

# America

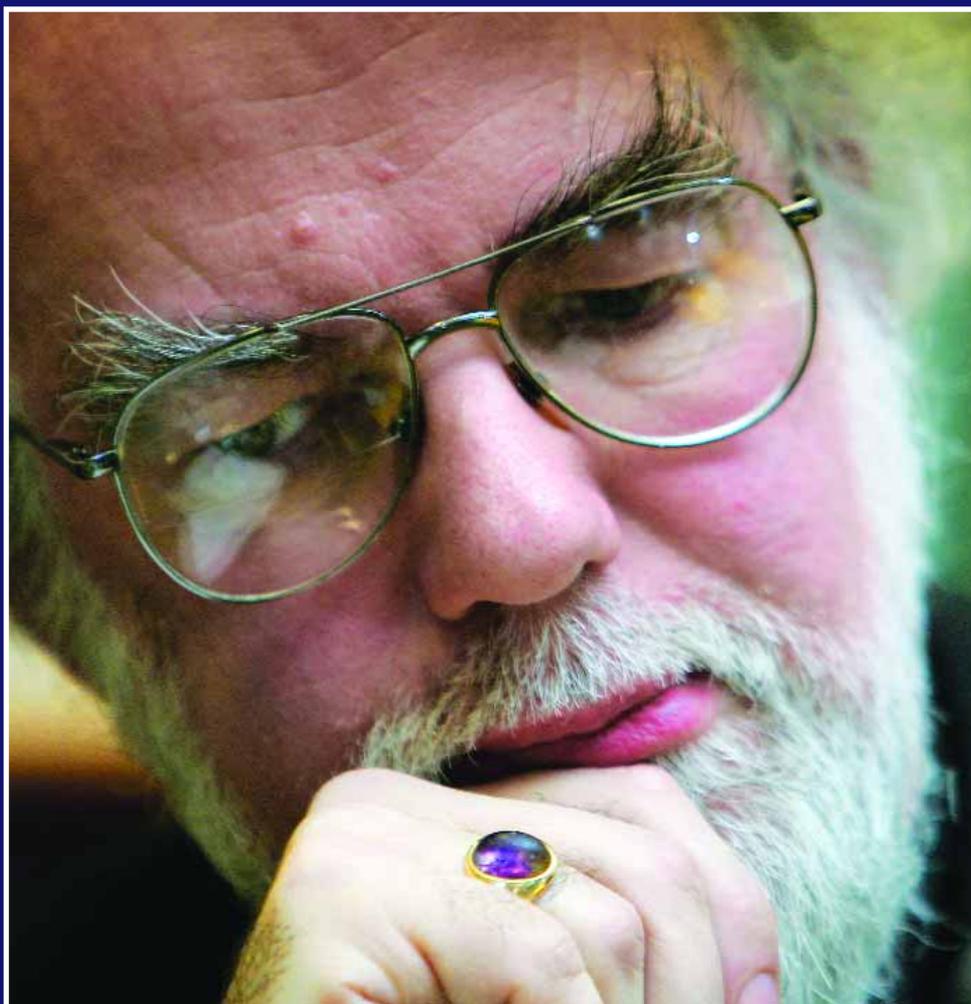
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## Can the Anglican Communion Be Saved? *Austen Ivereigh*



**Also in this issue:**

**Human Dignity and the End of Life**

*Justin F. Rigali and William E. Lori*

**Gordon Zahn and Milieu Catholicism**

*William A. Au*

**T**HOUGH I GREW UP within the confines of New York City, at heart I am not a city boy. My boyhood home on the north shore of Staten Island stood on a dead end street. Just a block long, the street was bordered on two sides by woodlands. At the far end of the block was a private park with more woods, streams, a marsh and a pond. There we would scamper after salamanders in the spring and collect unlucky box turtles to carry home as pets. Much of the year we awoke to the crowing of pheasants as they fed in the neighboring yards. We lived, a Jesuit retreat master quipped, in “the garden spot of the cement and asphalt jungle.” It was a life that left me with an affinity for the land and its problems.

At certain times of year the church’s liturgy reminds me of my attachment to the land. In the summer, for example, readings of the parables of the kingdom and stories of Jesus’ ministry out in the open, on the water and hillsides, bring to mind the land-

scape of the Holy Land, the wildflowers of Galilee, the bird

life on the slopes of Mount Zion. The late Benedictine biblical archeologist and geographer Bargil Pixner called the geography of the Holy Land “the Fifth Gospel.” “Whoever has learnt to read and peruse this ‘book’ of biblical landscape,” he wrote, “will experience the message of the four Gospels with a new and greater clarity.”

Pixner’s own feel for the landscape of the Holy Land and his scholarship grew out of his 12 years at Tabgha on the Sea of Galilee, where he acquired a sense of “the distances from one place to another, and for the seasons of drought and of rainfall. Each season,” he wrote, “has its particular wind direction, times of heat and cold. I have learned much about the lake and about fishing and navigations....” Attention to the details of landscape, climate and the habits of fishermen and farmers gave him confidence in the authenticity of the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ life. In two books, *With Jesus Through Galilee According to the Fifth Gospel* (1992) and *With Jesus in Jerusalem: His First and Last Days in Judea* (1996), he spelled out his reading of the geography of salvation.

The biblical landscape Pixner loved, however, is fast disappearing. Thousand-year-old olive groves have been bulldozed

to deny terrorists cover, and ridge lines have been obscured by settlements intended to dominate the surrounding region. At Shepherd’s Field, a Franciscan shrine near Bethlehem, a decade ago pilgrims could watch as shepherds moved their flocks down the opposite hillside and then east into the Judean desert, but today pilgrims no longer have the opportunity to enjoy that scene, and the Bedouin shepherds themselves have been removed.

First came Har Homa, the Israeli settlement built on a hill where a forest once stood, anchoring the southern end of the security circle around Jerusalem. By 2000, middlemen had purchased much of the adjoining open land for settlement expansion. While it could, until 2000, the Palestinian Authority aped the Israeli “edifice complex,” building homes right up to the edge of the land it then controlled beneath the hill. Subsequently the security barrier, or wall, built to keep Palestinian terrorists from entering Israel,

further scarred the terrain. Like the Great Wall of

China, it is now an unavoidable feature of the landscape.

Ein Kerem is a Judean hill town associated with the birth of John the Baptist. Situated in a narrow valley between forested ridges, it was famed for its natural beauty and moderate climate.

Eventually artists and craftsmen discovered Ein Kerem and made it a hideaway; then development began encroaching. When I was last there, a forest atop the mountain to the north was over-towered by construction cranes, and the plain that spreads out beneath the valley was sprouting more housing.

In the 1990s, the Holy See frequently made preservation of the historic biblical environment one of its hopes for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. Many pilgrims, both Jews and Christians, lament the passing of the biblical landscape. But today conserving the geography of salvation is a moot point. Much of it is buried beneath concrete and steel. Pixner’s “Fifth Gospel” has been sacrificed to the twin gods of fear and security. In the meantime, the woods near my boyhood home were purchased by a conservancy that will protect one, small “garden spot” in “the cement and asphalt jungle.”

*Drew Christiansen, S.J.*

## Of Many Things

# America

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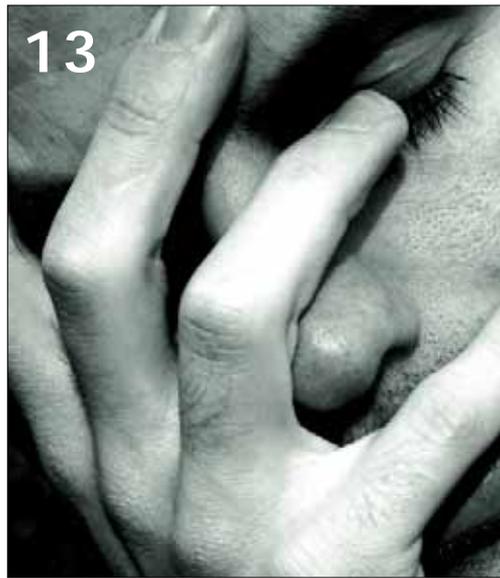
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#### Advertising

Julia Sosa

106 West 56th Street  
New York, NY 10019-3803  
Ph: 212-581-4640; Fax: 212-399-3596.  
E-mail: america@americamagazine.org;  
letters@americamagazine.org.  
Web site: www.americamagazine.org.  
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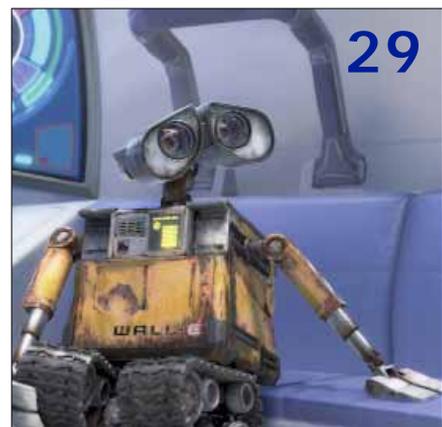
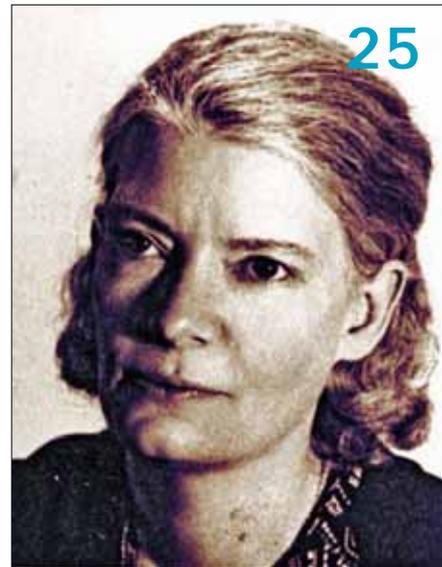
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'Little Faith'; Interreligious Dialogue?

*Daniel J. Harrington*



### Finally, a Favorite Son

This August, 132 years after Thomas Eakins painted it, a masterpiece of American realist art will be on display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, its new home.

Newspapers reported the efforts of various museums to buy “The Gross Clinic,” considered by many to be one of the greatest canvasses in American art. But reports of the \$68 million deal fail to describe the human drama behind the sale: a city’s change of heart toward one of its own.

Eakins, a former medical student, had painstakingly created the work for the city’s Centennial Exhibition, the first World’s Fair held in the United States. It showed an outstanding Philadelphian making a medical breakthrough. Eakins depicted Dr. Gross, the most distinguished surgeon of his day, in the operating theater demonstrating a surgical technique to his students. But showing an actual operation shocked the exhibition judges, who had never seen anything like it. The surgeon’s bloody fingers and the bared thigh of the patient repelled them. Most critics agreed that it was indecent. Eakins nearly burst into tears when he saw where the judges had hung his painting—not in the art galleries, but in a corner of an outlying building rigged up like a battlefield hospital unit.

By purchasing this particular work, the Philadelphia art establishment has shown pride in an artist its predecessors had spurned throughout his lifetime, not only for his work, but for his insistence on teaching students to paint the human body from live nude models and for unproved allegations of personal misconduct. The story, familiar in art history, demonstrates that the public can gradually come to value an artist’s work that in the artist’s own day was scorned. After the centennial embarrassment, Eakins gave “The Gross Clinic” to the Jefferson Medical School, where Dr. Gross taught, which kept the painting for a century until two museums outside Pennsylvania offered to buy it. Then the Philadelphia Museum sprang into action.

### Over Here

Europeans! They’re everywhere. Residents of nearly any American city from Atlanta, Ga., to Zwingle, Iowa, will concur that the new tourist to be found in the United States these days is from the Old World. Our summer streets are still crowded with visitors taking in the sights and awkwardly posing for contrived photos, but this year people are skinnier, they all seem to be wearing neon, and they are renting bikes. What on earth is going on?

The dollar has collapsed. The euro is king. Don’t think so? Walk out into the area of your town or city most likely

to be visited by the all-American tourists who usually travel this time of year, and open your ears. German, French, Spanish and Slavic tongues are everywhere, but only every now and then does one hear a variant of that protean language called American English that we are used to hearing during tourist season. Why? Is gas too expensive? Has history reversed itself? Is the sky falling?

Hard to tell. But according to the word on the street these days, the United States is a cheap country to travel in and a cheap place to shop. And the people buying everything—everything—in our shops this summer are from a continent that 10 years ago looked as if it were headed for economic irrelevancy. We welcome our European visitors, but remain surprised.

### Peace B w/ U

Pope Benedict XVI has gone high-tech. On July 15, the opening of World Youth Day celebrations in Sydney, Australia, Benedict sent the first of his daily text messages to an undisclosed number of pilgrims registered for the world’s largest youth gathering. The message read: “Young friend, God and his people expect much from u because u have within you the Fathers supreme gift: the Spirit of Jesus.” Signed, “BXVI.” Benedict’s messages focused on the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of young Christians. On the fourth day, using abbreviations common among the millennial generation, Benedict wrote, “The spirit impels us 4ward 2wards others; the fire of his love makes us missionaries of God’s charity. See u tomorrow nite - BXVI.” The text messages serve as a creative venue to communicate Gospel hope, and Benedict should be commended for employing this tool.

Amid the excitement of receiving a “text” from the pope, however, pilgrims should not neglect Benedict’s full WYD message. Benedict wisely tempered his openness to gadgetry with warnings about the “the cult of material possessions” and the perils of “acquiring as many possessions and luxuries as we can.” Undisciplined desire for the latest technological practices (texting, for instance) can be a symptom of consumerism. What results in the “spiritual desert” of a materially rich society, according to Benedict, is “an interior emptiness, an unnamed fear, a quiet sense of despair.” In our technological age, the quantity of communication has increased, but the quality—that personal encounter with Christ in the other person—has deteriorated. Through his words and example, BXVI is teaching us that technology, which can be used for good, should not be used uncritically and without reflection.

# Decline and Progress in Africa

**T**HE ACCLAIMED DEBUT collection of short stories by the Nigerian author Uwem Akpan, S.J., *Say You're One of Them*, gives readers a chance to see Africa through the eyes of its children. It is not a pretty picture. Critics have praised the book, yet several have also written that they do not recommend it generally, but only for select friends, because of the brutally honest picture it presents. One reviewer concluded that "Akpan reveals Africa's pain, pity, joy and grace, and comes closer to the truth about modern Africa than the entire outpourings of the Western mass media."

Recent news from Africa continues to be negative. Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, now apparently dictator for life, declares himself president by a ballot box coup d'état. In Sudan the incumbent President Omar Hassan al-Bashir now faces charges of genocide for his role in masterminding the horrors of Darfur, where 300,000 have been killed. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, an estimated 5.4 million have died in the past 10 years, even though the civil war is said to have ended in 2003. Somalia is ruled by warlords engaging in gang warfare. The Central African Republic has been called a phantom state—worse than a failed one. Fifteen African heads of state have been in power for more than 15 years, and 26 for more than 10.

But positive news can be found as well. Among the 48 states of sub-Saharan Africa, the number with a free press and multiparty governance has risen to 11 from 3 in 1977, according to democracy advocacy groups. The number of nations considered to have no freedom at all has fallen to 14 from the 25 so listed a decade ago. Ghana, Liberia, Burundi, Tanzania, Mozambique and Botswana have all solidified democratic gains in recent years. There is also hope for the unity government of Ivory Coast, with an election scheduled for November 2008. Kenya, after several difficult months in which more than 1,000 people were killed, has returned to a fragile peace.

Ultimately, reform is needed on both the international and national levels. The United Nations has found some success in offering assistance to developing African nations and applying pressure on repressive governments. Its security forces have made a difference in Liberia, Darfur and the Congo. But much depends on whether the G-8 group of nations will live up to its promises of support for debt reduction and assistance with the ongoing AIDS pandem-

ic. In the United States, the Senate's recent approval of the so-called Pefpar reauthorization act, already passed in the House, will also bring some relief by providing funding to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria around the globe.

On the local level, the African Union can play a valuable role in supporting developing nations; but it remains largely ineffective because of disunity, a lack of resources and uncritical attitudes toward many African leaders. The organization needs to function as the voice of the African people, not simply as the echo chamber of leaders often unconcerned about the welfare of their citizens. "Free and fair elections" can become more than a hope if African election-monitoring groups are put into place on the continent. Constitutional limits on the number of terms of office should be stipulated, and support given to those nations attempting to establish a legitimate system of checks and balances. A positive example is Nigeria, where the Supreme Court in the past year has stood up against the executive and demanded new elections in seven states.

ULTIMATELY, THE SOLUTION to Africa's problems must come from within Africa. Africa's many natural resources, including oil, diamonds, metals and timber, should help the common good rather than enrich government officials. The future must see Africans feeding themselves, implementing a green revolution instead of depending upon food aid from abroad. Education is another obvious but necessary area of concern, especially the education and empowerment of women. Foreign nongovernmental organizations can be part of the solution, but their assistance should not serve as an excuse for local governments to neglect their responsibilities toward their citizens.

Two recent stories coming from Africa point the way to a better future for the continent. First, the world, and African leaders in particular, might try to see Africa through the eyes of its children, as presented in the stories of Uwem Akpan. Second, we can all keep in mind the standard set by Nelson Mandela, who recently celebrated his 90th birthday. Mandela's rule in South Africa was a powerful example of the good that can be accomplished by a government that serves, unites and then steps down. These two powerful stories from Africa might help all to see the need for and possibility of responsible leadership on that continent.

*Peter Schineller, S.J.*

## Signs of the Times

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### U.N. Agreement Helps Curb Arms Trade

Religious and peace groups heralded a nonbinding U.N. agreement on small arms that they said helps incremental efforts to curb the trade of illicit weapons. Disarmament advocates said the action is part of a wider effort to curtail a serious international problem that is being fought by faith communities, such as parishes in Brazil. Referring to the slums of Rio de Janeiro, Auxiliary Bishop William Kenney of Birmingham, England, who attended a U.N. conference on July 14-18, said: "The parish priest in the Rio favelas is part of the same network as those involved in negotiations at the United Nations.... You need to do this work at different levels." "We're not expecting to change things overnight," he told Catholic News Service. The U.N. conference ended with 134 nations agreeing to a set of recommendations that includes the marking of small arms at the point of manufacture to assist tracing efforts. The United States did not cast a vote and kept a low profile during the conference, advocates said. The conference also recommended efforts to boost controls and management of state-run weapons arsenals, which are often targets of smugglers and thieves.

### Holy See Reports Deficit for 2007

After three years in the black, the Holy See reported a \$14 million deficit for 2007, due mainly to the continued fall in the value of the U.S. dollar and the poor performance of the stock markets. While Vatican City State itself did not report a deficit, this was not enough to offset losses in other areas of the Holy See's global operations, which include the Vatican Secretariat of State and its diplomatic missions around the world, Vatican congregations and pontifical councils, the Holy See's investment portfolio and properties as well as the Vatican's newspaper, radio station, publishing house and television production center.

The investment portfolio ended 2007 with an income of \$2.2 million, com-

pared with the \$21.5 million it returned to Vatican coffers at the end of 2006.

### Life of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati Extolled



The Italian Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati was a struggling student who excelled in mountain climbing. He had complete faith in God and persevered through college, dedicating himself to helping the poor and supporting church social teaching. He died at age 24 and was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1990.

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati's simple, holy life gives today's youths a needed example, said Tom Rosica, a Basilian priest who is the former national director and chief operating officer of World Youth Day 2002. "Every crisis that the church faces, every crisis that the world faces is a crisis of holiness and a crisis of saints," said Father Rosica, now the chief operating officer of the Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation in Toronto. "If there was ever an age when young men and women needed authentic heroes, it is our age," he said on July 14 at a prayer vigil that included adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and veneration of the body of Blessed Pier Giorgio in St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. More than 900 youths participated in the prayer service and listened to the story of the young Italian on the eve of the opening of World Youth Day in Sydney. Blessed Pier Giorgio "was simply a young man

who was in love with his family and friends, in love with the mountains and the sea, but especially in love with God," said the priest. "Pier Giorgio dealt with some of our own contemporary problems and struggles," he said. "His love of God and his tremendous sense of human solidarity bonded him with the poor, the needy, the sick, the hungry and the homeless."

### Mandela Letter to Catholic Bishops Released

The South African human rights activist Nelson Mandela was inspired by the Catholic Church's involvement in social justice concerns during his many years of incarceration, he wrote in a letter from prison to the country's first black Catholic archbishop. Mandela, who eventually was freed and elected president in South Africa's first fully democratic election, in 1994, also wrote to the late Archbishop Stephen Naidoo of Cape Town that he was uplifted by the pastoral care provided by clergy on Robben Island, where he was imprisoned for 18 years. The content of Mandela's letter, dated November 1984, was published for the first time in the July 9 issue of *The Southern Cross*, South Africa's Catholic weekly, to mark Mandela's 90th birthday on July 18. Archbishop Naidoo, who under apartheid laws was classified as "Indian," and Mandela had become friends before Naidoo's appointment to Cape Town. Then-Auxiliary Bishop Naidoo regularly made pastoral visits to the arid and tightly guarded Robben Island, where the former president was incarcerated from 1964 to 1982.

### Benedict Prays for Lambeth Conference

Pope Benedict XVI has assured Anglicans meeting for their once-a-decade worldwide conference that he and other Catholics are praying for them. In a message to Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury, spiritual head of the worldwide Anglican Communion, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone,

## Signs of the Times

### Will World Youth Day Be a Wake-up Call?

In what is often seen as one of the most intensely secular nations in the world, Australia received a wake-up call: the faith of the church on public display over the weeklong celebrations of World Youth Day. For young Catholics used to seeing a steady annual decline in figures such as Mass attendance—now estimated at approximately 13 percent of Catholics nationally—and feeling like the only young person in the local parish, the sight of hundreds of thousands of other young pilgrims may well have provided a much-needed shot in the arm. The Australian theologian Tracey Rowland, dean of studies at the John Paul II Institute in Melbourne, Australia, said the visit of Pope Benedict XVI will not fix Australia overnight. “But Pope Benedict’s weeklong ‘Christianity 101’ intensive course for a couple of hundred thousand pilgrims will certainly



Seminarians from Fiji carry the Book of the Gospels at the final Mass for World Youth Day July 20 at Royal Randwick Racecourse in Sydney, Australia.

improve the situation, especially for Generation Y,” she said, referring to the young people. She noted that for many young pilgrims, World Youth Day was

their first experience of solemn liturgy, adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and catechesis with deep intellectual and spiritual content.

the Vatican’s secretary of state, said the pope was “mindful that a primary objective” of the meeting was “the spiritual renewal that comes from prayer and contemplation.” The letter noted the internal divisions that trouble the Anglican Communion and said some of those issues “pose a further and grave challenge to the hope for full and visible unity that has been the long-standing goal of our joint ecumenical endeavor.” The letter was released in Canterbury on July 21, as the conference started its regular working sessions, which run through Aug. 3. The Anglican bishops face controversies involving the ordination of openly gay clerics, the blessing of gay unions and the ordination of women bishops in some Anglican provinces.

### Rigali Defends Conscience Rights of Health Workers

Protecting the conscience rights of health care providers should be an issue on which both supporters and opponents of abortion can agree, Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia said in a letter to

members of Congress. The cardinal, who chairs the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Pro-Life Activities, said his July 18 letter



Justin Rigali

was prompted by reports that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is preparing regulations that will require hospitals, clinics, medical schools and other health care institutions to certify they will not discriminate against people who oppose abortion based on their “religious beliefs or moral convictions.” The proposed regulations have not been made public officially but were apparently leaked to The New York Times and some members of Congress in mid-July. “I am not writing to comment publicly on the details of an unpublished draft allegedly leaked from a government agency,” Cardinal Rigali said. “The Catholic bishops’ conference will be glad to provide public comment on a proposed rule if and when it is published.” But he said the issue “provides

self-described ‘pro-choice’ advocates with an opportunity to demonstrate their true convictions.”

### End Urged for Federal Abortion Funding

Representative Chris Smith, Republican of New Jersey, led other pro-life lawmakers in the House in calling for the U.S. Congress to end federal funding for Planned Parenthood and other family planning organizations that provide abortions. “Most Americans, I suspect, probably have no idea whatsoever that our tax dollars have enabled abortionists to establish and to run hundreds and hundreds of abortion mills throughout America,” said Smith, a Catholic. “America’s biggest abortion chain is Planned Parenthood,” he said. “Each year, approximately 290,000 children are aborted in Planned Parenthood clinics. Each year, Planned Parenthood gets more than \$335 million in taxpayer funds, including huge amounts from the Department of Health

From CNS and other sources. CNS photos.

## Signs of the Times

and Human Services' Title X program." The amount is about one-third of its \$926.4 million budget. The federal grants and contracts included Title X family planning funds for low-income people. Federal regulations require that abortion services be kept separate from Title X-funded family planning services, but critics of Planned Parenthood say that receiving funding for nonabortion services frees up its resources for providing abortions.

### Catholic Worker Celebrates 75 Years

Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day founded the Catholic Worker movement in 1933 with its first newspaper and house of hospitality. Seventy-five years later the movement, centered on the works of mercy, a green revolution and nonviolent peacemaking, continues to flourish. There are over 185 Catholic Worker communities worldwide.

More than 500 Catholic Workers gathered July 9 to 12 in Worcester, Mass., to celebrate this history and to look toward the future. Martha Hennessy, granddaughter of Dorothy Day, opened the conference; and

Robert Ellsberg, editor of the recently published diaries of Dorothy Day, *The Duty of Delight*, delivered the keynote address. "Dorothy believed that our response to the poor was a test of the authenticity of our worship," said Ellsberg, explaining the synthesis made by Day of traditional Catholic piety and radical social activism. The gathering included panels on peacemaking and Catholic Worker history, several workshops and a closing Mass celebrated by Bishop Robert McManus of Worcester. In a statement approved in assembly, Catholic Workers called on the church and nation to join them "in repenting our affronts to God," which include "unending war" and a widening gap between rich and poor.

### Philadelphia Meeting Promotes 'Common Good'

More than 800 delegates met in Philadelphia from July 11 to 13 and approved a "Platform for the Common Good" that will be sent to both presidential candidates and their political parties. The platform blends language from the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution—most notably, "We the People"—with

principles of Catholic social teaching. It attempts to transcend partisan politics by expanding the pro-life ethic to include those who suffer from poverty, lack of health care, unjust immigration policies, ecological destruction, violence and war. Catholics and all Americans "are hungry for a new vision of governance that is rooted in a moral commitment to human dignity and social justice," said Alexia Kelley, executive director of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, which co-sponsored the event with Network, a national Catholic social justice lobby. Other featured speakers included Helen Prejean, C.S.J., Senator Robert P. Casey Jr., Democrat of Pennsylvania, John Sweeney, president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., and retired Bishop Walter Sullivan of Richmond, Va. Former Representative Charles Dougherty, Republican of Pennsylvania, challenged Catholics to "change the atmosphere in Washington by beginning to talk with each other" across partisan lines.

### Pope: Recovering Addicts Are Choosing Life

Pope Benedict XVI told a group of young Australians recovering from drug and alcohol abuse that he considers them "ambassadors of hope." Those who have struggled to overcome addiction and get their lives back on a positive track are the best ones to help others who are lost and suffering, the pope said July 18 while traveling in Australia for World Youth Day. During a visit by the pope to a rehabilitation community and support program run by the Archdiocese of Sydney's social service agency, a young man and a young woman publicly shared their stories with the pope, struggling with emotion to speak of their difficult pasts and their joy in finding the program that helps disadvantaged youths, including the homeless and refugees as well as those trying to overcome substance abuse. The pope said the participants, like the people following Moses, had been given the stark choice of choosing life or death. "They had to turn away from other gods and worship the true God," the pope said.

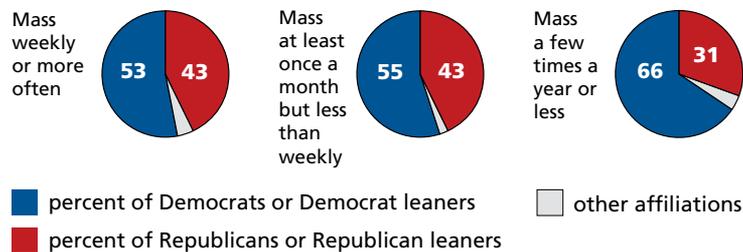
### U.S. Catholic Electorate

Potential Catholic voters number more than 47 million.

#### PARTY AFFILIATION



#### PARTY AFFILIATION BY FREQUENCY OF MASS ATTENDANCE, 2008



Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University

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# The Missing Class

“The real debate centers on our definition of poverty.”

**T**UESDAYS ARE PEDIATRIC surgery days at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md. Families come from around the world for everything from brain and heart surgeries to removing tonsils. The differences of countries, class and cultures seem to disappear in a hospital waiting room, scrubbed to the essentials: sick children and worried parents. As our 18-month-old son underwent four hours of reconstructive hand surgery, we were like all the other parents. We waited, worried and prayed. Would the surgeries work? Would the skin grafts take? Would our toddler respond well to the anesthesia and medicines? Unlike some of the other parents, though, one thing we never worried about was the cost. We have medical insurance. The surgeries and doctors' visits cost nearly \$10,000, but we had to pay only a few hundred dollars for co-payments, X-rays and medicines.

This is not the case for 9.4 million uninsured children in the United States. Since 1997, over six million poor children have received health insurance through the State Children's Health Insurance Program. This important law offers states matching federal funding to cover uninsured children whose family income, although low, is higher than allowed to qualify for Medicaid. The program came up for renewal in fall 2007; and state governors, children's health advocates, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities, the Catholic Health Association and others all urged that the program be strengthened and extended. Because of the spiraling costs of health care, more money is needed just to provide the same level of coverage for the children

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MARYANN CUSIMANO LOVE is professor of international relations at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

already enrolled in S-chip. The Congressional Research Service notes that 21 states will be unable to maintain present coverage over the next year if the current budgeted amount, \$5 billion, is not increased. Expanding coverage to include prenatal care for the unborn, as the Catholic Health Care Association, Catholic Charities and the U.S. Catholic bishops recommend, would require more investment. A strong bipartisan consensus passed legislation to continue and modestly increase health insurance coverage for uninsured children, but President Bush twice vetoed the S-chip legislation late last year, and Congress was narrowly unable to override the president's veto. Temporary reauthorization was passed to continue the program until after the election.

Much of the president's position amounts to political posturing in an election year. After spending nearly a trillion dollars on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (most of which enriches U.S. defense contracting companies) while cutting the taxes of the wealthy and increasing the U.S. budget deficit to an all-time high (according to the Treasury Department) of \$311 billion for the first half of this budget year, President Bush is now trying to regain his credentials as a fiscal conservative by denying health insurance to poor children as “too expensive.” Two weeks of the war in Iraq cost more than the entire S-chip program costs per year. The president disingenuously charges that the S-chip program amounts to federalized, socialized medicine. But the program is state-run and provides money for private health insurance.

The real debate centers on the definition of poverty. The federal government defines poverty as an income of less than \$16,000 a year for a family of three, and less than \$20,614 for a family of four; but most research shows that it takes more than

twice those amounts to cover basic expenses for such families. By this more accurate measure, 30 percent of Americans live in poverty. The government's numbers are based on 2005 numbers, and were criticized as too low even then. Since then the costs of food, fuel, housing and health care have risen dramatically while jobs have been cut, further squeezing poor families, while the government definitions of poverty have not changed. The federal poverty rate is thus not the real poverty rate.

The S-chip program attempts to bridge the difference, covering poor children the federal government does not count as poor. Katherine Newman, a professor of sociology and public affairs at Princeton University, calls these 50 million Americans, including 20 percent of U.S. children, “the missing class.”

The president and some members of Congress argue that expanding S-chip would extend coverage to middle-class and rich children. The facts do not bear this out. According to Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families and the Congressional Budget Office, over 90 percent of children enrolled in S-chip are from families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. More than 84 percent of the nearly four million uninsured children targeted by Congressional legislation are from low-income families already eligible for S-chip.

Professor Newman notes: “It's not clear that you can win an election focusing on the dispossessed in our country...we need to put these people back on the radar screen, and understand that if we invest in them, we invest in the prosperity of the nation.” The 2008 presidential candidates differ on this issue. Senator John McCain agrees with President Bush's veto of the S-chip legislation, saying, “The American people have rebelled against out-of-control spending.” In contrast, Senator Barack Obama favors expansion of the S-chip program, noting, “In the richest nation on Earth we must no longer stand by while nine million children live without health care.” Whoever wins in November, the issue will be revisited. We owe America's most vulnerable children medical care, not political posturing.

*Maryann Cusimano Love*



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/KEVIN CARDEN

Caring for patients in a persistent vegetative state

# Human Dignity And the End of Life

– BY JUSTIN F. RIGALI AND WILLIAM E. LORI –

**I**N SEPTEMBER 2007 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a Response approved by Pope Benedict to answer two questions posed by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops on our moral obligations to patients who exist in what has come to be called a “persistent vegetative state.” The Congregation’s Response and its accompanying Commentary confirm and explain the statements made by Pope John Paul II on March 20, 2004, on the moral obligation to provide food and fluids to P.V.S. patients when they need such assistance to survive.

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**CARDINAL JUSTIN F. RIGALI** is the archbishop of Philadelphia and chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. **BISHOP WILLIAM E. LORI** of Bridgeport, Conn., is chairman of the U.S.C.C.B. Committee on Doctrine.

Two recent articles in *America*, “On Church Teaching and My Father’s Choice,” by John J. Hardt (1/21), and “At the End of Life,” by Thomas A. Shannon (2/18), appear to misunderstand and subsequently misrepresent the substance of church teaching on these difficult but important ethical questions.

### The Duty to Provide Basic Care

Thomas Shannon, in his article, cites the *Declaration on Euthanasia* of 1980, which spoke of the discretion patients may have to refuse medical treatment that seems to them burdensome, and therefore “extraordinary” or disproportionate. He argues that this judgment by a patient is distinct from a physician’s judgment that a treatment is “medically ordinary” in the sense of being customary or usual. What is “medically ordinary” can be “morally extraordinary.” This is a valid distinction, but there is an aspect

of patient care even more basic than the distinction between ordinary and extraordinary medical treatments: the “ordinary care” owed to sick persons because of their human dignity, which the *Declaration* said should be provided even when certain medical interventions have been withdrawn as useless or overly burdensome. Pope John Paul II and his successor held that food and water, even when their provision may require technical medical assistance, constitute the “basic care” that patients should receive. The value of such medical assistance is not to be judged by its efficacy in curing the patient or improving the patient’s condition. Supplying the basic necessities of life can often require the assistance of others, in the case, for example, of those who are very young or very old, or simply very weak at any age.

In the case of medically stable patients in a “vegetative state,” who may live a long time with continued nourishment but will certainly die of dehydration or starvation without it, the obligation to care for our fellow human beings presents a very direct challenge. Such a patient’s condition should not be characterized as “unstable” or terminal simply because it would become so if the patient were deprived of food and water.

### Limits to This Obligation

It is true that this obligation to provide basic care can be exhausted when such assistance can no longer fulfill its basic purpose or finality. The U.S. bishops asked the C.D.F. whether food and fluids should be provided “except when they cannot be assimilated by the patient’s body or cannot be administered to the patient without causing significant

physical discomfort,” and the congregation’s response recognized the legitimacy of this exception.

When patients are dying and their bodily systems are shutting down at the end of life, medically assisted nourishment can be ineffective and even create additional suffering. This is why physicians did not initiate tube-feeding for Pope John Paul II himself when he was in his final days. The pope’s condition in his final hours was in no way comparable to that of a P.V.S. patient, who can live a long time with assisted feeding.

Thomas Shannon, in his article, confuses the three exceptions recognized in the congregation’s Response and Commentary, and John Hardt finds four such exceptions. The C.D.F. Commentary does speak of a situation where the obligation to provide nutrition and hydration does not apply. This is not really an exception to the norm, but rather the simple recognition that we are never

obliged to try to do the impossible. Some parts of the world may be so destitute or undeveloped that they lack the medical resources and skills for the kind of assisted feeding that can occasion difficult moral decisions. John Hardt goes further when he suggests that the C.D.F. Commentary introduces a broader and more subjective category of “burden” that justifies a simple dislike for survival in a helpless state. But that claim has no foundation in the text, is actually contradicted by the Response and raises an additional problem that is discussed below.

### The Teaching on Euthanasia by Omission

Both Hardt and Shannon acknowledge that a concern about euthanasia is part of the background for the C.D.F.’s Response. However, neither cites the longstanding church teaching that an omission of basic care may itself be euthanasia. Euthanasia is defined in the *Declaration* of 1980 as “an action *or an omission* which of itself or by intention causes death, in order that all suffering may in this way be eliminated.” Such euthanasia is always morally wrong.

Here the church insists on the important distinction between validly withdrawing a life-sustaining means because the means itself is burdensome, and wrongly withdrawing it because (in someone’s view) life itself has become burdensome and should be brought to an end.

To cite this distinction in no way dismisses or minimizes the real suffering of long-term illness, or the real costs and burdens that families may undergo in caring for a helpless family member diagnosed as being in a persistent vegetative state. In his March 2004 *Address to the Participants in the*

Life is the first and most basic good of the human person, the condition for all the others.

*International Congress on Life-Sustaining Treatments and the Vegetative State: Scientific Advances and Ethical Dilemmas*, John Paul II drew attention to this problem, insisting that such families “cannot be left alone with their heavy human, psychological and financial burden,” but must receive assistance from medical professionals, society and the church. This is the true meaning of “compassion” in the face of illness and disability, to “suffer with” the afflicted and lighten their burden through our support. The solution does not lie in seeking ways to hasten the patient’s death in order to lift burdens from the patient and family.

This is why the C.D.F. Response insists that assisted feeding may not be discontinued simply on the grounds that “competent physicians judge with moral certainty that the patient will never recover consciousness.” Even if one judges that such a condition, when prolonged, makes survival itself a burden, such a judgment does not justify removing food and water so the patient will not survive.

Some ethicists want to assess all the costs and burdens of caring for a helpless patient in a P.V.S., and then count these among the “burdens” of assisted feeding. One problem this approach raises is the question of intent. By omitting food and fluids, what are we trying to achieve? Whose “burden” are we trying to ease? Assisted feeding is often not difficult or costly to provide in itself, but the housing, nursing care and other basic needs of a helpless patient can be significant. To discontinue assisted feeding in order to be freed from such burdens puts the caregiver’s interests ahead of the patient’s, even if we prefer not to recognize the reality of our choice.

### The Unity of the Living Human Person

Finally, the claim is sometimes made that the life of a P.V.S. patient, one who survives only because of medically assisted nourishment, is not a fully human life because it is not capable of interaction with other persons. Such a condition has been called a “baseline biological existence,” a merely “physical” life without inherent meaning or value. Assisted nutritional support, in this view, is warranted only if it may restore the patient’s ability to engage in the activities that constitute the value of our earthly existence. Such an argument has deeply disturbing implications, since it challenges the value of anyone with mental illness, retardation or cognitive disabilities who is not able to pursue what such critics deem “worthwhile” activity.

It was against such dehumanizing criticism that Pope John Paul II, in his 2004 address, insisted that “the intrinsic value and personal dignity of every human being does not change, no matter what the concrete circumstances of his or her life.... Even our brothers and sisters who find themselves in the clinical condition of a ‘vegetative state’ retain their human dignity in all its fullness. The loving gaze of God the Father continues to fall upon them, acknowledging

them as his sons and daughters, especially in need of help.”

Our love and support for patients in P.V.S. should be modeled on God’s love, which is based not on their current ability to act and respond but on their enduring dignity as human beings, made in his image and likeness and facing an ultimate destiny with him. Earthly life is not the highest of all goods, and our hope in eternal life puts in proper perspective all disproportionate and burdensome efforts to sustain life.

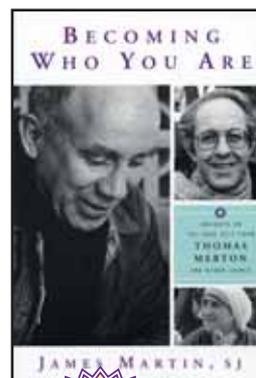
Life is, however, the first and most basic good of the human person, the condition for all others: “Life is always a good” (*Evangelium Vitae*, No. 34). The way we treat this life here and now—especially the life of those who are most helpless and least able to care for themselves—has consequences for our own eternal destiny.

Persons in the so-called “vegetative state” deserve our unconditional respect. As Pope John Paul noted in his 2004 address, they should receive all reasonable assistance aimed at their recovery and rehabilitation. But even if such efforts at recovery do not succeed, we need to provide friendship and practical help to their families and treat these patients always as fellow human beings in need of basic care. In this way our Catholic community can build a culture of life that excludes no one from the circle of love and mutual support. **A**



Read articles by Thomas A. Shannon and John J. Hardt on end of life care at [americamagazine.org/pages](http://americamagazine.org/pages).

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# Buyer's Remorse

*Spatulas, Yahoo and the conscience of a consumer*

BY ROBERT A. SENSER

WHEN OUR OLD WOODEN SPATULA showed signs of age, I looked for a replacement on my next trip to a nearby Giant Food supermarket. I found only a plastic model and was about to buy it until I read the small print: "made in China." In checking other nearby household utensils, I found that almost all came from the People's Republic.

A day or two later, I mailed a complaint to Giant's consumer affairs department. "Dear friends," I wrote, "It shocks me that a company of Giant Food's distinction would sell goods made in the People's Republic of China." The main point of my four-paragraph letter was to criticize the store for depending on China as a major supplier, when it didn't know how the spatula or other made-in-China products were manufactured. "Can you guarantee," I asked, "that they were not made by Protestant ministers sentenced to forced labor camps because of their religion? Or by underage children working in sweatshops? Or by college students sentenced to hard labor because they refused to follow the dictates of the Party? Or in a People's Liberation Army factory whose exports to the United States underwrite the missiles they build for firing toward Taiwan?"

The response I received did not answer my questions. Instead, the assistant director of consumer affairs wrote that over the years Giant had received many requests to boycott various products, but decided not to do so, being unwilling to make such choices for its customers. "Those who choose to boycott products made in the People's Republic of China have the right to do so," she explained, "but those who wish to purchase them ought to have that right as well."

At that time, in late 1995, I also wrote to other supermarket chains. The response from Fresh Fields was the most pointed: it said that one of Fresh Fields's founding philosophies is "to offer choices to consumers," and that therefore it was letting customers make their own choices on what to buy.

Both Giant Food and Fresh Fields based their positions on a value held to be basic in the free market system—freedom of choice. President George W. Bush recently expressed his belief in that value. In a speech to the U.S.

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on March 12, he warned that Congress's failure to pass more free trade agreements would deprive American families of the "choices that they've been used to." He went on: "We want our consumers to have choices when they walk into markets. The more choices available, the better it is for a consumer."

Milton and Rose Friedman laid down the rationale for that view in 1980, in a 10-week PBS series, "Free to Choose," and published a book with the same theme and title. They compared the choices made in the supermarket to choices made in the voting booth, both seen as freedom in action.

The trouble with extolling free choice for the American shopper, however, is that something happened to it on our way to globalization. Products made in the United States have almost disappeared from our shelves. They have been massively replaced by imports, above all by imports from China. Consumer choice for U.S.-made products is gone, or almost so.

## Internet Censorship and Trade

The services sector is falling victim to the same trend. That fact hit home to me because I am a Yahoo subscriber.

Yahoo, an Internet content provider and Web portal based in California, is a Fortune 500 multinational corporation whose business in China is booming. In China you do as the Chinese do. So Yahoo works closely with China's security forces in censoring the Internet. Even more serious, it is obligated to turn over to police incriminating information, which has led to jail and other punishments for Chinese Yahoo users who engage in conduct the government deems unbecoming a good citizen of China.

I am especially troubled by what has happened, for example, to Li Zhi, a 32-year-old civil servant, a supporter of the China Democracy Party, who was sentenced to eight years in prison in 2003 for "inciting subversion against the state." Yahoo helped put him there. The plight of Li and two other citizens of China made the news on Feb. 29, when they filed a lawsuit against Yahoo in a California federal court, charging that they had to endure torture and imprisonment, among other sufferings, after Yahoo handed over their e-mail messages and other Internet information to Chinese authorities.

Yahoo, which does not deny working with the govern-

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ROBERT A. SENSER, formerly a labor attaché in the U.S. Foreign Service and a program officer with what is now the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Solidarity Center, writes a blog on human rights for workers.



ment, may settle the case of Li and his two co-plaintiffs out of court, as it did a similar lawsuit last November with an undisclosed sum of money. That does not end my moral dilemma. I do not like to be connected with a company that helps a government torture people. Yet for 12 years I have run a Web site promoting human rights at home and abroad and have depended on Yahoo for its e-mail and research services.

Quitting Yahoo would not solve my problem either. As a media watchdog group, Reporters Without Borders, says, Yahoo's competitors, Google, Microsoft and Cisco Systems, all now working in China, also follow the axiom: when in China, do as the Chinese do. Under the pressure of a government equipped with armies of informants and the latest in surveillance technology, Internet companies have agreed to censor their search engines to filter out material over-critical of authorities. "This makes the regime's job very much easier, because these firms are the main entry-points to the Internet," Reporters Without Borders says. "If a Web site is not listed by their search engines, material posted on them has about as much chance of being found as a message in a bottle thrown into the sea."

I may find I can switch from Yahoo to a comparable provider that does not operate in China. That would get me personally off the hook in this instance, but it would change nothing else. Fortunately, another California-based Fortune 500 multinational with a booming business in China, Google, is searching for a solution. Making money on information services while at the same time collaborating with a government to suppress information, and having two of its executives called "moral pygmies" by a congress-

man at a public hearing last year—all this is not a comfortable position to be in. Google wants the U.S. government's help to get out of it. Trying to faithful to its slogan, "Don't be evil," Google is exploring an approach not tried before. This initiative relies on the logic of international trade law, which, in principle, outlaws barriers to trade. Since government censorship of information is a serious trade barrier for American companies in China, it follows that China's barrier should be outlawed as such through U.S. bilateral and multilateral trade agreements.

Timothy Wu, associate professor of law at Columbia University and a scholar on telecommunications and trade law, came to the same conclusion on his own: that China's Internet censorship violates international trade law. In a paper titled *The World Trade Law of Internet Filtering*, he emphasizes the cross-border character of Internet services: "Much of the Internet can be reached from anywhere, making nearly everyone on the Internet a potential importer or exporter of services (and sometimes goods)."

In China's case, Dr. Wu contends, the government agreed to reform the protectionist practices of China's firms in the services sector as a condition of entry into the World Trade Organization in late 2001. Instead, however, China has become one of the "world's more active filterers of Internet services." He regards China as probably in conflict with one of the key W.T.O. pacts—the little known General Agreement on Trade in Services, called GATS. The 21st-century expansion of the Internet, Wu insists, has "leaped beyond what was contemplated in GATS or subsequent telecommunications agreements [and] requires new thinking about how barriers come about."

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ANDRE BLAIS

## Financing Repression

A West Coast advocacy group, the California First Amendment Coalition, is contributing some new thinking. In an oral and written case to U.S. trade officials, the coalition specifically identifies a W.T.O. and GATS principle that China is violating: “national treatment.” Basic in all trade agreements, this principle requires a country to treat imported goods and services the same as those produced locally. But China uses “a wide range of laws and regulations that result in de jure or de facto” discriminatory treatment of U.S. companies, according to the coalition’s paper, and is thereby actively restricting the operations of U.S. Internet companies “while at the same time promoting Chinese Internet companies in the same or similar activities.”

At a hearing on May 20 of the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on human rights and the law, Nicole Wong, Google’s deputy general counsel, renewed the company position that the U.S. government should make combating Internet censorship a top priority. “It is vital,” she said, “for the U.S. Departments of State and Commerce and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative—in this and in future administrations—to make censorship a central element of our bilateral and multilateral [trade] agendas.”

U.S. government officials, however, have yet to embrace this precedent-setting approach. After all, the

plight of the Internet giants in China is not unique. Other global industries also live under trade policies that have not caught up with the 21st century. Multinational corporations still operate under rules of the world trade and investment system that was patched together in the five decades after the end of World War II.

Under the principles laid down by leaders who established the W.T.O., all its member nations (now 152) are equal and have the same rights in the international marketplace. Dictatorships and autocratic governments enjoy the same rights and privileges as democratic ones. And so China, exploiting its own opportunistic blend of Vladimir Lenin and Adam Smith, naturally takes full advantage of a position of political and economic repression at home—especially its heavily controlled labor force—to mass produce for free markets abroad, especially for the largest free market in the world.

Result: last year the United States imported \$321,442,900,000 worth of goods from China, a record sure to be broken again in 2008. Constrained by space, the print media publish those figures only in abbreviated form, if they publish them at all, by using a tiny “b” to replace the final nine digits, thus obscuring the 321,442,900,000 votes we cast by our dollars for repression in China.

In a 2001 policy paper for the U.N. Development Program, *The Global Governance of Trade as if Development Really Mattered*, Dani Rodrik, professor of international political economy at Harvard, proposed that a reformed trade system include the principle that “non-democratic countries cannot count on the same trade privileges as democratic ones.” The idea did not catch on in 2001, and hasn’t since.

This reform does not seem to stand a chance, mainly because now that China is in the W.T.O., Beijing can veto any reform that would diminish the advantages it now enjoys. Nevertheless, a broad range of ideas ought to be on the table for a serious trade policy review in light of the need to replace the president’s Trade Promotion Authority law, which expired in July 2007. To prepare for that review and the actions that should follow, Congress would be wise to commission an economist like Rodrik to prepare a report with the title “The Global Governance of Trade as if Human Rights Really Mattered.” **A**

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# For the Sake of Unity

*Will disagreements tear apart the Anglican Communion?*

BY AUSTEN IVEREIGH

**D**URING A RECENT DEBATE at the Church of England's General Synod, N. T. Wright, the Scripture scholar and bishop of Durham, summed up the crisis facing the Anglican Communion rather graphically. "We are living through, on many levels, a massive outworking of the law of unintended consequences," he said. "Or, in plain English, a slow-moving train wreck."

Bishop Wright is a touchstone theologian for traditionalists. He opposes women bishops, noncelibate gay clergy and the blessing of same-sex unions—the hot-button issues that have plunged the Anglican Church into possibly the greatest crisis in its history. But that does not mean he supports the decision by 280 conservative (or "Bible-believing") Anglican bishops of the developing world to form their own communion-within-a-communion at Jerusalem a few weeks ago in defiance of the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Wright likes neither the

Global Anglican Future Conference bishops' spurning of that authority, nor their claim to be more faithful to the Bible, nor their demand that other Anglicans sign on to their 14-point declaration of Anglican orthodoxy. Bishop Wright is a Church of England conservative evangelical, rather than an African or Australian one; and in the current meltdown, that is just as important a difference as those between liberal and conservative Anglicans, or Catholics and Protestants.

As the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Primates, which is held every 10 years, meets in Canterbury (July 16-Aug. 3) against a backdrop of what journalists are calling the "summer of schism," it is worth noting that the cause of the current Anglican crisis is not disagreement over homosexuality. Most Catholics as well as nonbelievers I know have strongly diverse views about same-sex blessings, civil partnerships and gay adoptions; homosexuality is one of the great divisive issues of our age.

But disagreements do not necessarily lead to divisions or crises. The real question is why the Anglican Church has not been able to contain the disagreements, and why they

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AUSTEN IVEREIGH, former adviser to Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, is a writer and journalist based in London.

Members and leaders of the Anglican Communion in Jerusalem June 23, 2008, as part of the Global Anglican Future Conference.

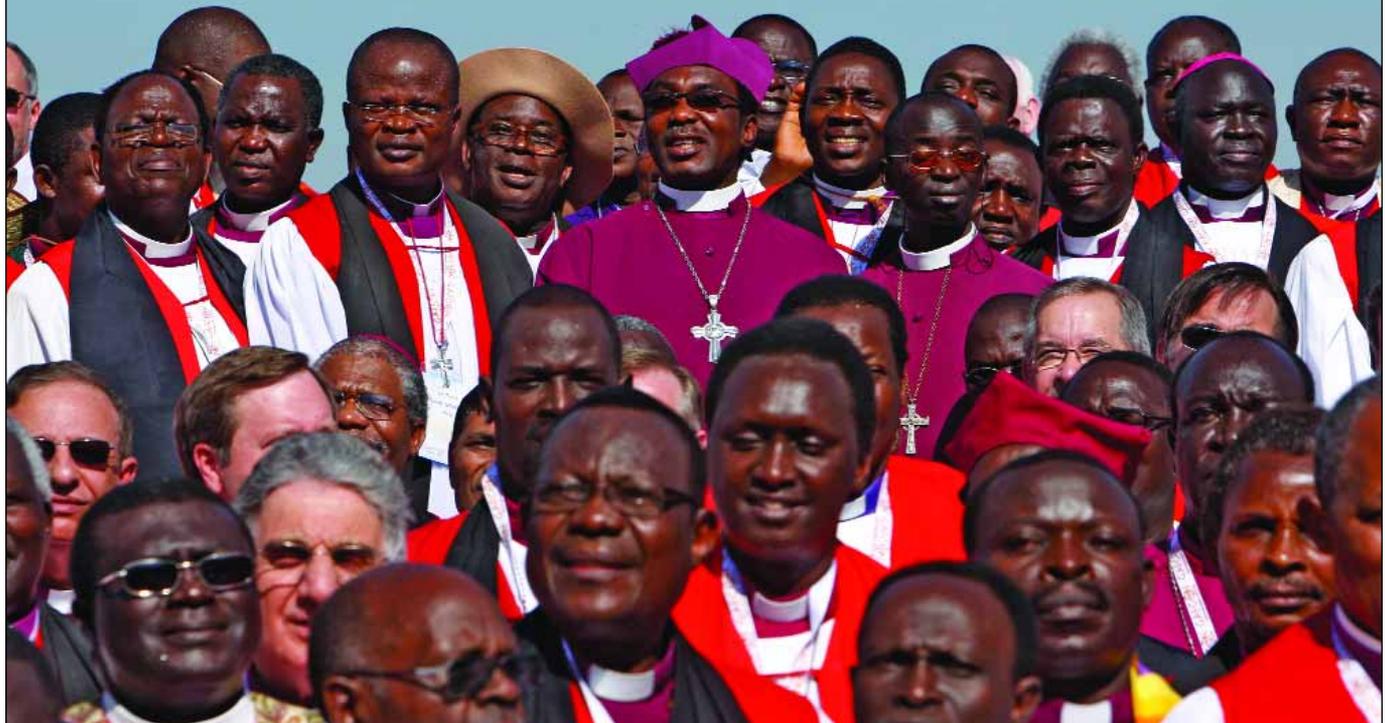


PHOTO: REUTERS/AMMAR AWAD

are causing the church to tear itself apart.

The current crisis is not, in other words, doctrinal; it is ecclesiological. As the center of Anglicanism has moved away from the Church of England to the global communion, the glue that has held the Church of England together has been exposed as inadequate for binding the Anglican Churches worldwide.

### Mission Impossible?

Consider the uniqueness of the historical project of the Church of England, an attempt—intrinsically flawed, to some; to others, heroic—to contain under a single roof the different traditions within Christianity. There are many rooms in the Anglican mansion. “Enlightened” Protestantism (which describes most Church of England bishops) co-exists with “evangelical” Protestantism (which describes much of the clergy and laity); the first stresses reason, the second biblical authority, while Protestant elements operate alongside Catholic ones.

The Anglican Catholics are in turn divided between “liberals” and “traditionalists,” grouped in such organizations as Affirming Catholicism and Forward in Faith. Liberals, whether Catholic or not, favor women priests and bishops, and a change in church policies on homosexuality, because they believe it is part of the church’s job to keep pace with the historical movements for emancipation. Conservatives, whether Anglo-Catholic or evangelical, are against adapting to the age. The Bible tells the evangelicals otherwise, while Anglo-Catholics believe that if Anglicanism should adapt to anything it should be the Catholic and Orthodox Churches of which they believe themselves to be a part.

All can give good reasons for their beliefs, and traditionally all can be accommodated—messily, awkwardly, often with extreme bad grace and sometimes only with imaginative 11th-hour compromises. In Britain, it is almost a national sport to watch the different parties maneuvering around the field at synods. You can almost hear the amazement each time the Church of England pulls clear of schism at the last minute—like the gasps that accompany goals before the final whistle.

Church of England Anglicans are proud of this capacity for compromise, which is bound up with the project of political liberalism. As a national church its task, subject to the will of Parliament with the Queen as its head, has been to bend and adapt to cultural developments. There has been the odd exodus—the evangelical rebellions of the 18th century against “worldly” bishops,

which led to Methodism and emigrations to Virginia, or the 19th-century Anglo-Catholic protest, which caused some to cross the Tiber—but on the whole Anglicans stay put. They know the rules: you fight hard, but must be ready to bargain and compromise.

### Fault Lines

In recent decades, however, the Church of England has been shrinking as fast as the Anglican Church in former British colonies has been growing. These days the average Anglican is more likely to be a struggling African farmer than a lady making cakes for a sale at her English village church. The gravitational center of Anglicanism has drifted southward, to countries where the church is not part of a liberal political project, and where excessive compromise and nuance mute its proclamation of the Gospel. Just as important, the old alliance between church and culture has been broken in England by the rise of secular attitudes and lifestyles: cultural Anglicans believe they have found better things to do on Sundays than worship. The case for bending to culture in order to “baptize” it is therefore looking much weaker, and the Church of England’s authority within the Anglican Communion is correspondingly reduced.

While the Anglican Communion has come of age, what holds it together is not structures, but rather fellowship and a shared cultural history. There is almost nothing that can force the “enlightened” North Americans, who see gay emancipation as a matter of historical justice, to coexist with developing-world evangelicals, for whom homosexuality is an abomination deplored by Scripture. As long as former colonials were taking their cue from the Church of England, the absence of structures was not fatal. But at the last Lambeth Conference, in 1998, concerned about the Church of England’s growing acceptance of homosexuality and what they saw as a betrayal of Scripture, a lobby of bishops from the developing world moved to “save the church” from the forces of secularism. They pushed through Resolution 1:10, which declared that homosexual practice was “incompatible with Scripture.”

This was precisely the kind of unambiguous statement of doctrinal clarity that Anglicanism has been at pains to avoid. Not only was it unacceptable to large numbers of Anglicans in the North; it could not be imposed, because Lambeth resolutions are not binding until they are accepted by member churches.

Resolution 1:10 emboldened the evangelicals to take a stand against the blessing of same-sex unions, authorized by a Canadian diocese in 2002, and against the acceptance of a noncelibate priest, Gene Robinson, as a bishop a year later by the Episcopal Church, in the United States. As Africans and Americans declared themselves out of communion with each other, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams,



Austen Ivereigh talks about the Lambeth Conference at [americamagazine.org/podcast](http://americamagazine.org/podcast).

struggled to establish firmer boundaries within the Anglican Church but without giving himself “papal powers,” as he put it to a journalist in Rome a few years ago. The 2004 Windsor Report of the Lambeth Commission on Communion was an impressive attempt to introduce a more Catholic ecclesiology through covenants and a *jus commune*, but it was largely ignored.

The bishops of the global South, meanwhile, demanded “restorative discipline” for the North Americans and their expulsion at Lambeth 2008 if they did not “repent.” Although Archbishop Williams has not invited Bishop Gene Robinson to Canterbury, he has made it clear that expulsion is not what Anglicans do. When Archbishop Williams decided a few months ago to arrange the meeting of the primates as a listening exercise, rather than to set up a series of debates followed by resolutions, the disaffected evangelicals decided to act. Seeing that Archbishop Williams had no intention of disciplining the Episcopal Church, they headed to Jerusalem for the Global Anglican Future Conference.

### Saving Anglicanism

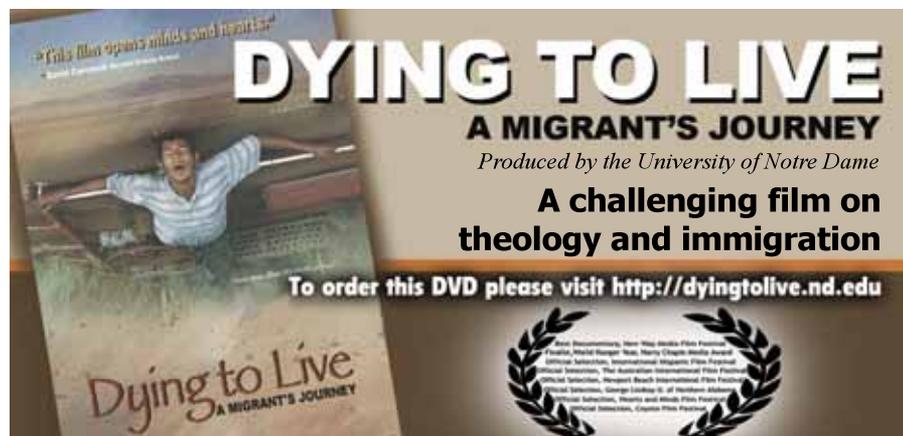
The Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans founded in Jerusalem in June by the churches of the global South is the next step in what the developing-world evangelicals see as their way to save Anglicanism. If the Anglo-Catholic movement of the 19th century sought to recover the national Catholic Church of Henry VIII, FOCA has in mind the Elizabethan Protestant version of Anglicanism, with its Book of Common Prayer and 39 Articles. FOCA rejects not only the “false Gospel” of the North American Anglicans and their “unscriptural” endorsement of homosexuality, but also what they call the “colonial” domination of the global Anglican Church by “northern, liberal mentalities.” The new network includes 280 bishops of African, South American and Australian churches, which include as many as half of the Anglican Church’s 80 million believers. Its rejection of the two instruments of communion—Archbishop Williams’s authority (“We do not accept that Anglican identity is determined necessarily through recognition by the Archbishop of Canterbury,” reads the Jerusalem declaration) and the Lambeth Conference (which they are boycotting)—means that there are now, in effect, two parallel Anglican Communion, split along both geographical and ecclesiological fault lines.

The sniping at Archbishop Williams from all sides has been intense. He is accused of giving in to evangelical black-mail, of being a closet liberal, of being a

ditherer and a Canute-like figure pondering theological abstractions while the waves crash on the shore. In fact his leadership has been extraordinary, a witness to the influence of Catholicism on his ecclesiology. The easier path is the one of expulsions, or at least of taking one side or another; but he has taken the far harder option of trying to forge a communion out of polarization. He has tried to persuade both the global South and the North Americans to renounce their absolute positions for the sake of unity, and not to move impatiently ahead. He exemplified this when—although personally he is convinced that the church will come to accept homosexual partnerships—he vetoed in 2004 the appointment of a gay friend, Jeffrey John, as Bishop of Reading, because he knew it would inflame disunity. The “pro-gay” lobby accused him of surrendering to evangelical pressure, but they misread the decision. Archbishop Williams was demonstrating that a move too soon—however principled—can destroy unity. He has more than once quoted to both the Episcopal Church and the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans St. Paul’s words to the Corinthians (1 Cor 11:33) to “wait for one another.”

So far they have not. A willingness to “suffer for the sake of the unity of the church” is something many Anglicans assume only Catholics have to do. The openly gay bishop of New Hampshire, Gene Robinson, is in England, popping up on television and radio to declare that Jesus loves him and that history is on his side, while the Global Anglican Future Conference evangelicals are growling from abroad, convinced the Bible is on their side. *Kenosis* for the sake of unity is not on the minds of any of them.

But that does not stop two-thirds of the world’s Anglican bishops who are gathering in Canterbury. If at the Lambeth Conference they can listen to each other—and to God—long enough, there may be a chance for Archbishop Williams still to build the structures on which future global Anglican coexistence so obviously depends. Global Anglicanism after the Lambeth Conference may still look like a “slow-moving train wreck,” but there is a good chance, under Archbishop Williams, that it will still be on the rails. **A**



# Still a Prophet

## Gordon Zahn and the danger of ‘milieu Catholicism’

BY WILLIAM A. AU

FOR THE FIRST TIME in its modern history, in December 1965 the Roman Catholic Church gave official recognition to the right of Catholics to be pacifists and conscientious objectors to war. This historic change was to a great extent a result of the life and work of Gordon Zahn. Zahn, who died in December 2007 in Wauwatosa, Wis., would have turned 90 on Aug. 7. The anniversary is an appropriate time to appreciate Zahn’s many contributions and to review the questions his life’s work still poses for American Catholics grappling with issues of war and peace.

Zahn, who was one of the few Catholic conscientious objectors during World War II, paid a personal price for standing against popular opinion. His application for conscientious objector status was initially denied because the Catholic priest on his draft board said Catholics could not be conscientious objectors. Upon appeal, Zahn received his c.o. classification and spent the war fighting forest fires in Camp Simon, a Catholic Worker community in New Hampshire. After the war, when Zahn attempted to resume his student work, he found it difficult to gain college acceptance because of his conscientious objection. Finally, he received a scholarship from St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minn., but faced so much hostility from a student body filled with veterans that he had to transfer to the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

Controversy erupted again in the 1960s, when Zahn published his two seminal works: *German Catholics and Hitler’s Wars: A Study in Social Control*, and *In Solitary Witness: The Life and Death of Franz Jägerstätter*. The first book was a sociological study of the failure of the German Catholic Church to resist the

Nazis. The second was a biography of the Austrian peasant who was executed by the Nazis for refusing to serve in a war he believed to be unjust. Zahn saw a kindred spirit in Jägerstätter, who had to stand not only against the authority of the state, but also against the German church, which refused to recognize his conscientious objection and endorsed the duty of Catholics to serve in the military. Vatican officials and German bishops tried to prevent the publication of both books. Yet Zahn went ahead, and his work on Jägerstätter paved the way for Jägerstätter’s eventual beatification by Pope Benedict XVI in October 2007.

### Ensnared by the State

In his work Zahn’s chief concern was to show how the church can become ensnared in nationalism, rendering it unable to resist the dominant currents of a secular culture. In such a condition, focused on preserving its corporate interests, the church is rendered incapable of prophetic witness and tends to provide a moral sanction for social conformity. This condition Zahn termed “milieu Catholicism.”

He sought to apply his analysis of how milieu Catholicism had crippled the German church’s ability to resist Nazi policies to the American Catholic Church. As he wrote: “This time...American Catholics and their bishops, not their German counterparts, will be facing the crucial test. We responsible citizens of a nation inflexibly committed to nuclear deterrence and a ‘security’ based on maintaining the capacity and the readiness to commit acts of war already defined by Vatican II as ‘crimes against God and man himself’...must decide how far we can go in our compliance.”

In a review of Zahn’s study of the German church, Gordon Allport insightfully noted the question underlying Zahn’s work: “[W]hat has happened

to the edge of Christian conscience? How has it become so badly blunted since the age of the early martyrs, many of whom embraced death rather than place one pinch of incense upon a pagan altar?” Zahn had quoted an unnamed expert at the Second Vatican Council as saying: “We don’t encourage martyrdom. To prevent this, the church will make almost any adjustment.” Such adjustments, Zahn contended, had robbed the church of its prophetic vitality since the time of Constantine and led to the cultural imprisonment of milieu Catholicism.

Thus, Zahn argued that the church must return to a suspicion of the state that characterized its worldview before Constantine. For Zahn, the inhumanity of the modern state was rooted in its reliance upon ever greater force to achieve security, which resulted in ever more aggressive wars and the ultimate insecurity posed by the threat of nuclear holocaust. Zahn rejected the ideological polarities of the cold war and sought to place both the capitalist West and Communist East within a critique of the modern state. In his view the modern state had destroyed the autonomy of the individual, and the preservation of the state depended on the effectiveness of this moral lobotomy. Therefore, a prerequisite for any social reform was a revival of a personal and cultural sense of individual moral competency and responsibility.

### Corrupting the Just War Theory

At the heart of the church’s co-optation by the modern state, Zahn insisted, was the just war theory, and the manner in which its interpretation and application had been used to justify government policies rather than to critique them. While his strict pacifism entailed a rejection of the just war theory, Zahn relished using its categories to argue that no modern war could be justified. The reason: Modern warfare violat-

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THE REV. WILLIAM A. AU is pastor of SS. Philip and James Church in Baltimore, Md.

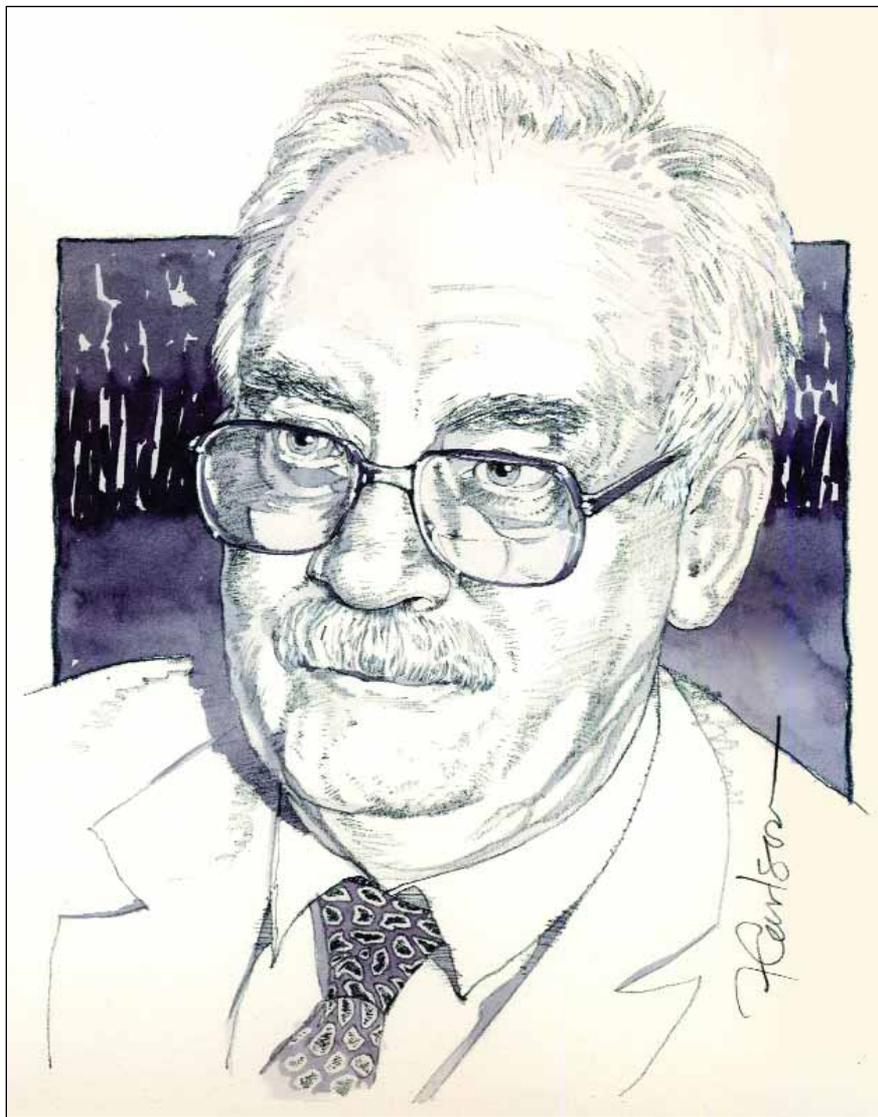
ed the requirements for discrimination and proportionality.

In the 1960s and 1970s, such Catholic intellectuals as James Dougherty and William O'Brien were among the prominent spokespersons for political-moral "realism," a school of thought associated with Reinhold Niebuhr in American Protestantism and John Courtney Murray, S.J., in American Catholicism. In their view, the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union was the defining cultural and moral struggle of civilization. In the struggle, the right of the United States to self-defense required adapting the just war criteria to accommodate the type of conflict in which the United States was likely to find itself. For these social moralists, that meant defending both the morality of nuclear deterrence and an engagement in "limited" nuclear war; for O'Brien, it even included the use of torture. This thinking reflected the majority Catholic opinion of the time.

Zahn vehemently opposed this position, arguing that it demonstrated a total corruption of the just war theory and the cultural enslavement of American Catholicism. Catholic moral theology, he argued, was being guided by the Defense Department, not the teachings of the church. Zahn argued that at a minimum, the Vietnam War violated all the requirements of the just war theory. And he viewed Catholic justifications of it as a fearful parallel to the moral capitulation of the German church during the Second World War.

### Critic of Fuzzy Thinking

He also criticized the American Catholic bishops for their failure to stand up to these developments, pointing out that their opposition to the Vietnam War was belated and stopped short of an outright condemnation. On the issue of nuclear weapons and deterrence, Zahn criticized



the bishops for what he called their "fuzzy thinking," which condemned the use of nuclear weapons while granting a conditional acceptance of their possession. He asked, "How long can 'strictly limited moral acceptance' be extended when those limits are ignored and openly rejected by those responsible for making and executing the policy?"

Despite his criticism of the church's accommodation of the state, Zahn still saw the church as the only institution left in the modern world with the potential to

support individuals making a countercultural stand of conscience. Throughout his life, Zahn remained actively involved with the Catholic Church and strove to have it recognize the moral validity of the pacifist position. During Vatican II, Zahn, along with other American Catholic pacifists, lobbied for recognition of conscientious objection. His work with the English and Welsh bishops led the British Jesuit archbishop, Thomas Roberts, to give a written intervention at the council citing the example of Franz Jägerstätter. This and the work of Zahn and his confreres led to the first formal ecclesiastical recognition of conscientious objection—in the council's "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World."

Zahn co-founded Pax Christi USA, an American branch of the Catholic international peace movement, in 1972. He also found great satisfaction in the American hierarchy's recognition of the right of Catholics to be pacifists in their 1983 pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and*

*Our Response*. Zahn was a primary consultant for the committee that drafted this letter and a ghostwriter for a section of it.

### Examining Current Positions

In the late 1990s the effects of Alzheimer's disease ended Zahn's active participation in the ongoing Catholic debates on war and peace, yet his analysis still poses challenges that we Catholics ignore at our peril. The end of the cold war and the events of Sept. 11, 2001, changed the geopolitical context of the issues Zahn

debated in the 60s and 70s. The neoconservative movement, which has been extremely influential during the George W. Bush administration, has sought to replace the American crusade against Communism with an American struggle against Islamic jihadism.

A new generation of Catholic writers has included prominent spokesmen for this movement, such as George Weigel, Michael Novak and the Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, and has carried the efforts of earlier Catholic realists into current events. They continue the argument that the justice of the American cause demands adaptation of the just war theory to allow for the conflicts the government deems necessary. This includes pre-emptive war, torture and aggressive military policies toward all governments deemed hostile to the United States. Weigel has argued that the just war tradition “lives more vigorously...at the higher levels of the Pentagon than...in certain offices at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.” Novak was sent by the State Department to the Vatican to argue a just war defense of pre-emptive war. Some have gone so far as to argue for the moral alignment of the

church with one political party. Weigel called the Republican Party a “more secure platform from which Catholics can work on the great issues of the day, than a party in thrall to abortion ‘rights’ advocates [and] gay activism.”

Zahn would decry this development as further proof of the descent of American Catholics into the enslavement of milieu Catholicism. He would also no doubt continue his criticism of the bishops’ inability to use the just war theory to stand against such developments. In 2002 and 2003 the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued statements arguing that an invasion of Iraq would not satisfy the requirements of the just war theory. Papal denunciations were much stronger. Yet when the war was launched, and even after the false premises for initiating the war became evident, the bishops could not make an unequivocal break with the government’s policies. No doubt Zahn would also question an apparent shift in emphasis in the bishops’ social teachings from the 1980s, when the issues of war and peace, economic justice and other social issues like abortion were treated with equal force. In more recent years, the issue of abortion

seems to have become primary, with the issues of war and peace taking a secondary place.

In the face of our current challenges, Zahn would ask how we as a church can pretend to be taking a countercultural stance against the “culture of death” if we avoid treating such issues as the Iraq war, torture and foreign policies that promote conflict with the same specificity with which we address the issue of abortion. He would ask whether our current position is to retreat into a realm of personal moral issues, where the church can assert its moral authority without risking a conflict with the state that could affect its corporate interests.

Such questions are as necessary as they are controversial. For they require us to discern whether we are still capable of a prophetic witness that can transform our society or whether we have become the slaves of a milieu Catholicism that desperately seeks to secure a place for its corporate interests. To the necessity of such a communal examination of conscience, and to the disastrous consequences of evading it, Gordon Zahn still stands as a solitary witness. ▲



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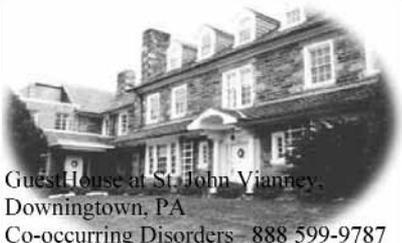
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# The Diabolic Plot

BY DOROTHY DAY

IT IS WHEN THE COMMUNISTS are good that they are most dangerous. And the trouble with many Catholics is that they do not recognize this dangerous goodness but think of Communists as characters from E. Phillip Oppenheim's international mystery novels.

Not long ago a Catholic novel was published by the MacMillan Company, and it was all about the fiendish Bolsheviks and their international agents and how refugee women of gentle birth were kidnapped and returned to Russia to be mated to nobles, in order that they might propagate a race of supermen....

The story is obnoxiously class-conscious. Nobles are nobles by nature as well as by birth, and the lower classes are noble in that they are the faithful servitors of those above them. If they are interested in those of their own class, and in righting the wrongs done them, then they are beetle-browed Bolsheviks.

And lastly, the story is untrue.

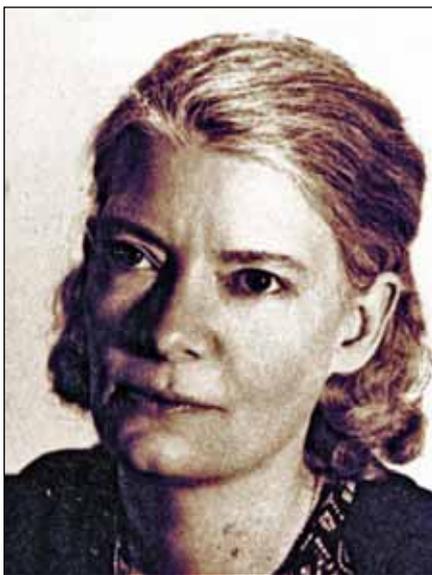
My association with the radical movement began while I was in college and continued for a decade. I worked for the Socialist paper, the *Call*, for the radical monthly, the *Masses*, for the anti-conscription League, for the Communist monthly the *Liberator*, and for the Anti-Imperialist League, and in these various jobs I became acquainted with many people connected with the labor movement, so that I can write from actual knowledge of the goodness of the people with whom I came in contact....

And then there is the case of the boy who lived across the street from me on East Fifteenth Street, between Avenue A and First Avenue, a peaceable Communist youth who was killed a few months ago when a Trotskyite sought to break up a

Communist street meeting by hurling bricks from the roof of an adjoining house.

He had for years been the support of his invalid mother, his unemployed father, and his schoolgirl sister....

He was not wild eyed, shaggy haired, revolutionary looking. He was not a hater of the institution of the family. He worked



and served his father and mother and sister. He had courtesy and respect for his fellow-man, and at night, after his day's work, he studied to better his condition. His life was actuated by a love of his fellows, and in his love for his fellow-creatures he forgot his Creator, if indeed he had ever known Him. Together with other boys on this street, he had been brought up without any religious training, and in growing up, he, with high ideals, had espoused the cause of the worker....

He went to meetings, discussed the questions of child labor, workingmen's rights and unemployment, and donated from his own small earnings towards strike funds to feed the hungry workers, and the mothers and children of other workers like himself.

It is because of the Communist party's ideals, not because of its essential anti-religious aspect; because of its love of the ordinary man, and not because of its hatred towards God, that so many young people are being attracted towards Communism. And being attracted by what is good in their natures, and fervently embracing it as a cause, they come eventually to accept whole-heartedly all the party teaches.

In the Communist movement in America, the question of religion only comes up when a strike is being carried on in a Southern mill town, for instance where the mountaineers are sincerely believers, or in city factories where the foreign labor is Catholic. In these cases, here are Lenin's directions in his writings on religion:

A Marxist must place the success of the strike movement above all else, must definitely oppose the division of the workers in this struggle into atheists and Christians, must fight resolutely against such a division.... We must not only admit into the...party all those workers who still retain their faith in God, we must redouble our efforts to recruit them. We are absolutely opposed to the slightest affront to these workers' religious convictions.... We do not declare, and must not declare in our program that we are atheists.

I do not know whether the boy across the street knew what he was doing—that he was working with the distinct end of tearing down the Church. I do know that the good Irish and German neighbors didn't know it. They said sadly: "He was a good boy, a fine boy," and they wept at his passing. **A**

**A**

DOROTHY DAY, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, was declared a Servant of God in 2000. She wrote several articles for *America* in the 1930s, including this reflection for the issue of April 29, 1933.



Read the full text of this article at [americamagazine.org/pages](http://americamagazine.org/pages).

# Life in the Borderlands

## Lessons from the saints on the diversity of the body of Christ

BY TRACY SAYUKI TIEMEIER

**H**ERE IS A TYPICAL conversation from my childhood. It took place in the second grade in the school cafeteria with one of our room mothers:

“Excuse me, little girl, but.... What are you?”

“Huh?”

“You know.... Where are you from?”

“Uh.... I was born in Washington, D.C.”

“Yes, but, what are your parents? Where are they from?”

“My dad is from Cincinnati, and my mom is from Los Angeles.”

“Noooooooooooo! I mean, you look so...different! What are you?”

“Ooooh! I’m half-German.”

I, of course, knew exactly what she meant all along. But as the woman in the lunchroom of my St. Louis grade school walked away exasperated, I, a particularly willful child, walked away feeling triumphant. Even then, I resented that I was a what and not a who.

I am fourth-generation (*yonsei*) *bapa*, a Japanese-German mutt who was dressed by my mother in shirts from Little Tokyo that said “Hapa, and Damn Proud of It,” even though I was anything but damn proud of it. I always knew I was different. I looked nothing like my cousins, not white, not yellow. I defy easy categorization, which arouses many people’s interest. The dreaded question, What are you?

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TRACY SAYUKI TIEMEIER is assistant professor of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, Calif. She teaches and does research in the areas of comparative theology, Asian and Asian-American theology, women in religion and Hinduism.

followed me wherever I went. I wanted desperately to be normal—that is, to be American. People who treated me as a what inevitably followed one of two paths: either they romanticized me (and my exotic cultural background), or they made fun of me with racial slurs and taunts, almost none of which actually applied to me. The question, What are you? stayed with me, even as I challenged people and began to reclaim myself as a who.

Religious issues heightened this crisis of self. My mother had become a Catholic when she married my father, and I was raised Roman Catholic. I also practiced Shinto and Buddhist traditions, however, with my grandparents, extended family and cultural associations. I learned to create an altar for my ancestors, to talk to them and feed them. This side seemed at the time to be in deep conflict with the Catholic education I was receiving. I was told that ancestor devotion, or ancestor worship, as it was called, was idolatrous, that non-Christians were not saved and that truly committed Christians did not concern themselves with anything non-Christian (which also seemed to mean nonwhite).

I found this to be confusing and embarrassing. But while it was difficult for me psychologically as a mixed Asian-American girl in the very white suburbs of St. Louis, it was not usually cause for public humiliation. I blended into my white school as much as possible. But my private, hidden struggles threatened always to break through the surface and were profoundly concretized through my middle name. I am named after my great-grandmothers, Sayo and Uki. This is a great honor and a grave responsibility. Yet I did not see it that way as a child. I was the

kid who deliberately got myself kicked out of Taiko drum class and begged to eat at McDonald’s every chance I could.

### The Saint Project

It was well known in our Catholic grammar school that we would have to do a project on the saint after whom each of us was named. It was assumed that we were named after a saint—that’s what Catholics did. If it was not your first name, it was your middle name. But I did not have a saint’s name. What was I supposed to do? What would people think? I dreaded the assignment, since I often lied and told people my middle name was Mary. In my private games, I would pretend to be Mary the mother of Jesus, transforming myself into what statues told me she should be, a blond-haired, blue-eyed white girl, clad in flowing blue robes, clearly American and obviously Christian. In these games, I could finally be beautiful.

The school project was not nearly as traumatic as I imagined in my grade-school angst. My teacher was happy that my first name could be a nickname for Theresa; I could choose between Thérèse of Lisieux and Teresa of Ávila. As a child, I felt more of a connection with Thérèse, so I picked her. While I felt rootless at the time—not quite Catholic, not quite American, not quite Japanese—the project actually freed me to construct my own connection to the saints and my own identity. I took the project very seriously and saw it as my chance to define who I was. I was ecstatic to take a saint’s name truly and legitimately at my confirmation. I took a proper saint’s name: Joan of Arc. She was a fighter—like me.

My desire to claim a Catholic, American identity conflicted with what I

was learning about my Japanese identity. My grandmother's home shrine was both fascinating and terrifying for this reason. Ancestors continued to be with us through this shrine, and we continued to owe respect and honor to them. We had to feed them and keep their space clean so that they would want to be with us. They were given rice and water every day, and sake, mochi or oranges on special occasions. They may have been dead in body, but they were very much a part of our lives. You honored and took care of them after death, too, just as in life. They in turn took care of you.

When my beloved Uncle Victor died from a blood infection, I was devastated that I could no longer hang out at his liquor store and play silly games. But I felt him with me at the funeral, not just in spirit, but palpably in the stars and in the wind. Spirits, ghosts, divine signs and revelations were seen to be a common part of life and death. This Japanese-ness I encountered was wondrous, but terrifying when I was told that it was superstition and idolatry. Nevertheless, I lived in a world of cosmic visions, ancestors and duties to the dead.

### Family and Hospitality

Family and hospitality were—and are—unquestioned values. We have sacred duties to one another. Elders, for example, are obliged to pay the check at meals; there is an elaborate ritual of fighting over the check (loudly) that is required for anyone who has reached adulthood. But junior adults must always know the appropriate time to stop fighting and gratefully thank the winner, so that you do not embarrass the generosity of elders. Elders negotiate within an unspoken hierarchy of family place, birth order and that bitter-sweet moment when the family patriarch becomes too old and his son or son-in-law takes the place of honor. These rituals and family passages are masked by feigned anger and firm speech: “You paid last

time,” “You’re my guest,” “It’s my treat.” You are obliged to follow the rules of hospitality not only with close family and friends, but with all extended family and friends, friends of friends, and strangers.

The home shrine is an extension of sacred kinship and hospitality. My grandmother says that her shrine is a part of the home, the room that hosts ancestors; it is essential to keep it as you would any other part of the home. It must be clean and



ART FROM "THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS," BY JOHN NAVA. AT LOS ANGELES CATHEDRAL OF OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS

desirable. In tending to it, you host your ancestors and take care of them, just as they continue to take care of you. She says that a well-kept and beautiful shrine is the best way to ensure that family (living and dead) will be happy and return. When I talk with her, she always speaks of our ancestors in the present tense, for the worlds beyond death are not so far away as we might imagine. Our relationships cross time and space, are physical and real and are just as important in death as in life.

It was my great-grandmother who taught my grandmother the rites of the shrine. She emphasized that tending to the family shrine was an essential component of being a good homemaker. My great-grandmother could connect to Japan through the shrine, hosting relatives long gone and very far away. In the difficult times of World War II at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center, an internment camp, it was her way of main-

taining a connection to family.

My grandmother offers water and rice daily to her family at the shrine. Vertical tablets display the posthumous Buddhist names given to my great-grandparents at their funerals. A bottle of Scotch is a permanent offering to her father; it was his favorite drink. Pictures of deceased family members provide images for devotional focus and prayer. The shrine itself is modeled on the much more elaborate Japanese Buddhist shrine, called *butsudan*. Although my recently baptized Christian grandmother's shrine serves a function like that of shrines in Japanese Buddhist homes, she insists that her shrine is in no way Buddhist. Still, the prayers she recites as she tends the shrine are Buddhist.

### Unclear Boundaries

As a child, this multireligiosity confounded me. I was taught in school that the boundaries between religions were clear and absolute, and that Christians should not be messing with things like Buddhism. But in Asian America, the boundaries are not clear. The religions Asians bring with them to America have already con-

tended with thousands of years of religious pluralism. And Asian-American Christians, Confucians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Taoists will therefore inevitably practice multiple traditions, as successive generations live and work in America. The lines between religion and culture are not clear either. Christian Japanese-Americans who celebrate Bon (a festival for honoring ancestors), for example, may do so in order to celebrate their Japanese heritage. But Bon is a Buddhist festival. Does this mean that they are no longer Christians? Or does it mean that we must rethink the meaning of Christian traditions today in light of Japanese-American practices?

Given my struggles to understand what it meant to be both Japanese and American, my efforts to understand my name, my culture, my religion and myself, it is probably not surprising that I focused on saints as a child. The saints helped me

# Who Cares

## 1. The Reading

I see you everywhere, that bald crown bent forward almost against your  
puffy waist-length winter jacket;  
shoulders hunched, head down between your sheltering hands against the  
blowing wind, the lit match touching your cigarette,  
standing there in front of a string of stores at dawn, as I pass by in the  
rumbling bus, now that you're gone.  
Two years and I see you everywhere as I travel to my tedious, irritating,  
terrifying job.  
I look out and for an instant you are still here, standing on a street corner,  
or walking hunch-shouldered along.  
You rode the bus to tedium over half your life, as I do now these  
only last few years.  
I'm sorry!

## 2. The Critique

"What does 'I'm sorry' mean?" All fired up the Professor asks, and they  
strain  
to analyze, those darling college children.  
"And what do you think?" the Professor asks, looking to me, while  
for one instant I think I'll answer:  
I'd like to write a poem called WHO CARES, about a young (I admit  
sullen)  
student who is just questioned about the meaning  
of some obscure phrase in some enigmatic poem, written by a nobody,  
and I'm forced by the pure integrity of my mind  
to think WHO CARES; let them say what they mean outright! But instead,  
I mumble; "I think she was married to him  
and he died, and only now she realizes all that he did, and that through  
all his years  
he suffered."

*Marilyn Brusca*

**MARILYN BRUSCA** is a retired nurse, who was a later-life student of English Literature at La Roche College, Pittsburgh. This poem is one of three runners-up in the 2008 Foley Poetry Contest.

make sense of my Japanese-American and my Buddhist-Christian identity. I took what I learned of the saints and constructed my own family shrines to them, adopting them as my spiritual ancestors, talking to them and offering them toys and candy. I would set up an altar outside my door and go to sleep. My offerings disappeared during the night, confirmation that my devotion would be rewarded.

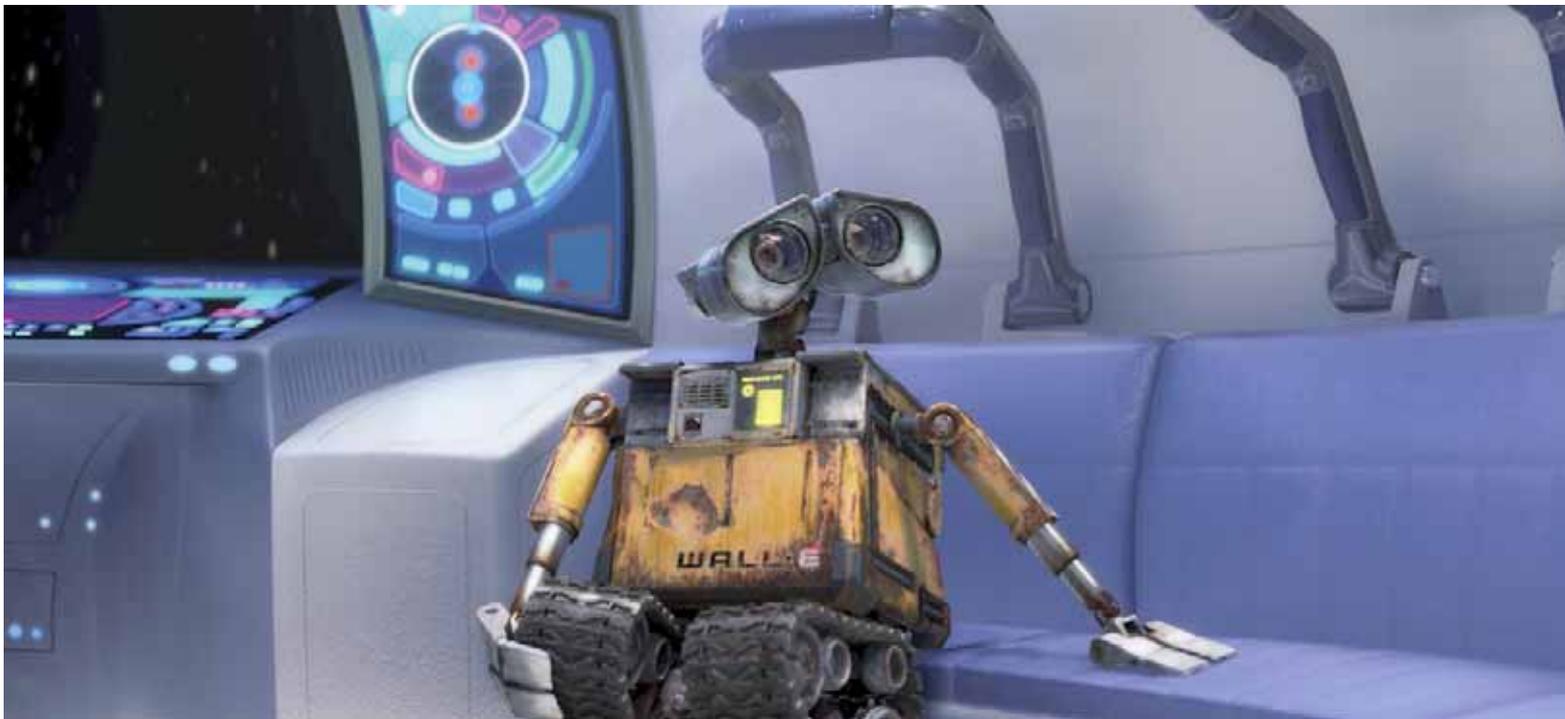
It never occurred to me that this strange act of devotion was not properly Christian. Instead of water, sake and rice, I offered action figures, stuffed animals and lollipops. But in my attempt to hold together all the worlds to which I struggled to belong, it made perfect sense. Just as my ancestors enjoyed food and gifts, it seemed obvious to me that Catherine of Siena would enjoy offerings. This may sound naïve and a little bizarre, but it is not without insight. By connecting the worlds of ancestors and saints, I was able to reconcile my inner confusion about what it meant to be both Asian and American. Ultimately it allowed me to embrace a wider, more complex understanding of myself, my religion and the world.

The Catholic doctrine of the communion of saints is a profound expression of the diverse body of Christ, our fellowship here and now with each other in a mystical body. We explicitly call saints those who have gone before us, crossed the border between life and death and are confirmed to be with Christ in heaven. But they are still with us; the communion of saints includes all of us together, living and dead, all bound together in Christ. It may sound old-fashioned, even strange to 21st-century ears, when we sing the Litany of the Saints or pray for their intercession. But I think we can all learn a lesson from our ancestors about a renewed Catholic imagination as we see the communion of saints as a real, vibrant (and sometimes difficult) family. We are dedicated and committed to one another, in this world and at this time; but this dedication includes those ancestors, those saints who have passed on before us, yet who are still with us today. Let us not lose sight of the divine signs and wonders all around us, of the lessons of the living and the dead, and of Asia and America. May we embrace a wider vision of the cosmos, live in the borderlands and search for meaning in a wider community of relationships. 

## Film

# Romance of the Robots

BY RICHARD A. BLAKE



**T**WICE DURING MY MATINEE visit to the multiplex to see **Wall-E**, two different toddlers started crying inconsolably and had to be taken from the theater. The Disney name and the G rating might have misled their mothers into thinking they were taking their children to a cheery cartoon with pastel flowers, singing bunnies and dancing butterflies. Not so. The unrelieved grimness of the ruined urban landscape in the opening scenes seems to have gotten to the first child. It was too sad and ugly for the tot to process. The second could not endure the brutal pummeling that almost destroys the main character, who by that point in the film had endeared himself to his young audience. Older kids, long hardened to the ways of electronical-

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RICHARD A. BLAKE, S.J., is professor of fine arts and co-director of the film studies program at Boston College in Chestnut Hill, Mass.

ly simulated violence, could probably deal with this material handily and enjoy the story with some enthusiasm. Put me with the older kids. I loved it, but perhaps for very different reasons.

"Wall-E" opens on a blasted urban landscape. What appears to be a jungle of ruined skyscrapers gradually comes into focus through the smog. Tall buildings with empty windows and buckling steel beams mingle with giant mounds of compacted scrap. The city has evolved into a dump, with no distinction between monumental buildings of some past civilization and mountains of refuse. They are one. Recall the post-apocalyptic griminess of "Blade Runner" (1982) or "Mad Max" (1979) to gain some sense of the visuals. (There goes the first of my little theater mates.) The script, written by the director Andrew Stanton with Jim Reardon, takes its time in filling in the back story. We are curious. How did all this come to pass?

The only motion in this rusting uni-

verse comes from the eponymous hero, Wall-E (Waste Allocation Load Lifter Earth-Class), a dented, rust-stained robot, with a head made of two cameras that looks and tilts much like the oversized dome Steven Spielberg put on E.T. (1982). Actually, he looks pretty good for a machine that's been working for 700 years. His solar-powered batteries recharge every morning, like the first jolt of caffeine for the rest of us, and he goes about his pre-programmed tasks without ever wondering about the point of his labors. He wanders through the ruins on his tractor treads, collects scrap, compacts it in his belly and deposits the brick-shaped bundles ever higher in perfectly squared mounds until they rival the ghostlike office buildings. In 700 years, he's been able to compact and stack a lot of stuff.

As we soon discover, Wall-E discriminates in the trash he collects; he harbors nostalgia for the old days. His townhouse sports a junkyard motif, since he is contin-

PHOTO: GNS/DISNEY

ually on the lookout for interesting fellow gadgets. Among his most beloved possessions is a Zippo lighter of 1940s vintage. Known for its durability during wartime, it still works despite the cataclysms it has faced. It is a marvel of technology, a survivor, much like Woody Allen's 200-year-old Volkswagen in "Sleeper" (1973) and like Wall-E himself. No mere automaton, he is a bit of a sentimentalist. He has decorated his lair with Christmas tree lights, and for entertainment in his leisure hours, he plays an old videotape of "Hello, Dolly!" (1969).

I doubt that many of my youthful pals in the theater caught any of this, but the historian in me was delighted by the consistently smart and pointed allusions to earlier movies. The technique also demonstrates a major theme of the film: earlier inhabitants of this city created a disposable culture. As a result, they buried themselves in garbage to such a degree that the planet could no longer sustain life. With his junkyard bedroom, Wall-E treasures artifacts from the past and recycles them for present use. When one of his parts wears out, he simply rummages around to find a replacement. Taking their cue from the robot, the filmmakers have recycled movie history and made a point on conservation of our artifacts without being preachy about it.

One day Wall-E's routine is forever broken when a spaceship deposits a shiny white robot shaped something like a computer mouse. While Wall-E clings to the earth on steel tank treads, the visitor is not subject to gravity. It zips around the debris on what appears to be an inspection tour. Wall-E follows it, and when the two finally meet, the visitor sputters and squeaks like R2-D2 in the first "Star Wars" (1977).

Its onboard computers identify a mutually intelligible language, and the newcomer identifies herself as Eve (Extraterrestrial Vegetation Evaluator). Even the beginners in Sunday school would recognize the mother of human life, but the script uses its symbols so deftly that few of them would have been distracted by the theology. We now have first parents falling in love in a ruined Eden. Because of their love, they offer this dead planet a second chance.

In the tradition of the screwball comedies of the 1930s and 1940s, the lovers come from opposite sides of the track—or of the universe. She's slick and modern; he's a product of clunky 22nd-century technology. Her creators want her back in their own galaxy, simply to see if she has been successful in detecting vegetation—that is, life—on the barren planet. Love will not be denied, however. Wall-E will follow her to the ends of the galaxy, literally.

The kidnapers from outer space bring their cargo back to a mother ship, which looks like a cruise liner designed by the special-effects team from "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" (1977). The human captain is a mere figurehead. Computers actually run the operation under the command of a particularly nasty bit of electronics called AUTO that out-HALs HAL from "2001: A Space Odyssey" (1968). Buy N Large, a multinational corporation that once urged its customers to buy more and bigger and dump the leftovers wherever, launched this artificial planet as a refuge for its favored customers after the earth choked on its own litter. Now these descendants of earthlings have carried their consumer culture to its obvious conclusion. Bulbous bodies,

looking like Teletubbies stuffed into spandex, float on recliners patterned after those first-class airline seats that no one I know could ever afford. They give obesity a bad name. Their bloated faces hide behind screens that provide endless entertainment, and they need only stick out their hand to have a robot deliver yet another megacalorie treat. This world will end not with a bang or a whimper, but with a burp. Keeping with its corporate philosophy, B N L dumps tons of waste into space. The entire universe is theirs to pollute. The plus-sized passengers can't bother about such things. "Get me another giant shake."

Here on the spaceship, the threads of the narrative come together: romantic comedy, space adventure, ecological parable. The fate of the universe rests with Wall-E. AUTO's sinister henchmen capture Eve to keep her from revealing her secret to the humans. Wall-E's attempted rescue pits him against an army of rogue robots who want to tear him apart, rivet by rivet, and nearly succeed. (There goes my second little friend.) The reclining humans hang in the balance. Will they accept the challenge of returning to the planet of their ancestors and building a new society, or do they actually prefer a life of massive Slurpees and mind-corroding television? Will true love triumph in the time-honored Hollywood tradition? If only Indiana Jones or Arnold the governor were here to help them escape!

After nine previous collaborations, the Disney-Pixar partnership has once again pushed the envelope. Of course, one has to admire the technology that has brought animation to such an incredible level of expressiveness. Imagine giving two robots enough personality to make us really care about them. Their romantic relationship has its light moments, like the friendship of R2-D2 and C-3PO, but it also has a serious, human dimension that the "Star Wars" buddies lacked. Even more impressive is the fact that this bit of clever animation, with all its entertainment value, actually poses several serious questions about life on this blue planet without showing a bit of didacticism. The issues it raises last longer than the recollection of the stunning images. I only hope those two teary-eyed viewers come back in a few years and give this film another try. I'm sure they'll find it as rewarding as I did. 

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# Thinking With the Church

## Church and Society

The Laurence J. McGinley Lectures, 1988-2007

By Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.  
Fordham Univ. Press. 546p \$39.95  
ISBN 9780823228621

When Cardinal Avery Dulles speaks, people listen. Five years ago, a group of Catholic bishops and theologians gathered near Denver for an initial consultation on what would become *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' 2005 document on lay ecclesial ministry. The meeting was warm, open, respectful. But even while bishops were offering their comments, papers rustled, cell phones were checked and throats cleared. Whenever Cardinal Dulles spoke, however, the room fell silent. It wasn't because of his voice or his personality—neither of which is overpowering—or even primarily because of his eminent status.

Simply put, Cardinal Dulles was listened to because he taught with authority. His authority derives from his intellect, certainly, and also from his lack of personal ambition (I have never met another church leader whose ego was in such inverse proportion to his talents). More deeply, though, I believe that his authority comes from his listening: to God, to the church and its multifaceted tradition, to contemporary developments. "I want to learn before I speak," he wrote recently, and his life's work attests to self-effacement before the sources of theology. He is, as Robert Imbelli puts it in his fine foreword to *Church and Society*, "an original," precisely in his abjuration of scholarly and personal originality.

For 20 years, since his statutory retirement at the age of 70 from The Catholic University of America in 1988, Cardinal Dulles has been the Laurence J. McGinley Professor of Religion and Society at Fordham University. His primary duty has been to deliver a public lecture each



Read a selection of Avery Dulles's articles for **America** at [americamagazine.org/dulles.cfm](http://americamagazine.org/dulles.cfm).

semester, with an eye toward topics that are theological, controversial and accessible to a general audience. *Church and Society* collects the 38 lectures he has delivered over the past two decades (minus last April's valediction, which I hope will be included in a second edition; it can be found in **America**, 4/21). Substantial and rigorous, these lectures are best read occasionally, rather than sequentially. This is a book to be consulted on a given topic for a concise survey of the state of the question and for measured but firm judgments.

Although the topics of the McGinley lectures range from the death penalty to Mary to hell, Dulles's method is invariably Thomistic and Ignatian. Like Aquinas, he evinces clarity of thought and expression, attentiveness to subtle but important distinctions, command of tradition, dispassion and a willingness to engage the strongest objections to his arguments. He shares with St. Ignatius a desire to think with the church, an emphasis on what the Jesuit *Constitutions* call "more solid and safe doctrine" and a presupposition to put the best possible interpretation on contrary positions and to honor whatever truth might be found therein.

The best lectures in this volume exemplify the strengths of this twofold method. "Religion and the Transformation of Politics," for instance, delivered just weeks before the presidential election in 1992, remains as pertinent as ever on the interplay of principle and prudence in the church's engagement in the political order. "Justification Today: An Ecumenical Breakthrough" affirms the significance of the *Catholic-Lutheran Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, as it notes the important differences that remain between the two communities. "Pope Benedict XVI: Interpreter of Vatican II"—the best essay of its kind that I have read—shows the broad continuities and smaller, but real, discontinuities in Benedict's ongoing interpretation of the council.

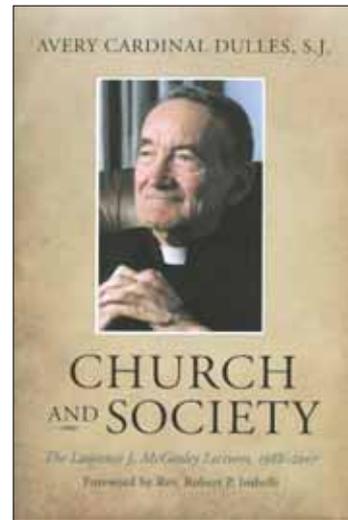
These lectures, like any, nonetheless have their limits. "The Papacy for a

## Book Reviews

Global Church," while rightly affirming the growing need for a strong papacy in the paradoxical face of increasing globalization and nationalism, does not take sufficient account of inculturation as the necessary enfleshment of the one Gospel in all times and places; the relationship between unity and inculturation—or between primacy and collegiality—should not be a balancing act, but a reinforcing one. And, "The Church as Communion" tends to conflate the position of those like the late Jean-Marie Tillard, who

argue for the simultaneity of the local and universal churches, with those who wrongly hold for the priority of the local church over the universal church.

Cardinal Dulles's emphasis on the continuity of tradition, moreover, can occasionally obscure elements of discontinuity or, at least, of discontinuity-within-continuity. "True and False Reform in the Church," which takes its title from Cardinal Yves Congar's book, perhaps does not address adequately Congar's argument that between a "reform of abuses" (which seeks a closer adherence to already-existent church laws and structures) and a "doctrinal revolution" (which is unacceptable), there can be a need for a reform of an ecclesial "state of affairs" or "system" that hinders the church's life. The clerical sexual-abuse crisis, I think, represents one such instance in which a



## The Reviewers

**Christopher Ruddy**, author of *Tested in Every Way: The Catholic Priesthood in Today's Church* (Herder & Herder, 2007), is associate professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn.

**Robert T. Vischer** is associate professor at the University of St. Thomas School of Law, Minneapolis, Minn.

**Kevin Appleby** is director of migration and refugee services for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.

“reform of abuses” is necessary but not sufficient.

And yet what must not be overlooked in *Church and Society* is that this ecclesiologist is thoroughly Christ-centered, something that cannot be taken for granted in a discipline ever tempted to reduce itself to ecclesiastical politics and structural management. A surprise to some readers may be that this least charismatic of men—dry, wry, reserved—is evangelical in the best sense of the word. “The most important thing about my career,” he noted in his final McGinley lecture, “is the discovery of the pearl of great price, the treasure hidden in the field, the Lord Jesus himself.” To know Cardinal Dulles—in person or through these lectures—is to encounter the conviction and the gratitude that come from being in love with Christ.

The most profound lectures reveal this all-encompassing commitment to the person of Jesus Christ: essays on the “new evangelization,” apologetics, the crucifixion, the eucharistic real presence and the Ignatian heritage in theology and in contemporary Catholicism. One cannot avoid his concern for the centrality of Christ in Catholic theology, the Society of Jesus and in the church’s prayer and mission. I sense that he would share the judgment—if

not the trenchancy—of the late Cardinal Jean Daniélou, S.J., who wrote nearly 40 years ago that the greatest problem facing the church today comes from within: its timidity in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Cardinal Dulles will celebrate, God willing, his 90th birthday this August. In the 20 years of his “retirement” he has written, in addition to the 38 lectures of *Church and Society*, eight books and scores of articles. He has done more after 70 than most theologians do in a lifetime (or three). There is no one who can replace him, yet he would be the first to recall the words of John the Baptist: “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

**Christopher Ruddy**

## A Delicate Relationship

### Religion in American Politics

#### A Short History

By Frank Lambert  
*Princeton Univ. Press. 304p \$24.95*  
*ISBN 9780691128337*

Writing a history of religion in American politics, much less a “short” history, is tricky business. Potential pitfalls include the seemingly infinite breadth of the subject, the subtle waxing and waning of religion’s influence on various issues in various eras and the temptation to portray past disputes through the partisan lens of today’s disputes. Frank Lambert has succeeded, for the most part, in his project.

In reality, *Religion in American Politics* is not as narrow as the title suggests. It is practically impossible to focus simply on religion’s role in politics; more accurately, Lambert explores the public dimension of religion in American history. He knows that one slim volume will never be the last word on such an expansive subject, and he does not

pretend that it is. Instead, he picks insightful episodes from our nation’s history to paint a picture of religion’s relevance. The episodes range from the familiar (the Scopes trial, the civil rights movement) to hidden gems (early debates over Sunday mail service). Lambert’s succinct writing gets to the heart of each episode while ably placing it in the broader socioreligious context of the era.

Often books in this genre appear to be aimed at reassuring a particular religious/secularist audience of the correctness of its existing views. They are written in polemical tones and build caricatures of opposing viewpoints that can easily be torn down. Lambert, a professor of history at Purdue University, avoids this ten-

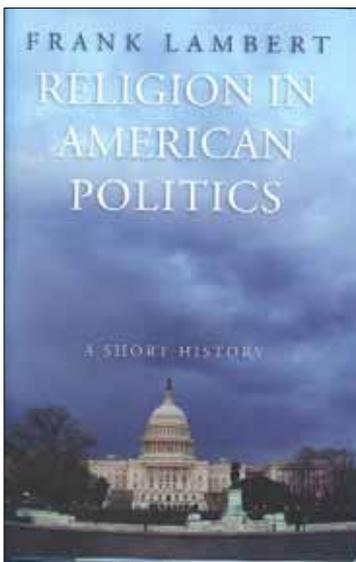
dency, for most of his narrative is painstakingly evenhanded. But by setting the bar of dispassionate analysis relatively high, he brings attention to the few instances where he falls short.

One example is his portrayal of the faith-based initiative, which he dismisses as a product of President George W. Bush’s “determination to direct federal funds to conservative causes.” Federal funds, we are told, had flowed previously to “liberal religious groups” and their social services agencies, including Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army, and Bush saw an opportunity to level the political playing field. Given that funding restrictions on religious organizations were initially loosened by President Clinton, and that the Catholic Church and Salvation Army can hardly be called “liberal religious groups,” this is an area where greater nuance would have been welcome.

Or consider this indictment couched as neutral observation: “Some opponents of religious correctness object to the ungenerous, sanctimonious attitude of the Religious Right toward people they label sinful.” It reminded me of the classic conclusion-assuming query, “Have you stopped beating your wife?” We are to take as a given that “the Religious Right” (an entity, apparently) is ungenerous and sanctimonious, but for some reason only some opponents have objected to that fact. The Religious Right’s successes, moreover, are due largely to human weakness, as Lambert informs us that “conservatives are revivalists” who “appeal to audiences’ emotional needs.” Liberal Christians are less popular because of their “sedate, rational approach,” which recognizes “the complexity of modernity.” The tone is evenhanded, but one gets a sense that a thumb is on the scale.

Lambert devotes the bulk of his book to telling the stories of religion’s role at various points in American history, and it is worth reading because of these stories. But he understandably aims to impart lessons with his storytelling, and while those lessons for the most part do not obfuscate the value of the overall project, they left me with more questions than answers.

In his introduction, Lambert explains that a primary argument of the book is “that religious coalitions seek by political



means what the Constitution prohibits, namely, a national religious establishment, or, more specifically, a Christian establishment.” He claims, in fact, that “[w]hatever the grievance, politically active religious groups are inspired by a particular vision of America as a Christian nation.” These sweeping introductory assertions are belied by the history he so ably recounts.

He explains, for example, that Christian groups pushed both sides of an intense debate over the decision to drop atomic bombs on civilian populations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Just after the bombs were dropped, 85 percent of Americans approved of the decision, but over the next two years that percentage dropped to a bare majority. The debate, in Lambert’s recounting, “triggered a broader discussion of American morals and values.” The question is, how exactly does a religious coalition formed to challenge (or affirm) the moral propriety of dropping the atomic bomb amount to the seeking of a “religious establishment”? And on what basis can we conclude that participants in such a coalition are motivated by their belief that America is a “Christian nation”?

Of course, there are many Christians in American history who have leapt into the public square in order to reclaim our nation’s purportedly Christian heritage or to more closely align state power with Christian identity. (Roy Moore, the Alabama judge who erected a Ten Commandments monument in the state courthouse, then defied a federal court order to remove it, comes immediately to mind.) But to suggest that politically engaged Christians are, by definition, inspired by a vision of the “Christian nation” is silly. Politically engaged Americans of all religious and ideological stripes are inspired by the worldviews that shape their moral convictions and commitments. As a Christian, my criticism of the decision to drop the atomic bomb is inescapably shaped by the teachings of Christ. But I do not offer my criticism in order to bring the nation under the authority of Christ’s teaching; I offer it because I want to contribute to the common good.

This may seem like an obvious point, but it is an important one. If we are serious about welcoming all citizens into the public square, we need to ensure that the

debate centers on the substance of their claims, not the source of their convictions. Lambert is far from the worst offender on this score, as a spate of recent books seems to gleefully blur any distinction between politically engaged religion and theocratic power grabs. But the thoughtfulness of Lambert’s overall work makes his oversight more glaring. **Robert T. Vischer**

## ‘Welcome the Stranger’

### A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey Theological Perspectives on Migration

Edited by Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese  
*Univ. of Notre Dame Press. 352p \$32 (paperback)*

Missing from most of the national immigration debate has been the humanitarian aspects of the migration phenomenon. One can hardly find—in talk radio, in the mass media or in scholarly journals—a serious discussion of the human dignity and rights of the migrants who cross international borders to find work or join family.

*A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey*, a compilation of essays taking a theological and rights-based approach to the issue of migration, provides a needed framework to begin that discussion. Comprised of pieces from a wide range of scholars, advocates and service providers, it engages the contemporary immigration debate from a faith-based, Catholic perspective. The issue of migration has been with us for centuries, and one truth maintains: Migrants are human beings and are imbued with God-given rights that must be honored.

In his foreword to the book, Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez of Honduras captures this theme: “We are called to see in our

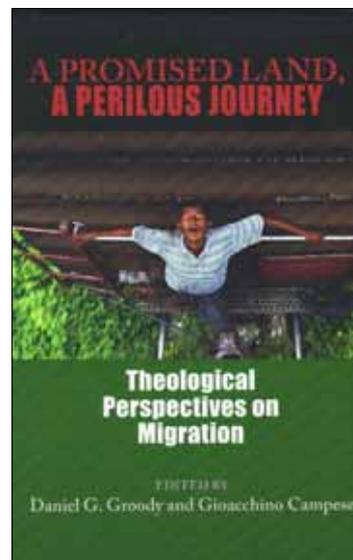
migrant brothers and sisters a common humanity and work together for a common solidarity, that is, a community of love and fellowship reflective of the reign of God.”

Several noted scholars build on this theme in the first part of this four-part compendium, uncovering the theological roots of migration. Jacqueline Hagan of the University of North Carolina opens with a vivid and personal account of the faith of migrants and how religious symbols and rituals are central to their journeys. Peter Phan of Georgetown University looks at the history of the early Christians as migrants and strangers in new lands. Jesus himself was a migrant, an itinerant preacher “having no place to lay his head,” (Lk 9:58) and, profoundly, as both divine and human, part of two worlds. Like Christ, the first Christians became migrants to spread the Gospel. Gustavo Gutiérrez, O.P., of Notre Dame, noted scholar of liberation theology, concludes this section with an analysis of migration as part of the “preferential option for the poor.”

The book’s second part communicates a sense of the mission of the church toward migrants and how it has developed over the centuries, beginning with Christ’s instruction to “welcome the stranger,” for “what you do for the least of my brethren, you do unto me” (cf. Mt 25:35, 40-41). Stephen Bevens of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago offers a thorough analysis of the Christian obligation in this regard. Giovanni Tassello writes on the

Scalabrinian tradition of assisting migrants and provides historical insight into how this mission was developed and continues today. Pat Murphy, the director of Hispanic ministry for the Archdiocese of Kansas City, points out the challenges and opportunities for local dioceses in ministering to a new generation of Hispanics.

Then, in the part entitled “The Politics of Sovereign Rights, Cultural Rights, and Human Rights,” writers con-



front the dichotomy of natural rights and sovereign rights. Where do the human rights of the migrant and the right of a sovereign nation to control its borders intersect? Does one right trump another? These questions are certainly at the fulcrum of the current debate, as manifested in the political terms “amnesty,” “rule of law” or “border security.” But as the contributors to this section suggest, human rights and sovereignty are not mutually exclusive: both can be achieved and, in some cases, complement each other.

Graziano Battistella of the Scalabrini

International Institute in Rome begins the argument by suggesting that a human rights approach to migration creates room for common ground among competing interests. By using human rights as the yardstick for effective policy, economic, social and security interests will be served. “Policies of exclusion,” as he calls them—deportation, detention, worker exploitation—only lead to a failure of all competing interests and exploitation of the human being. This argument comports with the policy positions of the U.S. bishops, who favor

legal status as a way to promote human rights for the undocumented and to serve the common good.

Donald Kerwin, executive director of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, compares a rights-based approach to current U.S. policy and practice. Human rights and national security can go hand in hand, provided the right policies are adopted and implemented. In the case of the United States, post-9/11 security concerns have, in some cases, undermined basic human rights. “National security, at its core, implicates the right to self-preservation,” Kerwin concludes. “The Catholic natural rights tradition, however, cautions against turning security into an ‘idol’ or an absolute good.” In the end, the human dignity and rights of the person should remain a central principle—even in a national security context—and the ultimate measure of just immigration policies.

Concluding this section, Olivia Ruiz Marrujo of the El Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Tijuana, Mexico, draws attention to the sexual violence confronting migrant women, bringing needed attention to an underreported issue—one that makes clear the necessity of a rights-based approach to migration.

The final section of the book returns to the theme of Christ as migrant. Daniel Groody of Notre Dame looks at migration and the Eucharist, the central example of God’s real presence among us. He concludes powerfully: “The liturgy of the Eucharist is a place where we seek to develop a community that transcends all borders, that sees in the eyes of the immigrant stranger a brother, sister, and a real presence of Christ.”

*A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey* is a useful resource for Catholics (and others) who want to reach beyond the dehumanizing language of the national immigration debate and articulate a vision of the migrant as a human being created in God’s image. It does not pretend to engage the anti-immigrant rhetoric so often heard and seen in the media these days, and it will probably not move those who use or agree with such rhetoric. But that is not its purpose. Its purpose is to educate and inspire those who are called to “welcome the stranger” that theirs is not only a just but also a spiritual mission. It accomplishes that goal very well.

**Kevin Appleby**



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# The Future of Nuclear Energy

In “Five Myths About Nuclear Energy” (6/23), Kristin Shrader-Frechette outlined objections to an increased reliance on nuclear energy to meet the nation’s energy needs. The article drew a large response from **America’s** readers. A sampling follows.



## Diversified Holdings

In her analysis of nuclear energy, Kristin Shrader-Frechette is puzzled as to why contemporary thinkers are moving away from the old-fashioned objections to nuclear energy that she repeats in her article. The answer is simple.

Wise investors like to diversify their alternatives. Coal, for instance, is the energy source of choice at present in America, but is the dirtiest energy type that exists. Wind power is of increasing significance, but it has the difficulties of the intermittent nature of wind, the problem of power transmission and opposition from neighborhoods. Hydroelectric power creates problems for fish and farmland availability.

Solar energy is developing fast. But really, the best use of solar power is in a corn or wheat field. The last thing we want to do is to take wheat fields out of food production.

Shrader-Frechette is also concerned about terrorist attacks on nuclear power plants. But 9/11 showed us that terrorists like to attack soft, unprotected targets. They are so much easier to hit, and they can produce massive effects that change a whole culture for the worse. Terrorists,

after all, are not dumb.

To Shrader-Frechette’s question, therefore, of where we go from here, the answer is: in several directions at once. What does any wise investor do?

*Frank R. Haig, S.J.  
Baltimore, Md.*

## Accept What Exists?

As a retired scientist with sixty years of experience in uranium geology and related nuclear energy, I have major disagreements with Shrader-Frechette’s attempt to debunk nuclear energy. Several critical issues deserve mentioning.

She states that “by the year 2050 atomic energy could supply, at best, 20 percent of U.S. electricity needs.” But the 104 nuclear power plants in the United States have annually produced 19 percent of our electricity for many years. New power plants will be built in the near future, and they will easily surpass the 20 percent mark.

Shrader-Frechette also argues that nuclear power is not sustainable because dwindling uranium supplies will force us to use low-grade uranium ore by 2050. However, a joint report from 2005 from the Organization for Economic

Cooperation and Development, the Nuclear Energy Agency and the International Atomic Energy Agency estimated that identified conventional uranium stock would be sufficient for 85 years at 2004 demand levels. New fast reactor technology could lengthen this to more than 2,500 years.

We must accept what exists; the momentum of the nuclear age is a reality.  
*Warren I. Finch  
Lakewood, Colo.*

## Moral Imperatives

There are many good reasons not to build nuclear power plants. The economics don’t play out, the energy pay-back is too long, and carbon dioxide emissions are created in the mining, milling and enriching of uranium. But there are also moral issues to consider.

Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. Uranium mines and radioactive waste disposal sites are usually in poor and minority areas. These groups don’t have the political clout to stop these hazards from coming to their communities. For example, Yucca Mountain in Nevada has been chosen to store nuclear waste even though this isn’t the best place to do

so—the Western Shoshone Indians have lived there for generations and believe it is sacred ground. They too are our neighbors, and deserve our love, not our waste.

Thou shall not kill. The processes involved in nuclear power generation are very much the same as those used in building nuclear bombs. Enriched uranium can be used for either nuclear power or nuclear bombs.

Thou shall not steal. Mankind's dominion over inanimate and other living beings granted by the Creator is not absolute: it is limited by concern for quality of life and requires a religious respect for the integrity of creation. By creating non-natural radioactive waste, we are stealing from all future generations the land we need for storage and security of the waste, and possibly polluting the air, ground and water.

*John Weber  
Boise, Id.*

### The French Paradox

Kristin Shrader-Frechette's article decrying nuclear energy did not convince me. France derives over 75 percent of its electricity from nuclear energy. This is due to a longstanding policy based on energy security. France is also the world's largest net exporter of electricity due to its very low cost of generation, and has been very active in developing nuclear technology. Reactors and fuel products and services are major exports.

Why don't the French have the qualms of conscience over nuclear energy that Shrader-Frechette seems to have? And why is Italy under the new prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, getting into nuclear energy production once again? And why is Japan doing just fine with its nuclear reactors? Do they know something we don't know?

*Gino Dalpiaz, C.S.  
Chicago, Ill.*

### Let the Market Decide

In every country where it is used, nuclear power exists only because of massive government subsidies. Without these subsidies, which in the United States are many times greater than the amounts given to renewable energy sources like wind and solar power, no country would use nuclear power. If nuclear plants were such a

great deal and were safe, the industry would be able to get full insurance coverage on the free market. But it's not able to. The industry refuses to generate power without the protection of a liability limit that is roughly 1 percent of losses.

Nuclear power seems a lot like a mortgage-backed bond: it's flashy, it's complex and for a while it seems to make sense. But in the end it bites you.

*Julia Yang  
New Haven, Conn.*

### Imperfect but Necessary

Many environmentalists, including myself, argue that nuclear power is an imperfect but necessary interim source for our nation's energy, one that should bear a significant portion of the total energy portfolio until truly renewable sources can come online.

Shrader-Frechette admits the nuclear fuel cycle emits only one-seventh of the carbon-equivalent emissions of coal. Both the already-realized and potentially dire future consequences of global warming should justify immediate substitutes for coal combustion, and nuclear technology is already currently available.

Though she presents the higher costs of nuclear energy (including all costs associated with both fuel and waste) as a negative, such comprehensive costs incurred by the consumer would spur conservation measures and energy-saving technologies much more quickly and efficiently than would be spawned by voluntary conservation programs.

Schrader-Frechette correctly emphasizes that the greatest cost benefit will accrue from putting dollars toward energy efficiency programs. Government incentives for nuclear power should be used judiciously until more reactors come online and economies of scale make the technology more competitive with coal.  
*(Rev.) Jim F. Chamberlain  
Clemson, S.C.*

### Nuclear Fears

In her analysis of the safety of nuclear power, Kristin Shrader-Frechette states that safety claims about nuclear power are myths, then uses arbitrary information to support her argument; for example, claims of government subsidies really do not support or refute whether nuclear

plants are safe. Also, offering statements about explosions and meltdowns to scare the reader does little to share scientific information about the safety of nuclear plants.

While we can calculate and project what might occur should there be a catastrophic event at a nuclear power plant, the fact remains that the United States has had no nuclear event of any significance to public safety or health. The meltdown of radioactive fuel at Three Mile Island led to no deaths or injuries because of built-in safety mechanisms and redundant systems. New plants proposed for the coming years will have even more safety built into their operations—twice that of current plants that already operate safely.

She also paints an ominous picture of the dangers of transporting wastes or materials around the country, when in fact there have been more than 20,000 shipments of spent nuclear fuel and high level waste in this country since 1971 without any radiological incident.

Projecting worst-case scenarios into the future for any technology, with no acknowledgment of current and past safety, will generate long lists of why any technology might not be good. The United States must take a broad view of our energy needs with the understanding that nuclear, wind, solar, gas and coal power may all be necessary to meet our increasing demand for electricity.

Radiation is one of the most studied physical hazards in our history. While it is necessary to assure that people are not exposed to radiation unnecessarily, it is not responsible to paint nuclear power as a villain and needlessly cause worry for your readers.

*Kelly Classic  
Rochester, Minn.*

### Hostage to Oil

Relying on 12 million barrels of imported oil per day is sapping the strength of the American economy and taking us to terrible political decisions. I say "full speed ahead" on renewable resources, but we won't get there fast enough to maintain an acceptable standard of living. We must not give up on our ability to solve the technological problems that nuclear energy presents.

*John Dwyer  
Tolland, Conn.*

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### Positions

**CHAPLAIN.** Roman Catholic priest, Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center. A teaching health care facility sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, N.Y., Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center is pleased to carry on the tradition that the Sisters began when they built this hospital more than 50 years ago. We are seeking a Roman Catholic Priest with N.A.C.C. or A.C.P.E. certification or eligibility within one year to join our pastoral care department. Must have ecclesiastical endorsement. Health care experience preferred.

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**PRESIDENT,** Xavier High School, New York City, N.Y. Founded in 1847, Xavier High School is an independent Jesuit Catholic college preparatory school dedicated to providing a rigorous and challenging education to young men of promise in the New York metropolitan area. Serving 935 boys in grades 9-12, Xavier endeavors to produce graduates who are persons of competence, conscience and compassion—"men for others." Among the school's signature offerings are its Junior R.O.T.C. and Christian service programs.

Located two blocks from Union Square, Xavier offers a dynamic urban environment for a diverse student body. More than \$1 million in financial aid was awarded this year. Annual Giving topped \$3.3 million last year, and the school's last capital campaign raised \$14.9 million. The school is debt-free and has a \$25 million endowment.

The President is the chief executive officer of Xavier High School and a member of the Board of Trustees; responsible for the direct supervision of the Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations, the Business Office and the physical plant; and, by delegation to the Headmaster, responsible for the well-being and operation of the educational programs of the school.

Xavier is seeking an energetic and visionary leader with exceptional skills in administration, fundraising and strategic planning. The President must be a practicing Catholic who understands and embraces the tenets of Jesuit education to which Xavier is dedicated.

Wickenden Associates is conducting the search for July of 2009. Call (609) 683-1355, or visit [www.wickenden.com](http://www.wickenden.com) to request the complete position description and details of the application process. Application deadline: Sept. 5, 2008.

**SHEIL CATHOLIC CENTER** at Northwestern University is opening a search for a CAMPUS MINISTER/CHAPLAIN with primary responsibility to the professional schools at the University's Chicago campus. For the past four years, the person in this position has provided quality pastoral care and a professional ethical Catholic-based framework in the areas of law, medicine, journalism, business and other health sciences through educational and formational programming. The Campus Minister/Chaplain helps students anchor their Catholic identity as well as represent the principles of Catholic

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## The Word

# 'Little Faith'

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A), Aug. 10, 2008

Readings: 1 Kgs 19:9, 11-13; Ps 85:9-14; Rom 9:1-5; Mt 14:22-33

*"O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Mt 14:31)*

**M**ATTHEW'S FAVORITE apostle is Peter, and Matthew's favorite description of the apostles' faith before Jesus' resurrection is "little faith." In Matthew's account of Jesus walking on the water, Peter serves as the exemplar of "little faith." Whereas Mark at times portrays the apostles as having no faith at all, Matthew upgrades their image somewhat. A little faith is not perfect faith, but it is better than none at all.

Jesus walking on the water should not be regarded as simply a stunt or a magic trick. Rather, it has a deep ancient Near Eastern background. One of the ways in which people in the biblical world imagined the creation was through the image of the highest or most powerful god imposing order on the chaos represented by the wild activity of the sea. A recurrent image for the creation in the Old Testament and other ancient Near Eastern writings was God walking on the sea, thus manifesting his power and control. When Jesus walks on the water, he is doing what God does.

Only Matthew interrupts the narrative of Jesus walking on the water with an account of Peter's attempt to do so as well. As a kind of test to determine whether it really is Jesus, Peter challenges Jesus to command him to walk on the water. At first Peter succeeds. But then he becomes frightened and flounders. He calls out in prayer, "Lord, save me!" and needs to be rescued. Jesus reprimands him: "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Matthew presents Peter as one of the first disciples, names him first on his list of the Twelve, makes him spokesman for Jesus' followers and relates Jesus' promise

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**DANIEL J. HARRINGTON, S.J.**, is professor of New Testament at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry (formerly Weston Jesuit School of Theology) in Chestnut Hill, Mass.

to make Peter the "rock" on which the church will be built. Nevertheless, Matthew does not flinch from showing the weaker side of Peter, as he fails to understand much of Jesus' teaching, refuses to accept the predictions of the passion and deserts Jesus in the passion narrative.

For Peter to get out of the boat and start walking took faith, courage and hope. But eventually Peter let his fears and self-centeredness get the better of him. Because Peter lacked perfect faith (some-

### Praying With Scripture

- Can you recall some instances of "little faith" in your own life?
- Why do you think Peter began to doubt and so began to sink?
- Why was Paul's Jewish identity so important to him and so significant for his work as an apostle?

thing he comes to exemplify after Easter), his faith grew weak and so he floundered.

The term "little faith" is probably an



ART BY TAD DUNNE

appropriate description of most of us. While we may be sincere in our faith and try always to trust in God's care for us, too often we let our problems and fears get the better of us. We need to learn, as Peter did, that the Lord is still there for us, ready to hear our prayer and stretch out a saving hand.

Today's selection from Romans 9 begins Paul's long meditation on the place of Jewish Christians like himself in God's plan, how non-Jews could become part of God's people and why not all Israel accepted the Gospel. At the outset Paul lists Israel's privileges and prerogatives in salvation history and affirms his continuing allegiance to Israel as God's people.

## Interreligious Dialogue?

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A), Aug. 17, 2008

Readings: Is 56:1, 6-7; Ps 67:2-3, 5-6, 8; Rom 11:13-15, 29-32; Mt 15:21-28

*"O woman, great is your faith!" (Mt 15:28)*

**T**HE IMPORTANCE of interreligious dialogue today should be evident to everyone. Yet when Christian theologians try to find New Testament foundations for such dialogue, they come up against such texts as Jn 14:6 ("I am the way and the truth and the life") and Acts 4:12 ("nor is there any other name...by which we are to be saved"). Christians must take these texts seriously because they represent the basic thrust of the New Testament. Matthew's surprising narrative about Jesus' encounter with a Canaanite woman, however, may offer a point of entry for

Christians committed to interreligious dialogue.

This encounter has many surprising features. It takes place in "the region of Tyre and Sidon," outside the traditional territory of the chosen people. The woman who approaches Jesus is described as a "Canaanite" (not as "a Greek, a Syrophenician by birth," as in Mark). In this way Matthew shows her relation to the ancient pagan inhabitants of the area and very much an outsider to Jesus' people and movement. Moreover, as a Gentile woman in a very patriarchal society, she shows courage and boldness in approach-

ing a Jewish teacher like Jesus, calling him “Son of David” and requesting him to heal her daughter.

Jesus’ role in the initial stages of the dialogue is also surprising. He responds to her request initially in an uncharacteristic and unattractive way by announcing that his mission is “only to the lost sheep of the

### Praying With Scripture

- Have you ever participated in an interreligious dialogue? What happened?
- How would you describe and assess Jesus’ behavior in his interaction with the Canaanite woman?
- Why is interreligious dialogue so important today?

house of Israel.” Matters grow worse when he refuses her plea by lumping her together with “the dogs,” a pejorative term applied by some Jews to non-Jews. As the story proceeds, these two statements serve as the occasion for highlighting the Canaanite woman’s faith in Jesus.

The greatest surprise is that through dialogue Jesus seems to change his mind and comes to display great openness to the faith of this non-Jewish woman. This is the only debate in the Gospels in which Jesus seems to lose an argument. One can interpret Jesus’ behavior as “only a test” of the woman’s faith. But one can also find in it an instance where through dialogue Jesus learns something and changes his attitude and behavior. He appears to come to understand better that his mission includes not only his own people, Israel, but also outsiders like the Canaanite woman and her daughter. While the primary goal of interreligious dialogue is better mutual understanding, it often happens that through such dialogue we come to understand ourselves better and make changes for the good of all.

A key New Testament text in dialogues between Christians and Jews since the Second Vatican Council has been Romans 9–11, which is Paul’s long and dense meditation on the place of the Jewish people in God’s mysterious plan of salvation. In today’s excerpt Paul insists that Israel has played an essential role in that plan and continues to do so, and that God’s gift and call to his people remain irrevocable. **Daniel J. Harrington**

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