer and the killed I grieve. We become less human when we kill our brethren."

The homily was read from the pulpit throughout diocese on Aug. 7 and was published on the diocesan website. Archbishop Villegas asked his parishioners: "From a generation of drug addicts, shall we become a generation of street murderers?" Other bishops around the country similarly deplored the rise in extrajudicial street killings.

STREET JUSTICE IN MANILA. Jennelyn Olaires weeps over the body of her husband, Michael Siaron, accused of peddling drugs and killed by a vigilante group on July 23.

In a testimony to how quickly the human rights situation has deteriorated in the Philippines since Duterte came to power, the nation's Catholic bishops' conference began an antiviolence program in July called simply Do Not Kill. The campaign seeks to organize family members of the victims of extrajudicial executions and continues an appeal, first issued in June, to the nation's police not to participate in or tolerate extrajudicial killings.

An implied shoot-to-kill policy toward drug dealers had propelled Duterte's campaign for the presidency. As mayor of Davao City, where he was known as "The Punisher," Duterte had similarly tolerated and even encouraged the summary executions of as many as 1,000 people suspected of committing drug crimes. Duterte so far has shown little concern that his tough-on-crime posture may prove too much for crime-weary Filipinos.

A day after the archbishop's homily, in fact, Duterte announced the broadening of his antidrug trafficking crusade, releasing a list of government officials, judges, members of Congress and military officers he accuses of having links to the illegal drug trade. His televised address came just hours after he vowed to maintain his shoot-to-kill order against drug dealers.

In his address, Duterte declared that the officials he accused would have their day in court, but added while reading the list that "my mouth has no due process." As mayor of Davao City, Duterte had similarly read out the names of drug suspects to local media; many of those he named were soon discovered slain.

In June the Bishops' Conference of the Philippines issued an official appeal to police, noting in a statement signed by conference president Archbishop Villegas, "We are disturbed by an increasing number of reports that suspected drug-peddlers, pushers and others about whom reports of criminal activity have been received, have been shot, supposedly because they resist arrest." In their statement, "A Pastoral Appeal to Our Law Enforcers," the bishops reminded police that killing a suspect is not "morally justifiable," even if he tries to escape. The bishops issued an "appeal to humanity" in dealing with criminals and drug dealers.

KEVIN CLARKE

CNS PHOTO/CZAR DANCEL, REUTERS

ENVIRONMENTALISM

In Hiding in Honduras

Kevin Donaldo Ramírez, 29, of Honduras describes himself as an environmental activist, just like his hero Berta Cáceres, a defender of indigenous rights and lands who was murdered in March.

When he heard the news of her death, "I cried," he says. "They killed Berta, but it was like they had killed me." Cáceres, he says, had been an inspiration for many of the people working to protect indigenous and rural territories from development interests.

Berta Cáceres had been the most visible leader for Honduran indigenous people in resistance to development projects. Since her murder, environmental activists in Honduras appear even more vulnerable. Global Witness reports that Honduras is the most dangerous place in the world for people like Ramírez; 109 eco-defenders have been killed there since 2010, and eight were killed in 2015.

Because of these deaths, Ramírez knows that resisting development projects can be dangerous. Powerful interests seek to produce energy by damming the Río Listón, practically in his backyard in his community in Quimistán.

Last year he endured several death threats and one murder attempt. His wife was attacked by one of his own neighbors, apparently hired by local businesspeople. Some stand to gain greatly from the project at the expense of their neighbors.

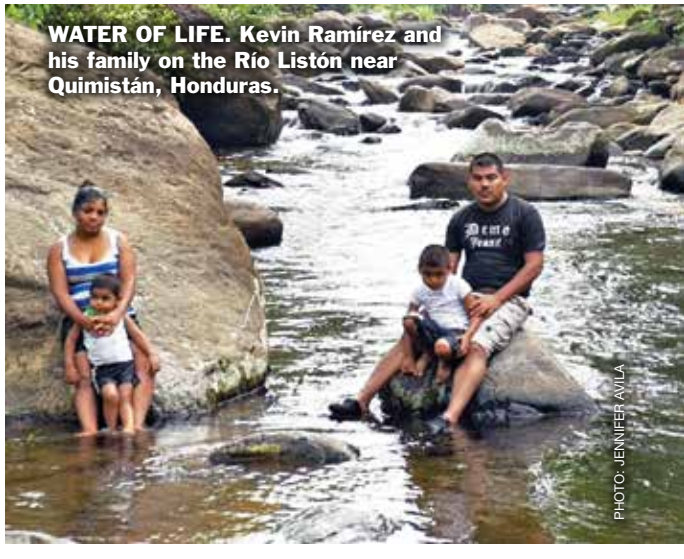
Honduras is a troubled country, now the second most violent in the world. The most desirable places in Honduras for energy production are located where farmers and indigenous people live, and conflicts over land often end violently. Since a coup deposed Manuel Zelaya, the popularly elected president, in 2009, 111 river concessions and more than 155 land concessions for mining have been approved without consultation with the people in communities that would be directly affected.

Ramírez's community is small; most people are farmers. The river is too important for their crops and their lifestyle, he says, for them to surrender it to energy production. His village is not the only community in Honduras facing a conflict of this type. In the whole municipality of Quimistán, six dam projects are underway. Many of the people who live in communities around the new dams say they learned of the projects only when construction work began.

Ramírez and his family have regularly had to flee his community when threats begin. That is why he has no permanent job, which makes it difficult for him to support his family. But he believes that God is in nature and that it is important to defend the land. It is the only legacy he can leave to his sons, he says; he does not possess property or wealth.

In September a Jesuit-sponsored group in El Progreso, called Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación, persuaded the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to demand protective measures for Ramírez and his family, and now the Honduran state is responsible for his safety. Sadly, before she was murdered Berta Cáceres had been given the same commitments of protection from the state.

As the investigation into Cáceres's murder continues in Honduras, the killing has had an impact in the United States. In June, Rep. Hank Johnson, a Democrat of Georgia, introduced leg-



WATER OF LIFE. Kevin Ramírez and his family on the Río Listón near Quimistán, Honduras.

PHOTO: JENNIFER AVILA

islation that would suspend U.S. funding to Honduras for police and military operations until the Honduran government investigates human rights violations.

Meanwhile, the lack of consensus and consultation in Honduras results in conflicts like the one that has again driven Ramírez from his community. As recent death threats escalated, he has gone one more time into hiding.

JENNIFER AVILA
Reporting from Honduras

Pope Francis Meets Rescued Women

In yet another sign of his strong stance against human trafficking, Pope Francis made a surprise visit to 20 women who have been rescued from sexual slavery. The pope met with the women on Aug. 12 at a refugee center in Rome, the Pope John XXIII community, which houses people rescued from prostitution. The visit was one of the regular gestures Francis has made to highlight the Jubilee Year of Mercy, which runs through 2016. The Vatican said in a statement that the women were from a range of countries, including Romania, Albania, Nigeria, Tunisia and Ukraine, as well as Italy. All suffered severe physical abuse during their ordeals and are living under protection, the Vatican press office said. The statement said the pope's visit was another reminder of the urgent need to combat human trafficking. Francis has been particularly outspoken against trafficking and slavery, calling it "a crime against humanity" and "an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ."

Bias in Baltimore

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore called a federal Department of Justice report cataloging systemic abuses by Baltimore's police "sobering and distressing." In a statement released on Aug. 10, the archbishop called it "an affirmation of those in our community who have long criticized the policing strategies and practices of the [police] department and a repudiation of those whose actions have undermined both public trust as well as the inherent dignity of those they have sworn to serve and protect." The report detailed a pattern of repeated violations of constitutional and statutory rights that eroded the community's trust in the police. It also revealed racial bias on the part of Baltimore police. In a city that is 63 percent black, African-Americans made up 95 percent of those stopped at least 10 times without arrests or citations and 91 percent of those arrested whose only charge was "failure to obey" or "trespassing." Archbishop Lori encouraged people "to read the report, reflect on the findings and consider the role that each of us should play in bringing about much needed change."

Countering Hate

Terrorists want to make peace-loving Christians and Muslims believe that it is impossible for them to live side by side; it is up to Christians and Muslims to prove them wrong, said Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran of France. The cardinal, president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, was in France July 26 when 85-year-old Father Jacques Hamel was brutally murdered in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray near Rouen. Writing on Aug. 12 in the Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano, Cardinal Tauran said, "Obviously, these crimes threaten the credibility of interreligious dialogue, but we must continue to meet, to speak and to work together when possible so hatred does not prevail."

From America Media, CNS, RNS, AP and other sources.

NEWS BRIEFS


Rosaline Costa

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America on Aug. 10 approved "Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist," a document that **tracks progress** over 50 years of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue and maps remaining steps to full unity. ⬩ Pope Francis **hosted 21 Syrian refugees** at the Vatican on Aug. 11, including the refugees brought back to Rome with him from Lesbos, Greece, in April. ⬩ Rosaline Costa, 67, a Catholic and for 30 years the editor of Hotline Bangladesh, a chronicle of corruption, crime and religious violence, was **warned "be careful"** so often she decided in July to flee from her native Bangladesh to New York. ⬩ Bishop Michael C. Barber announced that a **Cristo Rey high school** will open in the Diocese of Oakland in fall 2018, though much work remains ahead "to make this dream a reality." ⬩ Bishop Edward Daly of Derry—well known first because of a photograph of his efforts to **evacuate a wounded man** during Bloody Sunday in 1972 and later for his tireless advocacy for peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland—died on Aug. 8 at the age of 82.

DISPATCH | BOSTON

Teaching Together

Megan Fischer grew up hearing she would be a good teacher. She naturally assumed the responsibilities that often fall to an oldest child, especially in a family of five siblings. But she applied to an undergraduate program with plans to be a physical therapist.

"I remember fighting the idea of being a teacher because it was expected of me," Fischer said. But that didn't last long. "When I thought about who I wanted to work with, I always came back to kids. Once I sort of put my pride aside, I thought, 'You know what? Teaching. This is it.'"

Fischer is only a few weeks away from starting her second year of teaching through the Urban Catholic Teacher Corps, run through the Roche Center for Catholic Education at Boston College, where Fischer is pursuing a master's degree. She teaches third grade at St. John Paul II Catholic Academy's Neponset campus in Dorchester, Mass.

In her second and final year of the U.C.T.C. program, Fischer is excited to continue improving her practice, learning from the daily challenges that teachers face.

The teacher corps is a partnership of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston and Boston College. The program director, Charles Cownie, said the goal has always been to serve the highest-need schools in the archdiocese—those that have the hardest time with teacher retention and student achievement.

"What we do is take highly qualified educators and form them in Catholic education," Cownie said. Beyond their master's coursework, corps members like Fischer get intensive support in their teaching placement from trained supervisors, mentors and coaches.

The cohort model also facilitates peer support. Fischer lives in a convent with the rest of the U.C.T.C. members, going home every day to people who are facing the same problems and sharing their own ways of dealing with them.

> The mission is not only to give Catholic schools teachers, but to give them the best.

"Boston College's mission is not only to give Catholic schools teachers, but to give them the best," Fischer said. "They know that in order to do that well, a teacher needs to be supported. It's hard to get that support sometimes in underfunded schools because there are so many things that are demanding more attention."

This positive, solid foundation in teaching may be one reason corps members stay in the field. Looking at five-year numbers, 34 graduates completed the program between 2012 and 2016. Thirty of them are still teaching—23 in Catholic schools.

Improving academic achievement among Catholic school students is a key goal of the program, but Cownie says faith formation and religious education are equally essential in Catholic schools. While many of the students are not Catholic and there is a diversity of beliefs among the teacher corps, Fischer and her peers must learn what it means to teach in a Catholic school context.

"We believe that an individual actively engaged in their own faith formation is the ideal individual to be participating with young people in their faith formation," Cownie said.

Fischer grew up in Wisconsin and went to the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., earning her bachelor's in elementary education in 2015. She was raised Catholic and was attracted to the program's focus on service and ministry.

Her class last year included students from black, white, Vietnamese, Latino and Haitian families. Her students spoke multiple languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese and Creole. During one lesson last year about courage, one of Fischer's students spoke about how her family emigrated from Vietnam, how her mom had to stay behind and wait for enough money to make the trip and told of the family's dangerous boat passage away from Vietnam. The United States is a country of immigrants, and in Fischer's classroom, students learned that lesson from primary sources.

"It was one of those moments where you say, 'I am a facilitator of learning and so are they,'" Fischer said. "We are all teachers in this classroom."

The work is hard. Fischer gets home some evenings absolutely exhausted. She experiences near-daily failures that prove she has much to learn. But she also has those moments that keep her going—the times when she knows she is making a difference. And they power her through the bad days, rejuvenating her passion for teaching and her certainty that this is exactly what she wants to be doing with her life.

TARA GARCÍA MATHEWSON

TARA GARCÍA MATHEWSON *is a Boston-based freelance writer.*

MARGOT PATTERSON

Merkel's Mettle

While in Europe for a few weeks, I've been listening to what people say about the refugee problem. To be a Muslim anywhere is to be regarded as suspect; to be a Muslim refugee is to be persona non grata. Even friends and acquaintances I regard as broad-minded remarked that they think it a mistake for a society to accept large numbers of refugees from a very different culture. This was said in a European Union country that thus far has accepted a total of four Syrian refugees.

In this context one realizes how remarkable Angela Merkel is as a leader. Moral courage on the part of politicians—on the part of anyone—is rare, but she has been a shining exception. Germany under her leadership has taken in one million Syrian refugees, an act of astonishing generosity. The country also regularly ranks among the top donors to global humanitarian aid efforts.

Germany's commitment to being a good citizen of the world was tested by a series of violent attacks in July. Within the space of a week, the country saw assaults on four train passengers in Würzburg by a teenager with a knife, a suicide bombing in Ansbach, a machete attack in Reutlingen that left one dead and several injured and a mass shooting in Munich. Three of the four attacks were committed by asylum seekers, two of them by extremists linked to the Islamic State. These are the kinds of events that have other countries raising the drawbridge; but in the face of these attacks, Chancellor Merkel has been resolute. At a press conference held on July 28, she staunchly defended her open-door policy on refugees and refused to reverse it, saying, "Fear cannot be a counsel for political action." While pledging to upgrade security, she urged Germans to be strong in resisting terrorists who wish to undermine the country's readiness to take in destitute people. "They sow hate and fear between cultures, and they sow hate and fear between religions," she said.

Rejecting the politics of fear, Ms. Merkel sounded a lot like Pope Francis, who in the wake of the murder of a French priest in Rouen repudiated talk of a war of religion between Islam and Christianity. But a message of "stay the course" is unlikely to appease her critics at home. On the last weekend in July, Germans opposed to her immigration policy rallied in Berlin under the slogan "Merkel must go." A poll taken in early August found her popularity rating had dropped 12 points from what it had been a month earlier. The open-door refugee policy could spell the end of her chancellorship, as she surely realizes. Her confidence and determination that "we can manage our historic task" and "Germany is a strong country" stand in contrast with the fear, defeatism and passivity shown by other European leaders. If Ms. Merkel's mantra throughout the refugee crisis has been "We can manage," the other leaders' tune is "Not our problem."

> To be a Muslim anywhere is to be regarded as suspect.

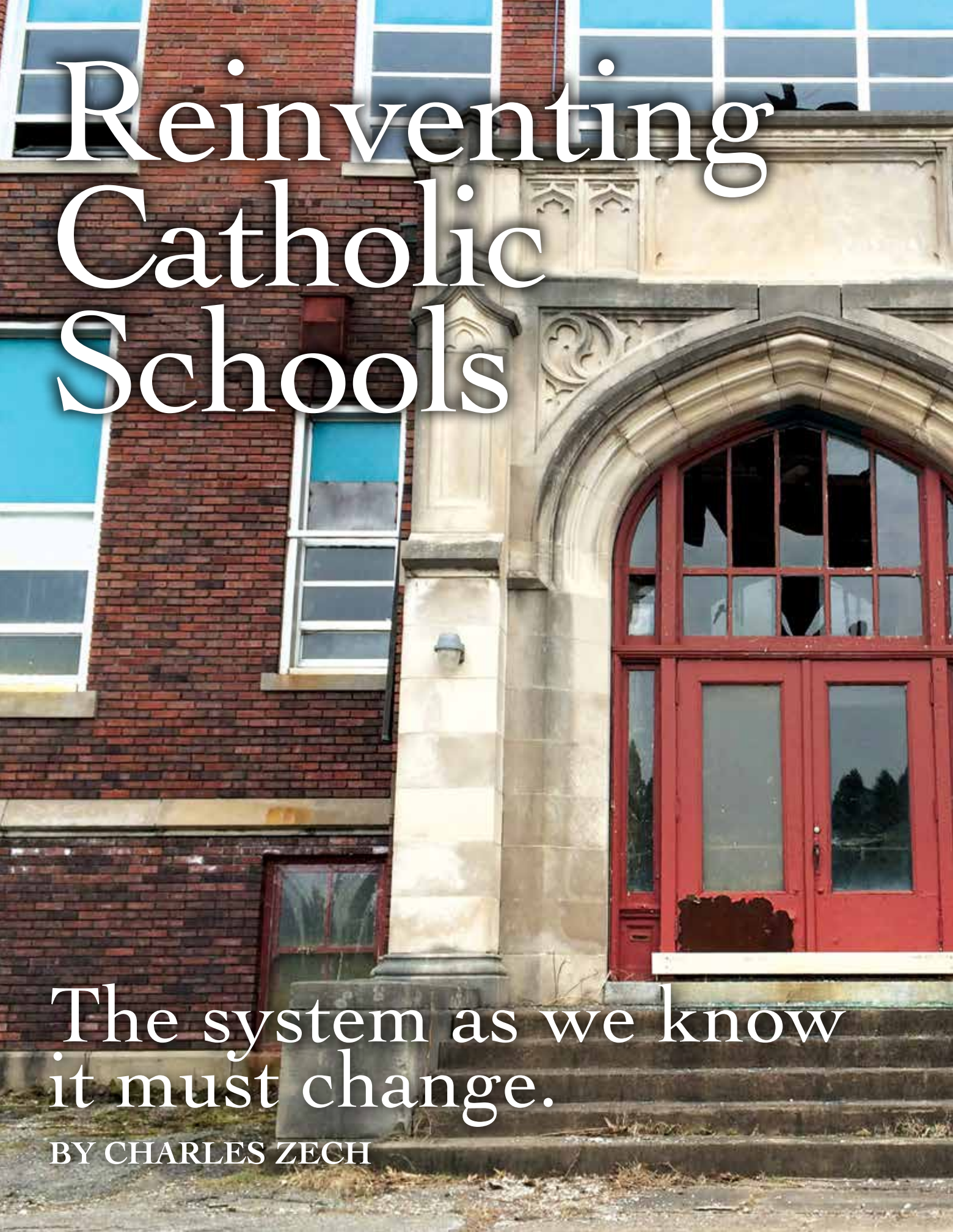
In one way or another, though, it is. The xenophobia spawned by the influx of refugees into Europe seems to have played a large role in the choice by British voters to leave the European Union. Now the whole future of the European Union, indeed of the whole post-World War II order, is in question. European heads of state may not want to cope with the problem, but the problem is theirs.

The refugee crisis is the defining issue of our day. Like climate change, another great challenge facing the world, this is a man-made disaster that is not going to go away. On this, as on many other issues, Germany is far ahead of the United States. The United States has shown little willingness to accept more than a minimal number of Syrian refugees, though its policies helped create the refugee crisis in the Middle East that Europe is facing. Historically, the United States has been a haven for refugees, but officials at aid agencies say a well-organized fringe group with an anti-refugee, anti-Muslim message has spread misinformation that is affecting traditional U.S. support for refugees.

Those who say large number of immigrants create problems for a society are half right, of course. While migrants bring economic benefits, social tensions can rise. But with more displaced people today than at any time since World War II, what is the alternative? There is none, as Germany has understood and accepted.

Germany has become the indispensable country and Ms. Merkel the indispensable leader not just because of the country's economic might but because of the moral leadership she has shown. Responsible leaders step up to the challenges that confront them, even when these are unpopular and not of their making. Doing the right thing isn't easy; it's just right.

MARGOT PATTERSON *is a writer who lives in Kansas City, Mo.*



Reinventing Catholic Schools

The system as we know it must change.

BY CHARLES ZECH

PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/GHORNEPHOTO

First, let me make it clear that I am not a parochial school "hater." In fact, I have spent most of my life in Catholic education. My parish had a high school, so I spent my K-to-12 years in one school, taught by wonderful Benedictine nuns and priests and dedicated lay teachers. From there, it was on to a Catholic college and Catholic graduate school. My entire academic career has been spent teaching in Catholic colleges and universities. Some might describe my education as narrow. But it certainly has given me an appreciation for the contributions of Catholic school education to our society.

But the model that supported my education is broken. It needs to be replaced by a new model. Simply put, the economics of the old parochial school system no longer work, and the result is serious financial stress. To put it in language more palatable to a faith-based organization, it is no longer good stewardship on the part of Catholic dioceses and parishes to continue supporting the old model of Catholic parochial schools. As distasteful as this thought is to those who are heavily invested in the parochial school system, it is time to recognize this reality and search for a new model.

Since 1965 the number of Catholic elementary schools has declined by 50 percent.

The fact of the matter is that the parochial school system has been in decline for some time. For example, according to the *Official Catholic Directory*, since 1965 the number of Catholic elementary schools has declined by 50 percent, while the number of students attending Catholic elementary schools has declined by 69 percent. The pace of this decline has increased in the past few decades. As I said above, the reasons boil down to basic economics—supply and demand.

Supply-Side Factors: No Nuns

On the supply side, the primary reason typically given for the financial stress that parochial schools face is related to the decline in the number of women religious, most of whom carried out their apostolate by teaching in parochial schools. Looking back, it is a scandal to see how little these dedicated women were paid. But low labor expenses kept parochial schools affordable. Today the sisters have been replaced by lay teachers, who are also scandalously underpaid but whose compensation is many times that of the sisters. The increase in parochial school labor costs is the most fre-

CHARLES ZECH *is the director of the Villanova University Center for Church Management & Business Ethics.*

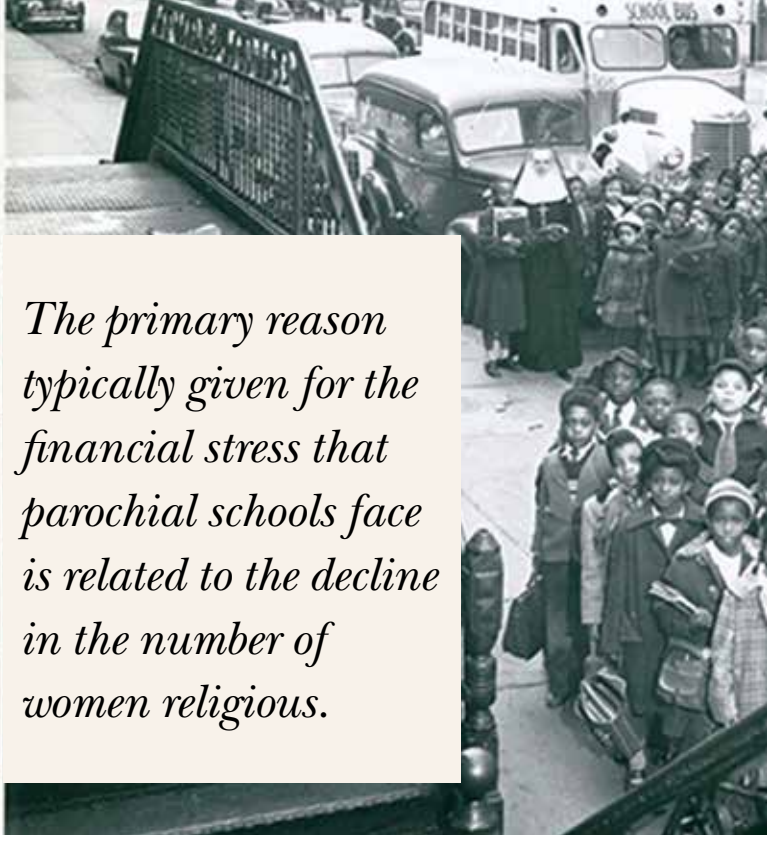
quently cited reason for their financial stress.

But this is too simplistic a view. Other factors, at least as influential on parochial school finances, have also been in play. One is the mismatch between the current location of parochial schools and the location of the Catholic population. At one time Catholics were heavily concentrated in the urban areas of the Northeast and Midwest. Naturally, that is where the bulk of Catholic parishes and their associated schools were built. Over time the Catholic population has migrated to the suburbs and increasingly to the South and West. They have been joined by immigrants, who have also settled in large numbers in the South and West. But the parishes and parochial school buildings still tend to be located in urban areas in the Northeast and Midwest. Dioceses are faced with the prospect of nearly empty parochial schools in their urban areas while schools in their suburbs and the South and West are underbuilt. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that many urban parochial schools find themselves serving a population that struggles to afford parochial school tuition. Many of these students are not Catholic (the saying goes, we serve this population not because they are Catholic but because we are).

But there is even more to this story. According to data collected by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, half of all Catholic parishes in the United States were established before 1950, nearly a third of them before 1930. Presumably the age of parochial school buildings mirrors this distribution. There are serious maintenance issues that accompany structures this old. Parishes have not always been able to keep up with this maintenance. Even if these school buildings are safe and up to code (many are not), catching up on the deferred maintenance adds another layer of expense.

Add to all this the competition that parochial schools face. Not only do suburban parochial schools face competition from well-funded suburban public schools, but increasingly in recent years, urban parochial schools face competition from publicly funded charter schools that for a variety of reasons offer more competition than do urban public schools.

The final supply factor, and perhaps the one that should be of most concern, is that Catholics are notoriously low givers to their church. Survey after survey has established that Catholics contribute about half as much to their parish as Protestants contribute to their congregations (1.1 to 1.2 percent of household income for Catholics, 2.2 to 2.5 percent for Protestants). To put this in context, if the typical Catholic household contributed at the same rate as the typical Protestant household (not necessarily tithing, just the same 2.2 percent of their income) U.S. Catholic parishes would receive an additional $8 billion in contributions annually. Or to put it another way, each parish would see its annual contributions double. Low Catholic giving inhibits each parish's ability to provide the whole array of services that we have come to expect. In terms of the parochial schools, this limits the ability of parishes to continue to subsidize their parochial schools at the level at which they have become dependent.



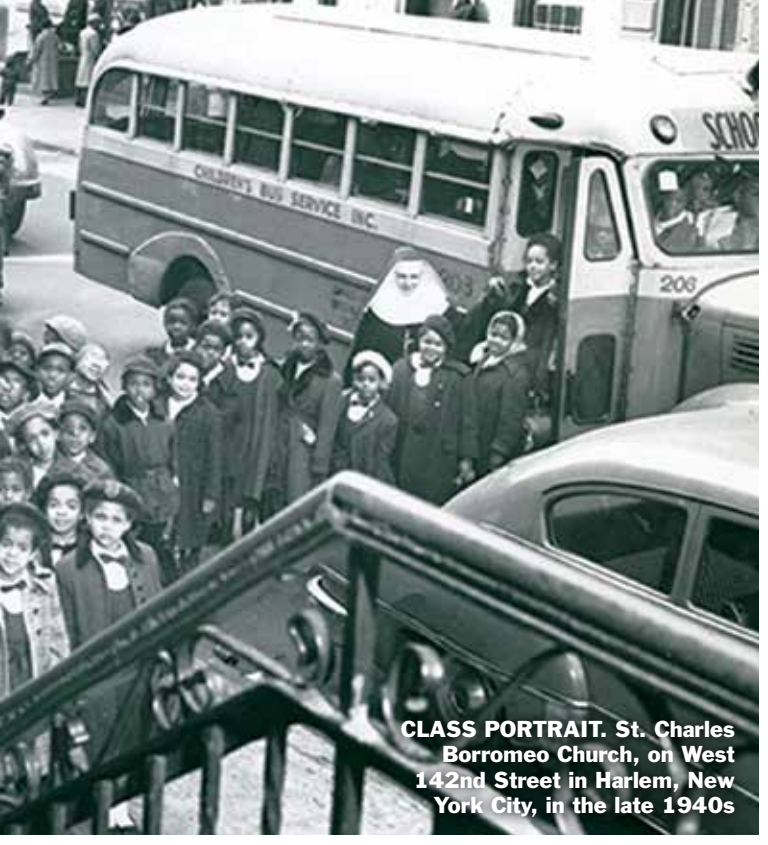
The primary reason typically given for the financial stress that parochial schools face is related to the decline in the number of women religious.

Demand-Side Factors

The demand-side factors center around the fact that there are simply fewer school-age children who might reasonably be expected to attend parochial schools. According to data in the *Official Catholic Directory*, the U.S. Catholic population has grown by 44 percent since the year 1965. In spite of this growth, Catholic marriages have decreased by 52 percent over that same period. Fewer couples are choosing to marry in the church. A couple that does not choose to have a Catholic wedding is not as inclined to send their children to a parochial school. This is compounded by the fact that despite the growth in the U.S. Catholic population, infant baptisms have decreased by 46 percent since 1965. This is probably in part because Catholic families are having fewer children. But it is also consistent with the trend toward fewer Catholic marriages. Millennial Catholics who are not getting married in the church are also not having their children baptized. This decreases the potential market for parochial schools.

What to Do About It: Three Approaches

Unless these supply and demand trends are reversed (not likely), we need to develop a new model for providing Catholic elementary school education. What will this new model look



CLASS PORTRAIT. St. Charles Borromeo Church, on West 142nd Street in Harlem, New York City, in the late 1940s

PHOTO: SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE, PHOTOGRAPHS AND PRINTS DIVISION, THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.

like? There are three primary approaches that have been tried nationwide to preserve the parochial school system.

The most frequently used policy is simply to merge parochial schools into regional schools. Combining the student population of multiple schools can result in one stronger school. But, of course, this approach is not without its problems. Those stakeholders whose school was shut down as part of the merger can be expected to be upset and often fail to support the new school. And even the stakeholders in the school that "won" by becoming the home campus may be resentful of the need to share facilities with students from other parishes. This could influence parishioners' decision to send their children to the school and their desire to support the merged school financially, either through fundraising or a parish subsidy. When everyone owns the school, no one owns the school.

A second approach, often used in conjunction with the creation of regional schools, has been to promote public funding for private—including parochial—schools. These efforts have been opposed on the basis that they violate the establishment clause found in the First Amendment of the Constitution. Some states have had success in getting variations of public funding programs passed by their legislatures in the form of voucher or tax-credit plans. But even where they have been approved, all of these programs suffer from two shortcomings. One is that they tend to restrict the number of eligible students. The other is that the value of the assistance provided typically falls far short of the cost of the child's education. The possibility of expanding these programs to more states and making them more accessible is limited. Besides the Constitution's establishment clause, public school teacher unions can be very powerful lobbyists against state funding.

Those states that have been successful in getting some form of public funding for private schools enacted have typically relied on the 2002 Supreme Court case Zelman v. Simmons-Harris.

A third and more recent tactic has been tried in the Washington, D.C., Indianapolis and Miami archdioceses, among others. They have converted some parochial schools to public charter schools. The benefit of this approach is that it makes these schools eligible for public funding, and therefore they are tuition free. These schools must eliminate any vestiges of Catholic identity during the school day, although some offer after-school religious education.

It does not take a major leap to envision a situation where all parochial schools are converted to a system of public charter schools offering the rigorous and values-based education that have always been the hallmark of parochial schools while providing religious education as a voluntary after-school activity, separate from the regular curriculum. The combination would provide the holistic education that parochial school advocates value. And it would also enable the church to continue its ministry to the underserved in the nation's inner cities.

This process is not without its complications. There can be significant up-front costs and legal hoops to jump through. Studies have shown that converted schools draw not only a larger student body but also more students who are behind academically and more students with special needs. To pass constitutional muster, daily classroom activities must be neutral with respect to religion. The establishment of Catholic charter schools would no doubt face the same type of opposition that other public funding options have faced. But this arrangement clearly meets the standards set forth in Chief Justice Rehnquist's majority opinion in Zelman.

The Options

While some parochial schools are thriving, the system as we have come to know it is in decline. The U.S. Catholic school establishment has two options to address this situation. On the one hand, they can continue down the worn path of trying to buck the economic factors that are behind the decline by merging schools while lobbying for incremental advances against the establishment clause. Or they can recognize that the current system is a dinosaur. The economic factors behind the decline are not going to be reversed. It is time to think outside the box by searching for new models for delivering the kind of education that Catholics have come to know and treasure. In the near future that model revolves around replacing parochial schools with a system of charter schools.

Saint of the Darkness

An interview with Brian Kolodiejchuk, the promoter of Mother Teresa's cause

BY JAMES MARTIN

Brian Kolodiejchuk, a Canadian priest of the Missionaries of Charity, was the official postulator for the canonization of Teresa of Calcutta, who will be declared a saint on Sept. 4. He is the editor of *Come Be My Light*, a collection of her letters and notebooks published in 2007, in which Mother Teresa's struggle with decades of interior darkness was revealed. Father Kolodiejchuk is also the editor of a new collection of her writings, *A Call to Mercy*, published in August by Image Books. In an interview with James Martin, S.J., in May, he spoke of Mother Teresa's early mystical experiences and her struggles with the "dark night."

Father Brian, congratulations on the canonization of Mother Teresa. I'd like to talk with you about her "dark night." Can you tell us how that first came to light?

Thank God the Jesuits had the foresight to save those documents! They were mostly from Father [Celeste] Van Exem, her spiritual director in Calcutta during those years of the inspiration and following. Plus Archbishop Périer, the archbishop of Calcutta, who was also a Jesuit, and then the Jesuits who came later—Father [Lawrence] Picachy, later Cardinal Picachy, and then Father [Joseph] Neuner.

Brian Kolodiejchuk discusses Mother Teresa's legacy in New Haven, Conn., in 2010.

They saved the documents. We didn't realize they were there until the work began of collecting the documents, even before the actual process began. When we checked the archives of the Jesuits in Calcutta and the archbishop's house in Calcutta, the letters came to light.

These letters became part of the process itself, and once that happened, it was only a question of time when they would be revealed—either now or, say, 50 years later, when archival material is revealed. But one of the nine theologians who looked at the *positio*—the life, virtues and reputation of holiness—suggested they be published. Actually, the archivist of the Calcutta Province used some of them in an article in Review for Religious, and Father Neuner had also written something, using some of it. So I thought the best thing would be to give all of what we had on the darkness. So *Come Be My Light* has everything, minus one or two letters that came after.

She had never spoken to you about these experiences, is that correct?

That is one thing that she never spoke about, and very deliberately. The sisters, or even I, would ask about the "inspiration"—Sept. 10 [1946]—and she would say nothing; only if the pope in obedience told her to say something. It was so sacred to her. So she managed to be a very public person yet at the same time was able to keep this experience hidden. Father Van Exem told one of the Jesuits in Calcutta, who told one of our priests, that Father Van Exem had five boxes of materials. Mother kept pressuring him to destroy all those things. Now I'm sure that her perspective is different!

Thankfully, they had the sense to keep those, because they reveal a very important part of Mother Teresa's own holiness and an important aspect of the Missionaries of Charity charism. We want to be in solidarity with the materially poorest of the poor, but when she came out to the West, more and more she would say that the greatest poverty in the world today was to be unloved, unwanted and uncared for. And that was her own experience.

Paradoxically, she was so united to Jesus that he could share with her his greatest sufferings in the Garden, and the sense of abandonment on the cross, as he had with other saints. The unique part of that darkness connected to Mother Teresa is this. St. Thérèse's experience [Thérèse of Lisieux] was more in the context of a trial of faith. And in the late 1800s and early 1900s that was the big question—of faith and the meaning of atheism. But this modern poverty of being unloved, loneliness, which Mother Teresa was experiencing, that is a kind of spiritual poverty as well.

Could you describe the kinds of mystical experiences that began her ministry?

The beginning, Sept. 10, which we call Inspiration Day, we thought of as a one-day thing, a special call. But we realized that it was only the beginning. Even then, when she wrote, she

JAMES MARTIN, S.J., *is editor at large of* ***America****. The 10th anniversary edition of his book* My Life With the Saints *will be released in September by Loyola Press. The full interview is online at americamagazine.org.*

CNS PHOTO/COURTESY KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

didn't say precisely what happened on Sept. 10. In that first letter she says what's going on—she's hearing very clearly and distinctly the voice of Jesus, beginning on the train on Sept. 10. Then she's going to Darjeeling for her retreat. So that continues. Even in the months later, in every Communion Jesus keeps asking: "Wilt thou refuse?"

That is connected to [an event] that no one had any idea of, which is that four years earlier she made a private vow to give Jesus anything he would ask, or, to say it another way, not to refuse him anything. So especially in the second letter there is more of a sense of dialogue. The first thing Jesus is saying is: "Wilt thou refuse?"

"So, okay," [Jesus says, in essence], "you told me four years ago you're going to refuse nothing and now I'm asking you to do this. You're going to refuse?"

Be careful what you promise Jesus!
Exactly! Exactly!

As you understand it, these locutions were auditory, which is rare in the lives of saints. Is that accurate?
They were in the imagination. They weren't external, like an apparition or anything. But they were very clearly and distinctly not part of, say, her morning meditation. Even she called it "the voice." She said it was very clear, very distinct.

The dark night comes rather soon after her ministry begins. As far as you know, because it is somewhat unclear in* Come Be My Light*, that lasted until her death. Is that your understanding?
That's my understanding. There's one moment that's been recorded in the book, in 1958, when Pius XII dies and, like we still do when a pope dies, the bishop will have a Mass praying for the repose of his soul. At that Mass, Mother Teresa asked for a sign that Jesus is pleased with the work of the Missionaries of Charity. And at that moment, the darkness is lifted. She simply says that Jesus gave himself to her to the full—although the union, the sweetness of those six months, passed much too soon.

I want to share with you a story and get your reaction. A bishop who was one of her spiritual advisors told me a story. He said he was discussing with her dryness in prayer one day, and she was relating how she didn't feel God's presence. The two of them were in Calcutta. Just then, a young boy came up and threw his arms around her. And the bishop said to her, "That's God's presence, too." Which brings me to a question I've always wanted to ask you: Do you think possibly that her early formation, in a sense, encouraged her to privilege the interior movements over the exterior signs of God's presence? Because when I read the diaries and letters, I sometimes want to say to her, "Are you looking outside of you?" Is there a sense of that?


Mother Teresa

CNS PHOTO

That's a good question. One of the comments she makes in one of her letters is that, thinking especially of her prayer time, she says, "When I'm on the street I can talk to you for hours." So there is some sense that all these experiences are more on the level of feelings. For example, she'll say, "I know my mind and my heart bounce back to Jesus."

So she's united with him more by will than, say, by pure faith. She sees all around her the whole work is spreading, it's growing. She's seeing the fruitfulness of it, and she sees people reacting. She's seeing the generosity of those who are helping her. So for her, that also has to be God's presence, and God's work.

So she does see that. On the other hand, I've always wondered that maybe her mystical experiences early on were so beautiful, she simply craved them again, as anybody would.
Strangely, people have said, "Who were the spiritual directors, and why weren't they helping her more?" It wasn't until Father Neuner in 1961 gives her an insight and says, "This is a spiritual side of your work." That lights the bulb, as Father Neuner said later on. So that helped her. It was still painful and difficult, but at least she had some meaning to it, to be associated with Jesus' own suffering, and interior suffering especially. She

used to comment that she thought Jesus suffered more in the Garden than in the physical suffering on the cross, and now we have an idea why she was saying that.

Thank God for good spiritual directors.
Right.

For me, all this vaults her into the category of one of the greatest saints ever, because the other saints did these great works with the poor but with consolation.
Right.

And she's doing it on an "empty tank."
Right. We around her would think, "It's not easy being Mother Teresa," with the demands—even on an airplane people are approaching you, wanting to talk, asking for a signature or a blessing. So you would think at least she's enjoying this rich interior life to keep her going. And then we find out the opposite.

It's astonishing. I like what you said about her being a model for today. It's interesting that God would give her the graces that were needed for today but also invite her into the suffering that many people today are suffering.
We know that saints are raised up for a particular time, for the times in which they are living. So that's one of the reasons why Mother had that experience. Was it because of such a widespread phenomenon, this way of spiritual poverty? Even if you're materially rich, or in any class of life, it is a really common experience of modern life. We go so fast, and family life isn't the same, so it is much easier to have that kind of experience of loneliness, of being unwanted and uncared for, seemingly.

By way of closing, can you tell us what it was like to be with her, what she was like personally and what she meant to you?
Well, I knew her in the last 20 years of her life, so I had the more mellow version of Mother Teresa! [Laughs.] At the beginning, she was always very demanding, of her sisters especially. But what was really striking was how really motherly she was. Everyone who knew her even briefly would call her Mother, and the sisters would call her Mother and so to all the people close to her she was just Mother. She really wanted to be that maternal presence—that's one of the striking things.

The other was just how ordinary she was. Sometimes, if you didn't know what she looked like and you were in the convent, she wouldn't be sticking out in any way, unless you noticed how she would do those little things, like a genuflection or taking the holy water when you enter—little things that you could say was a special way she did those things. She was a realist saint with her feet on the ground, very practical, very observant. You couldn't get anything past her. At meal times she would notice what sisters were eating, what sisters were not eating, what was said, what kind of mood you're in—she was very observant!

Like a good mother.
Exactly, exactly.

Can you describe your feelings about the upcoming canonization?
Humanly speaking, one thing is a sense of satisfaction that it's happening after these years of working and waiting. But I think the more positive thing is that now throughout the whole church Mother can be more formally prayed to—public veneration, we say. So now, her example, her message for our own time, can be even greater, stronger, more widespread.

Also, the other part of a saint is that they pray for us. At the very beginning of the book there is a kind of mission statement: "If I'm going to be a saint, I'm going to be a saint of darkness, and I'll be asking from heaven to be the light of those who are in darkness on earth."

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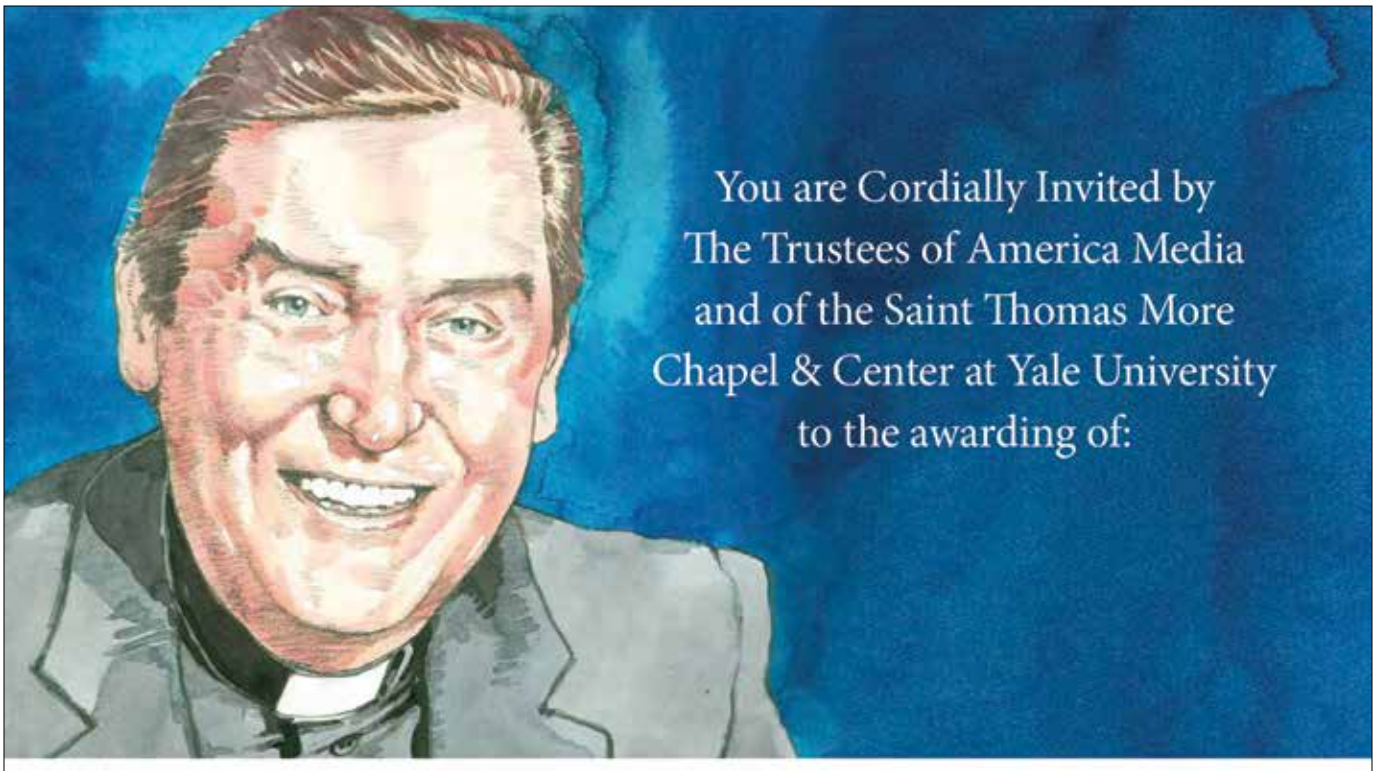

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Still Separate, Still Unequal

White Catholics must admit the sin of racism.

BY MICHAEL PASQUIER

Two years ago, at the age of 7, my daughter developed an interest in the biographies of famous people. We started with a children's book about Amelia Earhart, followed by Walt Disney and Anne Frank. Next up was Rosa Parks. The book opened with Parks as a girl growing up in rural Alabama, watching white kids ride buses to white schools while she and her black friends walked to black schools. The moral of the story was clear: Racism is bad. When we finished the book, my daughter said to me, "I go to a segregated school." It wasn't a question. It was a statement of fact.

My children attend a Catholic elementary school in Baton Rouge, La. My spouse and I send our children there for obvious reasons. It's connected to our parish. It's seven blocks away from our house. We both attended Catholic schools as children. My mother taught at Catholic schools. My wife works in the parish office.

What can I say? We're Catholic.

We're also white.

In describing her school as segregated, my daughter was simply calling it as she saw it. The children she encountered every day—in the classroom and on the playground and at birthday parties—were white. I couldn't disagree with her, but I tried to explain why. I said things like, "Most Catholics in the school district are white, and only people who live in the district can go to the school," and "Most of the people who go to our church are white, and only the people who go to our church can go to the school." Remember, she was 7. So she replied, "Well, that's too bad."

MARCHING FOR PEACE. Students from the Academy of St. Benedict the African School in Chicago conduct a prayer walk for peace in their community Nov. 5. The walk was prompted by the fatal shooting of a 9-year-old boy in a Chicago alley on Nov. 2.

CNS PHOTO/KAREN CALLAWAY, CATHOLIC NEW WORLD

Not much has changed since my childhood in the 1980s. I attended a Catholic elementary school in a rural town on the outskirts of Lafayette, La. Two black children started kindergarten with me, Quiana and Joshua. They were gone by the third grade. I never spoke to them again. My kindergarten teacher was black, Mrs. Norman. She was fired the following year. My mom seems to remember that she filed a racial discrimination lawsuit against the school. I do not know the outcome. And I did not read a biography of Rosa Parks when I was 7.

Today, there are more African-American Catholics in Louisiana than almost anywhere else in the United States. They are here because of slavery. During the 18th century, French and Spanish colonists introduced Catholicism and

MICHAEL PASQUIER *is an associate professor of religious studies and the Jaak Seynaeve Professor of Christian Studies at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. He is the author of* Fathers on the Frontier: French Missionaries and the Roman Catholic Priesthood in the United States, 1789-1870 *(Oxford University Press, 2010) and* Religion in America: The Basics *(Routledge, 2016).*

race-based slavery to the Mississippi Valley. Sacramental records of the period show people of color—most of them enslaved but some of them free—being baptized, married and buried in the church. In the years following the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, the church became one of the largest slaveholding entities in the state. When Pope Gregory XVI condemned slavery in his 1839 apostolic letter "In Supremo Apostolatus," the white clergy continued to defend slavery as it was practiced in the United States. Most white laypeople never heard of the pope's letter, much less read it. They also agreed with the assessment of Bishop Auguste Marie Martin of Natchitoches, La., that slavery was "the manifest will of God" and the result of the so-called curse of Ham. The Vatican rejected Bishop Martin's opinion in 1864, but who was listening?

Many rank-and-file Catholics of European descent have continued to harbor attitudes toward interracialism ranging somewhere between ambivalence and violent opposition.

A Separate Faith

After President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, the Catholic Church continued to marginalize African-Americans. During the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1866, U.S. bishops decided against a motion to address the hardships of free, black Catholics. They agreed with Archbishop Jean Marie Odin of New Orleans that African-Americans "already received sufficient care and had no need for new programs." This was coming from a bishop who suppressed the black Catholic community of New Orleans for organizing a pro-Unionist church during the Civil War. By the end of the 19th century, and with the endorsement of the white clergy and laity, most black Catholics had acquiesced to a segregated model of parish organization. One of the leading architects of church segregation was the Dutch-born Archbishop Francis Janssens of New Orleans.

The Catholic Church in Louisiana became a Jim Crow institution after Homer Plessy, a Catholic of color from New Orleans, lost his case before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1896. "Separate but equal" was not just the law of the land. It was the practice of the church. The church's position on race compelled W. E. B. Du Bois to state that "the Catholic Church in America stands for color separation and discrimination to a degree equaled by no other church in America."

In response to this racial discrimination, African-American Catholics founded the Federated Colored Catholics in 1925. Thomas Wyatt Turner, the group's leader, did not mince words with the white clergy. "We have undoubtedly come to a sad parting of the ways," he wrote to the president of St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, adding, "the passing of Christ out of His Church if our bishops and priests are willing to acknowledge that their labors are no longer efficacious in changing men from their sinful ways." Turner was talking about "the sin of race prejudice." "Should not the bishops and priests speak out against this sin as the paramount evil of the age?" he asked the seminary president. "Should the Church become a party to our oppression, and an abettor of our contemnors?" A handful of white Catholics advocated for interracialism during the early 20th century, chief among them the Jesuit priest John LaFarge. Their gradual approach to change, however, aggravated the intentions of black Catholics like Turner.

Why the slow movement toward racial justice in the church? The answer is straightforward: the power of white, Catholic racists. Diocesan-wide desegregation before Brown v. Board of Education (1954) occurred in Indianapolis in 1946; St. Louis in 1947; Washington, D.C., in 1948; New Orleans and Raleigh, N.C., in 1953; and San Antonio in 1954. In these and later cases, large numbers of white Catholics put up resistance to episcopal authority. For example, when a Louisiana bishop excommunicated a group of white mothers for acts of violence against those integrated into a children's catechism class, a Catholic man from Ohio reminded the prelate that "it is morally wrong to mix the races."

White Catholic support for desegregation grew during the 1960s, a decade that witnessed the peak of the civil rights movement and the *aggiornamento* of the Second Vatican Council. But a comprehensive plan to address racism never materialized in the church. The National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus observed in the late 1960s that "the Catholic Church in the United States, primarily a white racist institution, has addressed itself primarily to white society and is definitely a part of that society." Since then, U.S. bishops have issued pastoral letters and conducted studies on the realities and sinfulness of racism. Yet as much as some white, Catholic activists have worked for racial equality both inside and outside the church, many rank-and-file Catholics of European descent have continued to harbor attitudes toward interracialism ranging somewhere between ambivalence and violent opposition.

A Racial Sin

This brings us to the present day. On July 5, a white police

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officer shot and killed Alton Sterling, an African-American man in Baton Rouge. In the days following the incident, I listened to my white Catholic friends and family members talk about the Black Lives Matter movement. I read a statement released by Bishop Robert W. Muench of the Diocese of Baton Rouge that made no reference to the racial implications of violence against African-Americans. I spoke to a representative of the diocese's Office of Black Catholic Ministries who said that all we can do is "pray and let God bring us insight." I went to Mass on the Sunday after the killing of Mr. Sterling and listened to a homily on the parable of the good Samaritan that made no reference to the tragic events of the week.

All of this silence and inaction made me wonder what my white Catholic neighbors in Baton Rouge were thinking about their involvement in the racism of our church and our community. I was encouraged when my parish announced a special event, billed as a Prayer Service for Peace. On the night of July 12, our white senior pastor led about 200 people through an opening prayer and Scripture readings. When he got to the sermon, instead of offering his personal thoughts on racism and violence, he read a message written by our associate pastor, who was away on a teen service trip.

He knew racism was a sin. He knew he was racist. I think we all knew we were.

The associate pastor is the only African-American priest in the Diocese of Baton Rouge. He is in his late 20s. His father is black and a retired Baton Rouge police officer. His mother is white and a retired nurse. The senior pastor wept throughout most of the sermon. "It's interesting," the white priest read from the black priest's notes, "since I have become a priest, not much has changed…. When I wear clerics, people respect me. But when I wear [civilian] clothes...my experience growing up being judged for the color of my skin continues to this very day." The associate pastor explained to his white flock, "Some of you may have never experienced discrimination in this way, but this is normal for us [African-Americans], and this is not okay." He implored the congregation to pray the rosary and to "listen to God whom we cannot see," for only then "can we certainly begin to listen to our brothers and sisters who are different than us and whom we can see."

Then on July 17, a black man shot and killed one black and two white police officers in Baton Rouge. Their names were Montrell Jackson, Matthew Gerald and Brad Garafola. John Bel Edwards, the Catholic governor of Louisiana, asked Louisianans to pray for the officers and families involved in the shooting. Bishop Muench issued a call to prayer, fasting and action, "so that we may gain wisdom and courage to become personally and communally involved in building bridges across everything that divides us to become better brothers and sisters to each other." He encouraged Catholics to recite the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. "Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace," et cetera and so forth.

Call me a bad Catholic, but I don't expect much change to come from prayer and fasting, especially when there is such an aversion among many white Catholics to talk about race and to admit their racism. Growing up white and Catholic in Louisiana, I do not remember a time when I didn't hear people say the N-word. Children used it when parents and teachers weren't around. Teachers and parents used it when children weren't around. Grandparents used the word whenever they wanted. The only adults I addressed by their first names were my grandparents' maids. No Miss or Missus. Just Leona and Willie Mae. Kids played a game called "black baby," which involved throwing a ball or doll in the air and trying to catch it. I didn't interact with African-American Catholics because there were two Catholic churches in town. St. Joseph was the white church. Our Mother of Mercy was the black church. To this day, the Diocese of Lafayette has more racially segregated churches than any other diocese in the United States. I am told that my grandfather went to confession toward the end of his life and said, "I can't help it, Father. I hate N—s." He knew racism was a sin. He knew he was racist. I think we all knew we were.

Some white Catholics out there might be shocked by this kind of upbringing. But I suspect many can relate. In parts of Louisiana, this was and in some cases still is normal. I didn't learn about race in religion classes or during homilies. I wasn't provided a theological vocabulary that addressed racism from a Catholic perspective. The vagaries of caring for the poor, turning the other cheek, loving thy neighbor and being a channel of peace just didn't cut it. Race was not a culturally constructed category to be understood and appreciated. It was a dividing line that made white people superior and black people inferior. Racism was not a problem to be eradicated. It was a way of life, so pervasive as to be invisible.

History, like prayer, matters when addressing the deep roots of racism in the Catholic Church and in Catholic families. But let's be honest. Thinking about the past and kneeling in prayer can be a lot easier than living in the present and turning faith into action. I'll also admit that the last people I want to read this essay are my white Catholic friends and family members—people I love—because then we will have to admit to some terrible sins, sins that we were born and raised into, sins that we have kept alive in what we have done and what we have failed to do.

New Cardinal Rules

Pope Francis is expected to hold his third consistory before the end of the year and create at least 13 new cardinal electors—that is, cardinals under the age of 80 with the right to vote in a conclave—including at least one American. He is also likely to give the red hat to some over that age.

While the date has yet to be finalized, sources say it is likely to be before the Jubilee of Mercy ends on Nov. 20.

The pope has been working over the summer on the list of possible choices, according to Vatican sources, and could announce the names by mid-October.

By Nov. 28, the number of cardinal electors will have decreased to 107. And presuming that Francis will opt to abide by the maximum number of 120 established by Paul VI in 1975, he should be able to name at least 13 new electors.

At that date, Africa will have 12 of the 107 electors, Asia 13, Europe 51 (including 24 Italians), Central and South America 15, North America (Canada, Mexico, the United States) 13 and Oceania three.

This already represents a change from the 2013 conclave that elected Francis, in which Africa had 11 electors, Asia and Oceania 11, Europe 60 (including 28 Italians), Central and South America 13 and North America 20.

Pope Francis created 31 new electors in his first two consistories: 16 in 2014 and 15 the following year. Significantly, however, he did not give the red hat to any American because at the February 2015 consistory the United States still had 11 electors, far more than Brazil (four), Mexico (three) and the Philippines (two)—all of which have larger Catholic populations.

Since the 2015 consistory, however, the number of U.S. electors has decreased to nine, after cardinals Roger Mahony and William Levada turned 80. Given this and the fact that Francis was deeply impressed by the faith of American Catholics and by the warm welcome he received during his U.S. visit, Vatican sources expect him to give the red hat to at least one American this time around.

> Vatican sources expect a red hat for at least one American this time.

In choosing new cardinals, Francis has been guided by five criteria. The first is universality: He wants to make the college of cardinals, and especially the electors, as international as possible so as to reflect the different cultures and nationalities in the church. As a consequence of this desire, as of Feb. 15, 2015, the college of cardinals had members from 73 countries and all continents, including electors from 59 countries.

His second criterion gives priority attention to "the peripheries," in particular to situations of poverty, conflict, natural calamity and countries that have never had a cardinal. This is a hallmark of Francis' pontificate, reflected in his choice of cardinals from such places as Burkina Faso, Haiti, Myanmar, Mindanao in the Philippines and Tonga.

With his third criterion, Francis aims to contain the number of European cardinals. They counted for over 50 percent of the electors at the last three conclaves, even though less than a quarter of the world's Catholic population now lives on the old continent. And since more than half the European electors are Italian, Francis wants to reduce their number too.

A fourth and highly significant criterion is to abandon the longstanding tradition by which the holders of certain dioceses automatically get a red hat. This tradition was bound up with careerism, and Francis is allergic to that. He smashed the tradition not only in Italy, in relation to Turin and Venice, but in places like the Philippines and Haiti, giving the red hat to sees on the periphery.

His last criterion is intended to lower expectations in the Roman Curia by reserving the red hat for prefects of congregations and not giving it to presidents of pontifical councils.

It is reasonable to assume that Pope Francis will apply these five criteria when drawing up his new list. If so, then there are likely to be few Europeans and even fewer Italians on it, though the archbishops of Barcelona (Spain) and Mechelen-Brussels (Belgium) are expected to make it.

The archbishop of Bangui (Central African Republic) is considered a strong possibility, as are the archbishops of Jakarta (Indonesia), Havana (Cuba) and Chicago. But there are likely to be surprises too.

GERARD O'CONNELL

GERARD O'CONNELL *is* ***America****'s Vatican correspondent.* ***America****'s Vatican coverage is sponsored in part by the Jesuit communities of the United States. Twitter: @gerryorome.*

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Who Gets to Serve?

A short history of women deacons

PHYLLIS ZAGANO

The International Theological Commission approved a study on the diaconate during its meeting in Rome from Sept. 30 to Oct. 4, 2001. The question of women deacons has been before the commission for at least 20 years. The original study on women deacons, requested by Pope Paul VI, was suppressed. While that document remains unpublished, an article published in Orientalia Christiana Periodica in 1974 by then-commission member Cipriano Vagaggini concluded that the ordination of women deacons in the early church was sacramental. What the church had done in the past, he suggested, the church may do again. One commission member explained privately that the salient points in the ongoing conversation over the years, as the document grew from 18 to 70 pages, were: 1) What did women deacons do? 2) Were women deacons ever sacramentally ordained? 3) Does the ordained diaconate share in the sacrament of order? 4) Does the ordained diaconate share in the sacrament of order in such a way that it is part of the sacerdotal priesthood?

What Did Women Deacons Do?

While the work of women deacons—always rooted in the word, the liturgy and charity—differed regionally, the fact of women deacons is undeniable. The commission recognizes that St. Paul called Phoebe a deacon (not a deaconess) of the church at Cenechrae. But the commission ignores or relegates to footnotes significant epigraphical and literary evidence. There is a scattershot approach in the document to what is known about ordained women, and a general attitude that all persons called deacon are male, even though women deacons of the early church were called by their job title.

Over 40 years ago Cardinal Jean Daniélou, a French Jesuit, noted four ministerial areas of women deacons: 1) evangelization, catechesis and spiritual direction, 2) liturgical roles equivalent to porter, acolyte, lector and deacon, 3) care of the sick, including anointing and 4) liturgical prayer. Daniélou actually argued that women sacramentally anointed the sick, citing Epiphanius: the woman deacon is delegated by the priest to perform his ministry for him. This raises a deeper question and underlies the quandary imbedded in the document: can women be given the power of holy orders?

Were Women Deacons Ever Sacramentally Ordained?

As time and practice accrued, women were ordained to the diaconate in rituals identical to those used to ordain men to the diaconate. The ordination ritual of the Apostolic Constitutions for women deacons, codified by the Councils of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (421) begins: "O bishop, you shall lay hands on her in the presence of the presbytery. Perhaps the oldest known complete rite of ordination for women deacons, a mid-eighth century Byzantine manuscript known as Barbarini 336, requires that women be ordained by the bishop within the sanctuary, the proximity to the altar indicating the fact of a true ordination.

[There was a] famous debate about women deacons of the 1970's and early 1980's that included [Cipriano] Vagaggini, Roger Gryson and Aimé Georges Martimort. Gryson carried out a definitive exploration of texts and concluded that women were sacramentally ordained. Martimort argued against that interpretation. It is telling how carefully the Commission follows Martimort, as well as more recent writings by a subcommittee member, Gerhard Müller.

Share in the Sacrament of Order?

The study notes that the documents of the Second Vatican Council presuppose the sacramentality of both modes of the diaconate (permanent and transitional). It then devotes considerable space to distinguishing between how the priest acts *in persona Christi capitis* (in the person of Christ, head [of the church]) and a new term this document uses to describe how the deacon acts, *in persona Christi servi* (in the person of Christ servant). If *in persona Christi capitis* cannot be applied to a woman, then *in persona Christi* with any extension cannot be applied to a

PHYLLIS ZAGANO *is the author of* Women Deacons? Essays with Answers *and* Holy Saturday: An Argument for the Restoration of the Female Diaconate in the Catholic Church. *A longer version of this essay appeared in the Feb. 17, 2003, issue of* ***America*** *under the title "Catholic Women Deacons."*

woman, argues the document.

The commission's somewhat tortured logic in this respect—splitting and then rejoining the concept of Christ-head and Christ-servant—does not contribute to an understanding of the diaconate as a separate and permanent vocation and part of the sacrament of order. Neither does the new term *in persona Christi servi* reflect traditional magisterial teaching, which presents the deacon as the representative of the church.

Part of the Sacerdotal Priesthood?

The unstated fear evident in the document is the specter of women priests: If you can ordain a woman a deacon, you can ordain a woman a priest. The commission argues that if the diaconate is part of the sacerdotal priesthood, women are excluded from the diaconate. But such an argument could backfire. There is overwhelming historical evidence that women were ordained deacons by bishops intending to perform a sacrament. If women were sacramentally ordained deacons and the diaconate shares in the sacerdotal priesthood (as the commission argues), then women have already shared in the sacerdotal priesthood. I am not arguing for women priests, only pointing out that the argument seems to do so.

As for the diaconate, the universally accepted theology of the diaconate shows the deacon acting in the name of Christ in his church, as opposed to in the person of Christ, head of the church. The document, however, does all it can to conjoin the three grades of order. The clear attempt to define the sacrament of order narrowly, at any level, as part of the (male) priesthood of Christ to which women need not apply, makes church teachings about the equality of all persons less credible. Aside from the insinuation that women cannot represent Christ, even as servant (cannot act *in persona Christi servi*) the commission ignores the essential weaknesses of *in persona Christi* theology. In fact, the humanity of Christ overcomes the limitations of gender, and no church document argues an ontological distinction among humans except documents that address the question of ordination. This view is not likely to dampen growing worldwide enthusiasm for women deacons.

What Now?

The genuine question, Why not? has remained constant since Vatican II. [It] remains the mantra as more evidence of an unbroken tradition of ordaining women deacons surfaces in the churches of the East, whose apostolic succession and orders are noted in Vatican II's "Decree on Ecumenism" (1964). Sister Hripsime, a woman deacon who was ordained by the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople and assisted in liturgies in the United States many years ago, is alive today. Further, the Greek Orthodox Church ordained monastic women deacons through the 1950's and Bartholomew, ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, in 1996 said it is always possible to return to this ancient tradition of the church.

Both here and abroad the call for women deacons continues to intensify.

I believe that the arguments set forth in my book *Holy Saturday* are still valid. Men and women are ontologically equal. The church has given reasons why women, although ontologically equal to men, may not be ordained to the priesthood, but the judgment that women cannot be ordained priests does not apply to the question of whether women can be ordained deacons. Women are now called and have been called in the past to the diaconate. There are stronger arguments from Scripture, history, tradition and theology that women may be ordained deacons than that women may not be ordained deacons. Women have continually served the church in diaconal ministry, whether ordained to such service or not. The ordained ministry of service by women is necessary to the church—that is, to both the people of God and the hierarchy. As a result, the ordination of women to the diaconate is possible.

Fifteen years ago in New York City, I asked Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger the same question: Will the church return to the tradition of ordaining women deacons? He responded that it was under study. For how long?

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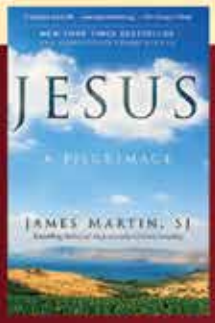

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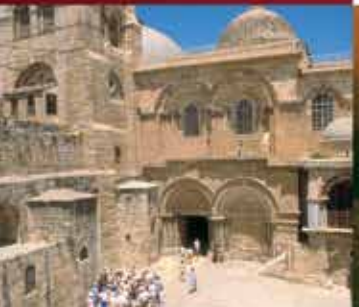

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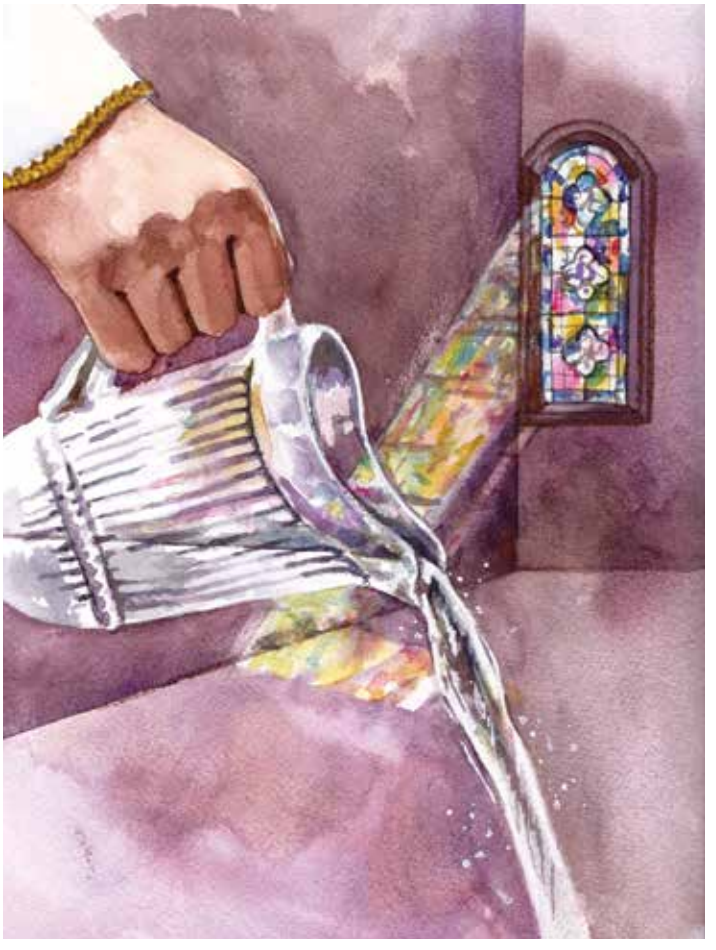
Godparents to Godfriends

A new take on an ancient role

BY KAYA OAKES



My godfather grew up with my father in Oakland, Calif., a black man and a white man coming of age together in the 1940s and '50s, when that might have been unusual in other parts of the country. It seemed normal enough in the Bay Area. They had stayed in touch as my parents raised us, worked and worked some more.

My godfather spent his career in the United Nations overseeing refugee evacuations around the world. He married and had two daughters, and in his retirement settled into Murray Hill in Manhattan, just a few blocks from the United Nations.

As a child I was awed by his intellectual glamour. He wore dashikis and talked in a beautifully deep voice with an accent landing somewhere between Europe, the United States and the Middle East. He spoke and wrote fluently in many languages. He was, for lack of a better term, godlike.

I am still in touch with him. He writes, he calls, he travels abroad and zips around Manhattan on buses and subways. When I make it to town he takes me to his regular spot, a tiny French restaurant on the Lower East Side where they call him "Bob." I call him Parrain, a nickname left over from my years of French studies, one of the many languages he speaks.

He was raised Catholic, and he's fascinated by the good and bad machinations of the Vatican, the backstage stories of cardinals, bishops and popes, but I honestly don't know if he attends church. He reveres the French writer Montaigne, a Renaissance Catholic who invented the personal essay but had a complex relationship with God. My godfather is, perhaps, a kind of Catholic humanist, deeply concerned with the suffering in the world and devoted to lessening it. He was drawn to the church for its history and traditions, but open-eyed about its shortcomings. My father was much the same in his life of faith. With those two as my primary spiritual guides, it is no wonder the most comfortable place I occupy in Catholicism is on its margins, oftentimes more of an observer than a participant. I move restlessly from parish to parish, always finding fault with one thing or another; I mentally tune out during shallow homilies and have been known to walk out on truly bad ones, and have to resist the urge to start mumbling footnotes to the readings.

So it is perhaps unsurprising that I did not become a godparent myself until this Easter, at the age of 45. My friends with children are, for the most part, neither Catholic nor Christian. The most recent baby-related event I attended was a ritual for the child of two friends, one of whom is a convert to Hinduism, the other an atheist with Jewish roots. The child was blessed, but not in Christian language or terms.

ART: ANN KISSANE ENGELHART

KAYA OAKES, *who teaches writing at the University of California, is author of* The Nones Are Alright: A New Generation of Believers, Seekers, and Those in Between.

In a side room of their apartment, the family dog pacing outside in the living room, grandparents, aunts and friends sat in a circle on the floor, held up the child and passed him around. He was raised up in this sense by a community, but not one bound by creeds or customs. A friend of the mother did recite a Hindu blessing from memory, but the father talked about the mythologies of comic books. And that, in many ways, is the ritual of my generation: a mishmash of traditions, a D.I.Y. version of faith.

On the night of the Easter Vigil, however, rituals and traditions that go back thousands of years swept over me and my new godchild as she stepped into the baptismal font. My goddaughter is only a few years younger than me, a mother of two teenagers, a woman with a career and friends and rituals of her own. Like many adult converts of our generation, her entry into Catholicism required years of discerning, exploring, questioning, rationalizing the irrational and committing to the inexplicable. I was there for part of that journey, and eventually we became good friends.

What I do not feel like is her mother. Not only would this be biologically implausible, but my role as her spiritual guide will always be one of mutual support rather than parental guidance or discipline. The tradition of godparents stretches back to the earliest days of the church, when parents themselves filled this role. As the church evolved, so did the role of the godparent. A Mexican-American friend told me that her child's godparent plays both a spiritual and pragmatic supporting role: guiding her through catechesis, chipping in to pay for school, lending a hand with child care. But most people I asked about being godparents had casual roles in the lives of their godchildren: birthday cards, occasional meals, Facebook greetings. For the most part they felt slightly guilty about that, as if they had somehow failed.

When my friend started attending activities that were part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and I offered to be her sponsor, the fact that she wasn't baptized meant I was also going to be her godparent. But I was given no sheet of responsibilities, no list to tick off. In Spanish, the term for godparent is *padrino* or *madrina*—literally, a co-parent. In many parts of the world, particularly outside of the West, there are closer bonds between godparents, parents and godchildren. The role of *padrinos* and *madrinas* in the lives of godchildren can make perfect sense in non-Western culture. Here in the United States, in our complex, multicultural church, the "rules" for godparents are, at best, unclear. We are technically spiritual parents who guide godchildren and are responsible for their care should something happen to their parents. What is unclear is how that role works when your godchild is a fully formed adult.

What we can be, instead, are companions. I often go to Mass with my goddaughter. During her formation program, I sat next to her in a tiny, airless, overheated room—months and months on metal folding chairs. We go out for meals, email, text, do the social media thing. I warned her I was probably a bad choice for a godparent: not very maternal, a habit of praying for 30 seconds before boredom or ennui sets in, impious and skeptical. On her behalf I was skeptical about the church's ability, with its resources strained to the limit, to give her something substantial, to keep her engaged. She said all of that was fine. We became friends because of a mutual interest in God. We are Godfriends.

I wonder if my parents looked at my godfather all those years ago and thought, "He's an intellectual, he's critical, he lives abroad and he has doubts about religion." Somehow they saw God in that complexity, and a suitability to be a spiritual father for their daughter.

Three pitchers of shockingly cold water were poured over my friend's head at the Easter Vigil while she stood shivering in a stone pool. God found her in that moment, and I stood by with a towel and her glasses in my hand. I understood then that godparents don't have to be perfect; we don't even have to be guides. We just have to be present when it matters most. Walking in companionship with someone on a quest very few adults undertake is humbling simply because we become witnesses to a person taking a massive risk: the risk of opening herself up to faith.

That my goddaughter was willing to stand soaking wet, shivering and surrounded by strangers, meant that she was also willing to be found by God. As I stood with her, any skepticism and torpor I felt about religion became irrelevant for that moment. Standing with her meant that in that moment God also found me.

PHOTO: RON AMSTUTZ

ART | LEO J. O'DONOVAN

THE EGGBEATER IDEA

The bracing, confident art of Stuart Davis

It all began with an eggbeater. When Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney in 1927 gave the young American artist Stuart Davis a stipend so that he could concentrate entirely on his art, he "nailed an electric fan, a rubber glove and an eggbeater to a table," he later wrote, "and used them as my exclusive subject matter for a year." The resultant four paintings hang mesmerizingly now on a single wall in a stirring exhibition of some 100 works by the artist, "Stuart Davis: In Full Swing," at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Few visitors who see the eggbeater series for the first time could imagine what inspired these fantasies of form. But their startling, vigorous originality, a re-interpretation of French Cubism in an American key, is revelatory still. "Everything I have done since," the artist later said, "has been based on that eggbeater idea."

Davis was born in Philadelphia, Pa., on Dec. 7, 1892, to Helen Stuart Foulke Davis, a sculptor, and Edward Wyatt Davis, the art editor of the Philadelphia Press and a supporter of the first generation of Ashcan School artists. When Edward Davis was named art editor for the Newark Evening News, the family moved to East Orange, N.J., where young Stuart left high school at 16, with his parents' approval, to study at Robert Henri's Greenwich Village school. His fellow students there included George Bellows, Edward Hopper and Rockwell Kent, whose shared concerns were working people and tough urban life. After three years as a star pupil under Henri, Davis left to work as an illustrator for The Masses, a radical monthly.

The International Exhibition of Modern Art of 1913—the famed Armory Show—astonished and excited Davis as much as anyone. The nondescriptive color and radical freedom of form in Gauguin, van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso and Braque stood out among the almost 1,600 paintings. Young Davis had already become an ardent devotee of jazz and would for the next 50 years be equally committed to Modernism. For several years, though, he continued to produce mostly street scenes in the Ashcan style. That decade is not represented at the Whitney, whose exhibition picks up instead with breakthrough, smaller works that reinterpret the Cubism of Picasso, Braque and Gris with ordinary, American subject matter—tins of tobacco, light bulbs and radio tubes, even mouthwash painted almost with reverence. In 1928, after Mrs. Whitney had bought several of his paintings, Davis and his girlfriend, Bessie Chosak, left New York for 13 months in Paris, where he gained new confidence in his own unique vision. Returning to an America that he found more modern and technological than ever, he celebrated the grit of downtown Manhattan and, in summertime, the jumble of the coast at Gloucester, Mass., with flattened pictorial space filled with intensely colored forms that jostled jubilantly against each other.

Never adept at finance, Davis struggled during the Depression and devoted most of his time to rep-

Above: Detail of the installation of "Stuart Davis: In Full Swing" at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York: "Egg Beater No.3," 1928; "Egg Beater No. 4," 1928; and "Egg Beater No. 2," 1928. Left: "Percolator," 1927.

resenting artists' rights and social causes. He was active in the Unemployed Artists Group, became vice president of the Artists Union, editor of the leftist Art Front and vice president and then president of the American Artists' Congress. His paintings in the early 1930s were enlivened with quickly recognizable images of street signs, garage pumps, dock scenes and the Third Avenue El. But the major achievement of the decade was a series of murals, several commissioned by the W.P.A. Federal Art Project. In 1932 he did one for the men's lounge at Radio City Music Hall (dubbed, to his displeasure, "Men Without Women") and that same year "New York Mural," featuring a soaring Empire State Building, a tiger's head standing for Tammany Hall and Al Smith's derby hat, the symbol of Smith's 1928 presidential campaign. Another enormous mural, "The History of Communication," commissioned for the New York World's Fair in 1939, was unfortunately destroyed when the fair was dismantled. But "Swing Landscape" (1938), commissioned for a low-income housing project in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, though never installed, is not only Davis's major mural but one of the greatest of American paintings. Based on sketches of the Gloucester waterfront, more than 14 feet wide and over seven feet high, it transforms the gear of the sea into crisp, dynamically interlocking forms in brilliant colors to create a symphony of jazzy abstraction. In New York again from its home at Indiana University since 1942, "Swing Landscape" will be bringing many visitors back to the Whitney for repeat visits. The painting's intense interplay of color-space logic becomes even denser in work from the early 1940s, when Davis also began to base new paintings on earlier efforts. Smaller but explosive canvases like "Rockport from Rockport," "Arboretum by Flashbulb" and "Ultra-Marine" led to Davis's "Pad series," a family of five paintings that played with the twofold sense of an artist's sketch pad and his home and culminated in the Brooklyn Museum's fabled "The Mellow Pad," on which he worked obsessively from 1945 to 1951. A new grandeur and simplicity emerged in Davis's production of the early 1950s. In "Little Giant Still Life" he took a matchbook cover advertising Champion spark plugs and made that word itself the focus for a series of paintings. Earlier pieces served as inspiration for some of his most famous works: "Owh! In San Pao," a soaring constellation of forms floating in a golden sky that was too late to be included in the 1951 Bienal de São Paulo; "Rapt at Rappaport's," a celebration in "color space" of his love of jazz and a boyhood toy store; and "Colonial Cubism" (1954), whose jubilant precision (and perfect title) you will never forget. Honors multiplied for the artist, and his inventive power continued through the last decade of his life. The "large simplicity" of his forms from the early 1950s continued, but now he regularly reduced his palette. Line became increasingly important. And wonderful paintings resulted, such as "Ready-to-Wear," from a family of work in 1955, and "The Paris Bit" (1959), a late evocation of the city that had long before won his heart.

"New York Mural," 1932

When Davis died of a stroke in New York City on June 24, 1964, the artist and critic Brian O'Doherty wrote in The New York Times that "he was one of the limited company of major painters America has produced.... He was never out of date." Indeed, the present show—which runs through September 25 at the Whitney and then travels to Washington, the de Young in San Francisco and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Ark.—is a bracing, confident, Whitman-esque testament to his continued relevance.

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

MY UNHAPPY FACEBOOK

Facebook is a great virtual space where friends and families meet and trade photos and videos, share fond memories, tell stories about their last vacation and launch interminable political squabbles that end with brutal rounds of "unfriending." This exceptionally nutty political year seems to have exacerbated all the worst aspects of the digital forum's variant of "dialogue."

In the early summer Sandersnistas and Hillaryists crowded my Facebook page with digital scolding that managed to aggravate just about everybody. That finger-pointing and wagging has been Trumped since the end of the Democratic convention by the terminal conflict between Mrs. Clinton and the Donald's dead-ender apologists.

Social media has been described as a political "game changer" in the 2016 election cycle, alleged to introduce innovative iSpaces for candidates and potential voters to interact. Indeed, there is some evidence of a positive impact on voting this cycle. The Journal of Communication reports that when people used Facebook to remind friends about voter registration deadlines, the resulting turnout increased between 15 percent and 24 percent. According to Reuters, a Facebook reminder contributed to a surge of nearly 650,000 new voter registrations in California alone.

Despite the innovative technology, a lot of what I see in the digital town square is the same political vitriol and lunacy we've experienced in the past, now merely accelerated to light speed. As the election grinds on (good grief, for three more months?!) the ad hominem attacks and condescension-drenched commentary continue apace on the Facebook feeds of millions of Americans who had appeared more or less sane before this presidential race began. Where are those adorable and emotionally soothing piano-playing kittens of yesterweek, my fellow Americans? Have we forgotten how cute puppies jumping on babies are?

The thousands of political "discussions" hosted on Facebook feeds have been great for the company's numbers, and Facebook has found an exceptionally lucrative new revenue stream in political ad sales and services. Facebook reports that in July 42 million U.S. users generated 406 million "likes, posts, comments and shares" related to Donald Trump, and 33 million fellow U.S. Facebookers generated 313 million of the same for Hillary Clinton.

How many already suffer from dramatic-posts stress disorder?

Still, I find myself wondering if all the vilification and unpleasantness gathering on its pages will ultimately work against the social media giant's long-term popularity. Facebook never really captured the under-30 crowd—the young folk prefer the textual disappearing act of Snapchat or Instagram's enthusiasm for duck lips—and all the political infighting could exhaust its aged, if coveted demographic. How many are already suffering from dramatic-posts stress disorder after one too many exchanges with former friends and newly estranged relatives?

Why do we keep at it? A lot of us are simply addicted to Facebook. Seriously. Four out of five neuroscientists will tell you that social media addiction is an actual thing that I did not just make up for this column. The "rightness rush" you experience just after that perfect rebuttal is not imaginary. Facebook lights up the same neuroreceptors in your brain that are energized by old-school dopamine triggers like nicotine or opium. Will a Joe the Camel-style scandal or a social media 12-step program threaten Facebook's future?

Beyond friendship-scorching debate this year, Facebook has also become the internet's latest conspiracy warehouse. Cyberspace, of course, has long been a hatchery for America's paranoid stylists, a Bughouse Square for the outing of "false flag" operations like the Boston Marathon bombing and just about any mass shooting event. But fact-challenged conspiracy-mongering has reached new heights on Facebook as the candidates head into the final turn.

One acquaintance of an acquaintance found her way to the top of my feed recently with a post about a series of mysterious deaths that are, with varying degrees of difficulty, being associated with Hillary and the D.N.C. "You can't make this stuff up," she finally wrote in amazement at the vast, unprovable and completely nonsensical murder conspiracy she was propagating.

"Yes, you can," I wanted to counterpost. "You can indeed make this stuff up; you just did!"

You may notice that I wrote "wanted to counterpost." I did not, in fact, post that witty retort to her feed.

I've already got 17 other timeline arguments with near-strangers to feed and care for. A fella has to know his limits.

KEVIN CLARKE *is chief correspondent and senior editor of* ***America****.*

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SAVED BY A BOOK

LIT UP

One Reporter. Three Schools. Twenty-four Books That Can Change Lives.

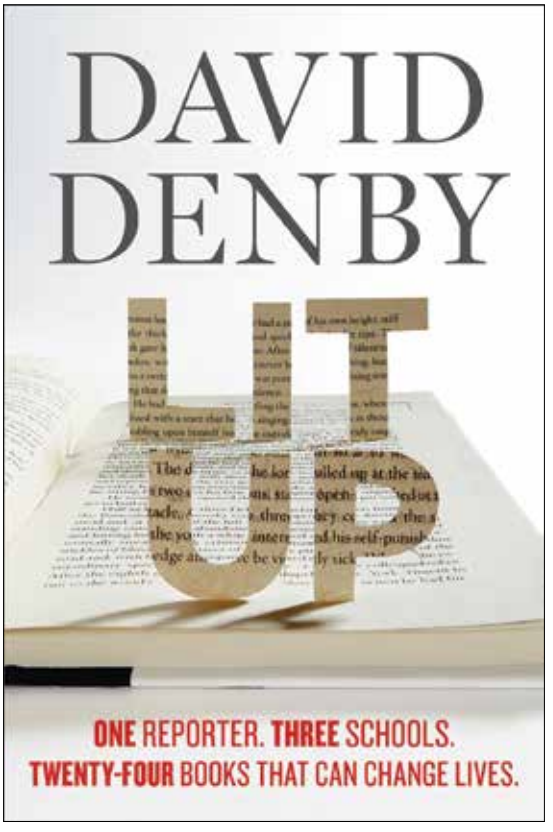
By David Denby
Henry Holt. 287p $30

Good books, the story goes, started Ignatius on the path to sainthood. During his convalescence from battle wounds, he asked for tales of chivalry but instead received the lives of Christ and the saints. Reading them awakened him to the spiritual battle, and he emerged from his recovery as the man who would go on to change the course of the church and the world.

As an English teacher, I would like to believe that there is an Ignatius in each of my high school students, who needs only to read the right book to be transformed. First, though, I must convince them to open one. Can a generation so habituated to manipulating screens be made to appreciate something like a novel, whose wood pulp and fixed text stand for everything that a smartphone is not? Creating readers is a difficult task, to be sure, but an essential one; for as long as it insists on reading good books, an English class remains the front line of our contemporary spiritual crisis.

The New Yorker critic David Denby has similar inklings, and in his recent book *Lit Up* he attempts to evaluate the state of high-school readers. This marks familiar territory for Denby: 20 years ago, in his best-selling *Great Books*, he sat in on classes at Columbia University, his alma mater, to better understand the debates raging over the Western canon. Now the problems plaguing classes are more fundamental, for how can a discussion of the great books happen if students have not encountered them beyond their online summaries on Sparknotes? Appropriately, in *Lit Up* Denby goes back to high school to see how, if at all, today's screen-loving teenagers can be made to read.

He sits in on a sophomore English class at Beacon Academy, a public school in Manhattan for high-achievers. Immediately he braces for the worst. The class has 32 students, three of whom Denby considers to be "real readers" at the outset of the year, and the reading list, which includes Faulkner, Plath, Vonnegut, Sartre and Beckett, would be daunting for any 15-year-old. Led by their dynamic teacher, Sean Leon, the class comes to life. Denby smiles at their attempts at writing confessional poetry, admires their candor in discussing, with Leon, the sudden death of another Beacon teacher and, above all, marvels at their ability to connect their own lives with their reading. The year culminates in an exercise in which students take turns inhabiting the role of Dostoevsky's contradictory "Underground Man," fielding questions about their motives and values from the rest of the class. The mock interrogations grow into personal challenges, and suddenly Denby finds himself in a place where literature has come to life. Books, against all odds, have grabbed hold of the class and started to change how they understand themselves. They have become readers.



Leon, a dynamic instructor with a sharp mind and an inexhaustible reserve of energy, emerges as the hero of *Lit Up*. Though one may argue with his reading list (heavy on existentialism, no Shakespeare, only one female writer), he clearly understands that literature makes spiritual demands of readers. Cognizant of the hazards of the digital world, Leon challenges his students to fast from screens for several days, urging them to resist the media-fueled temptation of "the unlived life" and instead, through the act of reading, to learn to inhabit the present moment. In Leon's class, Denby marvels, "high school reading had a new mission: Be there."

Openness to being transformed by what we read is a religious disposition, as the case of Ignatius makes clear. Consider, too, that of Augustine, who, when he heard children singing "pick it up and read it," opened his Bible to Paul's Letter to the Romans and read, "Let us behave decently, as in the daytime…." Suddenly the passions that had buffeted his former self seemed so many frivolous distractions. The transformations that happen in sophomore English

at Beacon are similar. Leon may be a lapsed Catholic teaching in a public school, but, as Denby puts it, "he ministered to [his students'] souls." In calling his class to put down their screens and be fully present to their literature and to each other, he teaches them to be something like saints in our age.

Moved by what Leon has accomplished with his class, Denby concludes that "fifteen year-olds will read seriously when inspired by charismatic teachers alert to what moves adolescents." This is true enough, and *Lit Up*, in portraying one such charismatic individual, will rightfully occupy the bedside tables of so many tired English teachers as fodder for the journey.

Unfortunately, Denby does not dig deeper into the circumstances that allow a teacher like Leon to work his magic. Part of the blame falls on the book's forays into two other schools, which are too brief to offer the kind of insight that the longitudinal study in Leon's class does. Simply put, his transformative class is made possible by Beacon's vision. The school has taken deliberate steps to extricate itself from the demands of our country's educational technocracy, in which the quantifiable is king and an English class is seen as a place for reading informational texts rather than one where great literature can transform souls. The school's performance-based assessments (like portfolios, written work and projects) allow it to withdraw from most of the State of New York's testing requirements, and its principal, Ruth Lacey, the unsung hero of the book, insists on her teachers' freedom to structure their own curricula. In other words, Beacon is purposely designed to be a place where "intellectually ambitious teachers" like Leon can practice their craft.

Denby acknowledges that Beacon and Leon are special but does not press the hard questions upon our educational system, instead content to offer a paean to miracle-working teachers like Leon. Even so, *Lit Up* is a must-read for all educators, for it does the great service of reminding us that the work of an English teacher, whether in a religious or secular school, is nothing if not a spiritual vocation.

MIKE ST. THOMAS *teaches English at a Catholic high school in Rhode Island, where he lives with his wife and daughters. He writes about literature and Catholic education at thecatholiclitclassroom.blogspot.com.*

RECOVERY

On the first day, I didn't know
it was the first day.
The second, third and fourth passed.
And on the eighth day something
remarkable, but I didn't tell anyone.
Remarkable, and I didn't know.
I noted some markers like weekends
and seasons, anonymous months.
No one else attended every day of
the long long time but some noticed
the unclenching. Evening and morning
came, the 90th day. Some days later,
in an afternoon walk, beauty opened
and I inhaled. Religion preceded
and followed and did no harm,
but the weight of a carapace and
a quietly sober dream (Cain's wandering?)
offered commentary on death.
So dying is essentially part of it,
not killing. And dying essentially
the most beautiful song.
After ten thousand days,
I knew the counting would never end,
but this interest in ordinary time sustains
itself in a still thirsty soul.

JOHN McANDREW

JOHN McANDREW, *former director of spiritual care at the Betty Ford Center, is a counselor and retreat facilitator. He currently resides in Palm Springs, Calif., and offers spiritual care for hospice patients.*

JEFFREY VON ARX

18TH-CENTURY 'PROGRESSIVES'

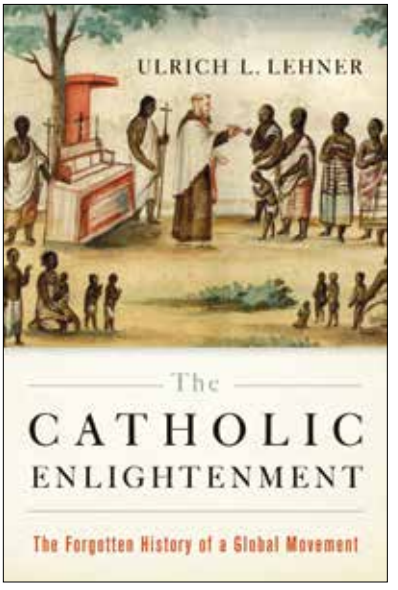
THE CATHOLIC ENLIGHTENMENT

The Forgotten History of a Global Movement

By Ulrich L. Lehner
Oxford University Press. 272p $29.95

Most people would think that the idea of a Catholic Enlightenment was a contradiction in terms. Was not the Enlightenment essentially anti-religious and specifically anti-Catholic? Did not the Catholic Church prove itself to be the bitterest enemy and strongest opponent of Enlightenment ideas and values in politics, philosophy and culture, culminating in denunciations of all that the Enlightenment stood for in documents like the "Syllabus of Errors" (1864)?

Viewing one historical period through the lens of another, however, inevitably distorts and misrepresents, and viewing the Catholic Church of the 18th century through the lens of 19th-century ultramontanism and the war between science and religion leads to false assumptions like the ones above. The Catholic Church of the 18th century was as much embedded in its culture as the church is in any age, and that culture certainly reflected a growing respect for the power of reason, especially in the sciences. Most Catholic intellectuals shared in that respect, to one degree or another, and the spectrum of Enlightenment thinking or sensibility extended, yes, from radical atheists to believing, practicing and devout Catholics. How could it be otherwise? In the 18th century, the church still controlled, in one way or another, most of the educational institutions in Catholic countries, many of the organs of scholarly communication, and Catholic priests, mostly from the orders (and especially from the Jesuits) were among the leading scholars, teachers and scientists of the day. Catholic intellectuals were as much immersed in the debates and discussions that we think of as the Enlightenment "project," if you will, as Protestants, deists and newly secularized Jews like Baruch Spinoza. Of course, Catholic enlighteners believed in the ultimate compatibility of faith and reason, which not all other Enlightenment figures did, but they were no less believers in reason for thinking this.



Ulrich Lehner's excellent book unpacks the notion of the Catholic Enlightenment, and provides us, as he says in the subtitle, with a "forgotten history." He does this in a series of essays on various aspects of Catholic involvement in Enlightenment themes and causes. There are fascinating chapters on Catholic women and the Enlightenment, slavery in Catholic countries, "Devils, Demons and the Divine in the Catholic Enlightenment" on the demise in the belief in witchcraft and diabolical possession in Catholic culture.

Lehner does not restrict himself to Europe: there is a chapter on "Catholic Enlightenment in the Americas, China and India." In all these areas and others, like a growing Catholic acceptance of religious toleration, Lehner reveals common cause and compatibility between Catholic enlighteners and Enlightenment figures of different and no religious commitment. More than that, in some areas, like defending the rights of women (for example, not be be forced into marriages against their wills), or in humane treatment of slaves (this based in part on the willingness of Catholic priests to receive slaves into the church) or in the defense of indigenous peoples (cf. the Jesuit reductions), Catholics were ahead of "mainstream" Enlightenment figures who were often influenced by their ties with enlightened despots or the colonialist aggrandizing agendas of absolutist states.

Part of the agenda of Catholic enlighteners had to do with church reform, and here Lehner points out an important continuity between the agendas of reform Catholicism going back to the Council of Trent and that of the Catholic enlighteners. Catholic enlighteners continued to look for reform in areas of priestly formation, catechesis, worship and popular devotions, in eliminating superstition and purifying both conduct and spirituality. In this, they often made common cause with reform Catholic monarchs, like the Holy Roman Emperor, Joseph II, often over the objections of the papacy, to correct abuses in dioceses and religious houses, sometimes suppressing them with no reference to the pope. This they were able to do in a much more decentralized and local church, where the authority of the pope was circumscribed by longstanding concessions given to monarchs and reinforced by ecclesiologies like Gallicanism and Febronianism which maintained the essential autonomy of national churches. These customs and theories saw the pope as little more than a figurehead and symbol, without

jurisdictional power in the church, and certainly most Enlightenment Catholics would have agreed that such a decentralized church, with local control, tending even toward the election of bishops, was more in keeping with enlightened ways of doing things.

What happened to this enlightened church and these Enlightenment Catholics that their history is now forgotten? In a word, the French Revolution and the reaction that followed it. With the promulgation of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in 1790 the French Church split, between backers of the Civil Constitution, which severed all ties with Rome and set up the independent Constitutional Church, and those who would not take the oath to the new church. In the former group were most of the Enlightenment Catholics. The latter group effectively went underground and were persecuted by the Revolution, many losing their lives in the September (1792) Massacres or on the guillotine. As the Revolution entered its most radical phase, abolished Christianity and set up the cult of the Supreme Being, even many of the Constitutional clergy lost their lives in the Terror. It was one of the most traumatic moments in the church's history.

Lehner notes the great irony that it was Napoleon, of all people, who put the final nail in the coffin of enlightened Catholicism, and ushered in the era of the ultramontane church. Realizing that de-Christianization had been a failure, and that most French people retained a loyalty to the Catholic Church, he invited the pope, Pius VII, to remove all of the bishops, both of the *ancien regime* and of the Constitutional Church, and to reestablish the French Church by papal fiat. This act vindicated the long held claims of the papacy to universal and immediate jurisdiction in the church, claims which the papacy had never before been in a position to exercise. Napoleon and the pope had a subsequent falling out, and Napoleon imprisoned him. But with the defeat of the Empire and the Restoration, the pope emerged with even greater prestige. In the reaction that followed the Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, enlightenment Catholics were vilified as fellow travelers and collaborators with the Revolution, and most of their ideas consigned to oblivion. With the

triumph of ultramontanism in the church, it took a century and a half for the ideas of enlightenment Catholicism to get a hearing in the church again at the time of Vatican II, but by then, most people did not realize where these ideas had come from!

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TIMOTHY O'BRIEN

FRIEND OF FRANCIS

THE ENTHUSIAST
The Untold Story of Elias of Cortona

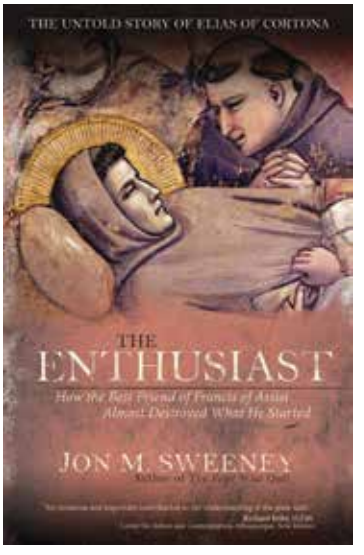
By Jon M. Sweeney
Ave Maria Press. 298p $18.95

Few saints have so firmly captured the collective Christian imagination and had such enduring impact as Francis of Assisi. The current pope not only adopted the mystic and reformer's name; he has also drawn theological and pastoral orientation from Francis' love of creation and of evangelical poverty. The saint's charism still animates numerous religious orders that bear his name. He is honored (if that is the word) in countless garden statues, to say nothing of the annual blessing of domestic pets on his feast day, Oct. 4.

With all respect to these most blessed animals, it is St. Francis who has been domesticated. *The Enthusiast,* Jon M. Sweeney's latest book, provides ample support for this conclusion. The medieval penitent who renounced wealth to embrace radical Gospel simplicity has morphed into a jovial, finch-toting hippie. Sweeney's book narrates the intersection of Francis' life with that of Elias of Cortona (also called Elias of Assisi), the man arguably responsible for both Francis' enduring renown and his domestication.

For the historically minded, the fascination that surrounds Francis can easily yield to frustration. He captivates even as the story of his life is a complicated mixture of fact, myth and hagiography. What is true of Francis is doubly, perhaps triply, true of Elias. His identity and story have been obscured by gaps and silences in the historical record—and by the (typically unflattering) portraits painted of him by others.

Few have heard of Elias, but all Francis devotees owe him a debt. It was Elias who first reported the saint's stigmata, the wounds of Christ he bore in his flesh. Moreover, as Sweeney notes, Elias was instrumental in helping Francis reach the status of Christianity's most beloved saint. The Basilica di San Francesco in Assisi was first constructed under his leadership, intended to draw pilgrims and swell his cult. Elias was determined that a "greater than Gothic" church should memorialize the humble Poverello.



Elias's legacy is unquestionably controversial. He twice served as leader of the Franciscan movement as Francis' "vicar general" (1221-27) and later as the order's second "minister general" (1232-39) following the founder's death. Particularly during this second period, his leadership veered toward the tyrannical. The grandeur of the way he commemorated Francis and rumors of a lavish life among popes and prelates led to charges that he compromised the order's strict observance of poverty, the cornerstone of the Franciscan charism. Deposed as minister general by his (former) friend Gregory IX, Elias allied against the pope with Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor. Though reconciled with the church before his death, Elias remained estranged from—and often vilified by—the order he helped build.

These details are relatively well attested in Franciscan sources and scholarship. The subtitle of Sweeney's new book, "The Untold Story of Elias of Cortona," is thus alluring. Is there more to know about this important figure?

Alas, the story has remained untold because we know so little about the details of his life. This makes Elias a difficult subject for a biography, and Sweeney acknowledges as much. Although he is the enthusiast of the book's title, at various points in the text Elias recedes from view almost entirely. In the end, this is more properly a biography of Francis that tries to involve Elias as often as possible.

What new material Sweeney relates about Elias depends mostly on the author's own imagination. He is forthright that the book is "imagining a portrait of one of Francis's closest friends…." Sweeney has "invented dialogue" between characters "to tell this true story." Doing this requires ventriloquizing a mute historical record. Still, Sweeney skillfully weaves together his own historical research with an imaginative rendering of Francis and Elias. The problem for readers, especially for those not intimately acquainted with Franciscan sources, is in marking the boundary between history and speculation (however plausible).

At the risk of interpreting a Franciscan work through an Ignatian

lens, Sweeney is engaged in something like imaginative contemplation of the overlapping lives of Francis and Elias. This method enables Sweeney to "tell this story as one who witnessed it and has just come running back from it" and results in a suggestive and thought-provoking book.

This new volume accomplishes a rare feat. It is cautious even as it is bold and daring. Sweeney is a student of the appropriate historical sources and of the scholarship surrounding them and has an obvious gift for making these accessible to nonspecialists. And, for all his knowledge of the standard narratives about Francis and Elias, Sweeney resists being confined by them.

Nowhere is this clearer than in his explanation of why Francis named Elias vicar in 1221. Others explain this as a function of Francis' self-awareness. Realizing that the growing movement needed a competent administrator, he tapped Elias, who possessed these talents. Sweeney, however, roots this decision in Francis' loyalty to their longstanding friendship, supposedly stretching back to childhood. The only problem is that we have no evidence whatsoever to suggest that the men knew each other before adulthood. Again, Sweeney concedes this fact. But this raises the larger issue of whether the book is an "untold story" or a fantasy based on true events.

The reader's overall impression of The Enthusiast will hinge, most likely, on his or her initial expectations. Those who are seeking a straightforward account of what we confidently know about Francis and Elias are likely to be somewhat disappointed. Those who, like Sweeney, wish to engage gaps in the known past imaginatively will find in these pages a stimulating glimpse of two complex and important figures from the Christian tradition.

TIMOTHY O'BRIEN, S.J., *teaches theology at Loyola University Maryland. He is an assistant editor of The Jesuit Post (www.thejesuitpost.org).*

Weigh the Cost

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), SEPT. 4, 2016

Readings: Wis 9:13-18; Ps 90:3-17; Phlm 9-17; Lk 14:15-23

"Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple" (Lk 14:27)

The Gospel of Luke has a central message: God's mercy, in the person of Jesus Christ, has been offered to all without exception. God's gracious gift, however, has one limitation, which is our willingness to respond to God's mercy. And while God's mercy evokes a "feel-good" response—endless GIFs of cuddly cats and infants taking their first steps—discipleship, the result of responding to God's mercy, has a price. On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus asks his disciples to weigh the cost of discipleship and determine whether they are willing to pay the price.

Jesus' language is sharp about the demands of discipleship: "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple." Is that all then? My family and life? No, one more thing: "Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." Give up a comfortable life? Is that it? As long as you include all of your things: "None of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions."

While these images are offered as a means to relativize the things of this life, to subordinate family and possessions to Jesus' call, that call is for your life. It might be your life at the altar as you celebrate Mass, as it was in Rouen, France, for the Rev. Jacques Hamel. It might be your life given to foreign lands, as it was for St. Francis Xavier. It might be your life given to the poorest of the poor, as it was for Mother Theresa. But make no mistake: Jesus calls for our lives.

Jesus offers two parables to explain why the things of this life are secondary to Jesus' call. Jesus describes building a tower and waging a war, both activities for which a great deal of money, planning and people are needed. He asks, "Which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it?" and "What king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand?" The focus of these stories is on the disciples. If you follow me, do you have what it takes to complete your mission? This means Jesus' disciples must be all in. Are we committed to the project of Jesus' mission?

But Jesus needs to know, too, whether he has the builders and the soldiers committed to completing the tasks to build the kingdom and to defend it. For the kingdom is an exercise in construction but also a battle waged against the forces of evil. For Jesus to complete the kingdom, he needs steadfast disciples; for the battle to be waged successfully, he needs faithful disciples.

What the building and the battle mean in practice for each of us will be something different, something perhaps unexpected even at the sunset of life, from what one has planned; but all of us must remain at the disposal of God's plan, not our own personal plans.

Paul remains the prime example of a man who felt he was doing all that God required of him in tracking down disciples of Jesus in ancient Syria, when the risen Lord appeared to him. Paul's life turned in this moment. Instead of being a persecutor of the Messiah's disciples, Paul became an apostle for the Messiah, bringing Jesus' word wherever he was called, including to prison cells. It was from prison cells that Paul continued to build the kingdom, even while in chains, by personal witness and by writing letters to the churches dotted throughout the Roman Empire.

Paul's life, and all that he had, was at the disposal of the kingdom after he heard the call. The cost of discipleship for Paul, for building the kingdom and fighting the forces of evil, was beatings, imprisonment and finally his life. But Paul weighed the price and gladly paid it. Building the kingdom was all that he desired, and the price of discipleship was more rewarding than he could have hoped.

ART: TAD A. DUNNE

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Think of a saint who is dear to you—Paul, Francis Xavier, Mother Teresa or someone else—and reflect on what he or she gave to build the kingdom. What do you admire about their lives and what they gave? Is there anything you fear being asked to give as a disciple of Jesus? Are you all in?

JOHN W. MARTENS *is a professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn. Twitter: @BibleJunkies.*

God's Joy

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), SEPT. 11, 2016

Readings: Ex 32:7-14; Ps 51:3-19; 1 Tm 1: 12-17; Lk 15:1-32

"Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight" (Ps 51:4)

I hate sin. Not enough to stop doing it, try as I might, but I truly hate it. The older I get, the more I recognize sin as persistent foolishness, darkness and nothingness that pulls me away from God, whispers false promises in my ears about new pleasures, asks, "Why not?" or assures me, "You deserve it!" With the purported author of Psalm 51, King David, I can say with honesty that "I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me." And I know now, with the psalmist, that "against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight" because every sin against another of God's creatures or God's creation is an act that draws me away from God's love and the joy that God has prepared for me.

I might not be the foremost sinner. The author of 1 Timothy, traditionally ascribed to the apostle Paul, claims that title, saying that he "was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence" and, indeed, "first" among sinners. But that's the point, is it not? When we are caught up in sin, or are coming down from the false high of sin, we feel that we are the worst of sinners, knowing better what we ought to do but still doing it. This can lead not just to proper repentance and confession, but sometimes to a sense of worthlessness and self-recrimination. Who are we to deserve God's love? Why would God want me, of all people?

This is why it is important to stress that God cares for us at every point in our lives. Even if we feel we are not worthy of forgiveness, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost." It is "for that very reason," Paul says, that "I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life." If the foremost sinner received mercy, you can, too. In fact, come and get it now.

God wants our repentance, not to demand obeisance but because we were created out of being for being, not out of nothingness for nothingness. God's desire for us is for our true nature and destiny to be realized. We see this when the Israelites out of Egypt quickly turn from their savior and the commandments given them to a golden calf. God tells Moses his wrath is burning "hot against them." Moses, though, implores God and says, "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants" and the promises of descendants and the land. In response, "the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people." As much as God hates sin, God loves us even more. This is why mercy, not punishment, is the gift that God offers us over and over.

This is not just an offer sitting on a back shelf somewhere. This offer was brought to us by God's son, who came to seek us out and offer us the gift prepared for us. The set of so-called lost parables in Luke begins with an account of grumbling on the part of the religious experts of Jesus' day because he was eating with tax collectors and sinners. It is in response to these complaints that Jesus tells three stories of a lost sheep, a lost coin and a lost son. They are so well known that we have to exercise care that their grit and groundedness in everyday life not get lost: God seeks out sinners in whatever muck he finds us in.

God rejoices over us when we are found. Listen to the endings of the three lost parables: "There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents," Jesus says, "than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance"; "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents"; "But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."

As much as sin stalks us, when I look back at my life I see how many mercies and graces there have been, how God has been picking me up every time I fell and dusting me off. God keeps standing us up and telling us to turn away from sin and come home, for now is the time to share in God's joy.

JOHN W. MARTENS

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Reflect on God's love for humanity and the joy God has in each of us. How can we turn to God more fully and repudiate sin? Have you been seeking out God in all things, bringing everything to God? Have you been to confession lately?

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