

# America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REVIEW

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## 'Pastors, Not Princes'

THE ROLE OF THE BISHOP UNDER POPE FRANCIS  
DIEGO FARES

THE EDITORS ON  
'LAUDATO SI'



**T**he late Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J., a frequent contributor to these pages, is remembered in more scholarly circles for his most famous work, *Models of the Church*, a postconciliar examination of the principal ways in which Catholics describe the essential identity of the church. The “models” are six different answers to the questions “what is the church and what is its primary purpose?” Cardinal Dulles acknowledged that his models were simplified descriptions and could not “do full justice to the complexities of individual positions.” Nevertheless, he thought his method was useful because it identified “the issues and choices to be made and the theoretical implications of pure positions.” Cardinal Dulles, then, was not so much holding up a mirror to the church as holding up a particular kind of mirror, one that distorts the subject and yet still reveals something meaningful, much like what happens when we stand in front a mirror in a fun house.

The book came along at just the right time. In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, people were asking big questions about the nature of the church. That makes sense; in Catholic theology, ecclesiology is destiny. What the church should do and how we should be in the world, in other words, will be guided in large part by who we understand ourselves to be as a church. Thus Cardinal Dulles also applied his models to an examination of five different ways of understanding the sacrament of holy orders.

The first model of holy orders, according to Cardinal Dulles, is the clerical model: “Ministry is performed by those who have authority to impose beliefs and give commands in the name of Christ.” In this model, ministry is primarily juridical in nature, especially at the episcopal level. The second model is that of pastor. The accent here is less on objective ex officio authority and more on the subjective charism of ecclesial leaders.

The third model is the “mediatory” model: through the sacrament of ordination, a class of persons is “set apart for the sacred ministry” in order to mediate an experience of God, especially in the Mass. The fourth model is that of preacher, the one charged with proclaiming the “faith, repentance and reform” envisioned by the Gospel. The final model envisions the church as servant and the priest as an organizer who encourages “coalitions dedicated to the promotion of peace and justice.”

Cardinal Dulles’s framework provides a useful roadmap for this week’s cover story. “The fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders,” said the fathers of the Second Vatican Council, “is conferred by episcopal consecration.” Our understanding of what a bishop is, in other words, depends in large measure on what we think a deacon or a priest is. But there is another reason why Cardinal Dulles’s methodology is useful. In the spirit of the classic “both/and” methodology of Catholic theology, one that resists false choices, a robust understanding of priesthood and episcopal service will most likely incorporate elements from each of the five models. It is equally true that an overemphasis on one particular model, to the exclusion of the others, will likely distort and impoverish our understanding of ministry.

This was Cardinal Dulles’s view, at any rate. His preferred symbol of priesthood was that of the Good Shepherd, the one who governs but also serves his flock. Most important, however, the Good Shepherd loves his flock and must be ready to give his life in deeds as well as words: “The shepherd, as the Gospels tell us,” Cardinal Dulles wrote, “must have a deep love for the sheep, know them intimately, lead them toward good pastures, defend them, and go out in search of those who stray from the fold.” I suspect that Pope Francis would completely agree.

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Cover: Procession of bishops at the beatification  
Mass of Archbishop Oscar Romero in San  
Salvador, May 23. CNS photo/Lisette Lemus

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## ON THE WEB

Expert commentary on the environmental encyclical "Laudato Si'." Plus, **Robert David Sullivan** begins a series on each state's role in modern presidential politics at **(Un)Conventional Wisdom**. Full digital highlights on page 19 and at [americamagazine.org/webfeatures](http://americamagazine.org/webfeatures).



### A Senate Vote Against Torture

In a rare display of bipartisanship, the U.S. Senate approved on June 16 an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would prohibit the use of torture by every federal agency. The measure comes six months after a report by the Senate Intelligence Committee revealed the “enhanced interrogation techniques” used on detainees held by the Central Intelligence Agency were more brutal and less effective than Congressional overseers and the public had been led to believe.

The amendment, co-sponsored by Senator Dianne Feinstein, Democrat of California, and Senator John McCain, Republican of Arizona, restricts the U.S. government to interrogation and detention techniques included in the *Army Field Manual*, mandates that the manual be updated every three years to ensure compliance with U.S. law and best practices, and requires the International Committee of the Red Cross to be given access to all detainees.

Unlike the torture ban introduced by President Obama early in 2009, which could be reversed by his successor, the McCain-Feinstein amendment, should it become law, would bind future administrations. That is significant. While the amendment passed by a wide margin (78 to 21), three members of the Republican leadership voted against it, as did the presidential hopeful Senator Lindsey Graham. Another 2016 contender, Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, missed the vote but told *The Guardian* he “would have voted no” because he did not support “denying future commanders in chief and intelligence officials important tools for protecting the American people and the U.S. homeland.” We now know definitively that torture did not make us safer. Whoever takes up residence in the White House in 2017 must not be given a chance to revive that myth.

### Eugene Kennedy’s Gift

Eugene Kennedy, who died on June 3 at the age of 86, happily navigated several worlds. He was a Maryknoll priest (1955–77); a professor of psychology at Loyola University Chicago (1969–95); and an activist intellectual former priest, writing books on psychology (*On Becoming a Counselor*, 1977), contributing to *The National Catholic Reporter* and speaking at Voice of the Faithful meetings (1977–2015). He was also the man at the center of a network of friendships that included Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, the Rev. Andrew M. Greeley, Mayor Richard J. Daley, Jacqueline Kennedy and Norman Mailer, whose biography he reviewed for *America*.

Perhaps his greatest legacy was the study he wrote with Victor J. Heckler, *The Catholic Priest in the United States: Psychological Investigations*, published in 1972. It concluded that of the 271 priests in the study, two-thirds were emotionally underdeveloped and incapable of forming healthy, trusting, nonsexual relationships. Seen in that context, it foreshadowed the sexual abuse scandals of the coming years.

Years before this he had proposed that seminaries become coeducational to break the isolation of young men shut off from the world they were supposedly being trained to love and serve. He also anticipated Pope Francis’ powerful critique of clericalism. In 2002 he wrote in the N.C.R., “The priesthood is not dying, but the clerical state is dead.” Meanwhile he defended the choice, not the rule, of celibacy, which he called a “vision of the Christian meaning of love.”

### Raise the Age

Kalief Browder spent three years in jail on Rikers Island in New York City for allegedly stealing a backpack at the age of 16. While at Rikers, Browder faced constant physical abuse from prison guards and fellow inmates and spent most of his time in solitary confinement. He was never tried. After his release, he spoke openly about the trauma he experienced, saying, “I’m mentally scarred right now.... Because there are certain things that changed about me and they might not go back.” On June 6, Browder committed suicide.

Mr. Browder was one of many teenagers prosecuted as adults in New York; North Carolina is the only other U.S. state that prosecutes people as young as 16 in this manner. Now, in a new effort called Raise the Age New York, a group of activists that includes formerly incarcerated persons, faith leaders and members of law enforcement, is demanding that New York State raise the age of criminal responsibility for children. Advocates argue that because adolescent brains are not yet fully developed, the emphasis in dealing with juvenile offenders should be on rehabilitation rather than punishment. Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City has introduced a plan that would gradually reduce the population at Rikers. Along with other New York City officials, he has also approved a plan that prohibits solitary confinement for inmates 21 and younger.

Four days after Kalief Browder’s death, another Rikers inmate, 18-year-old Kenan Davis, hanged himself in his cell. While Mayor de Blasio’s reform proposals would help, the age for prosecuting young offenders as adults should also be changed. The prison system should not contribute to one more teenage death.



# Mother and Sister Earth

It will take years to take the full measure of “Laudato Si,” Pope Francis’ new encyclical on the environment, and assess its impact. Pope Leo XIII wrote about the rights of workers in “Rerum Novarum” (1891) in response to the Industrial Revolution, but unions still struggle to remain relevant in a swiftly changing economy. St. John XXIII warned about the dangers of nuclear war in “Peace on Earth” (1963), but world leaders continue to grapple with the complexities of enforcing a nonproliferation regime. Yet these documents marked watershed moments, when the church directed the world’s attention to a calamity that no one nation could face alone, prescribing remedies but also outlining the spiritual ills that impede progress and reform.



With “Laudato Si,” the church now trains its focus on the plight of “our common home,” offering both an accessible summary of the climate crisis and a call to conversion. It is an authoritative document, using the power of the papacy to draw attention to the climate crisis. It is also a humble document, infused with the spirit of dialogue and engagement born of the Second Vatican Council. Quoting the Southern African bishops’ conference, Pope Francis writes, “Everyone’s talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God’s creation” (No. 14). It is a call to action that should be taken up with urgency by individuals, churches and governments.

With the arrival of “Laudato Si,” the voice of religion has now decisively entered the climate change debate. The document is already controversial, and not just because it accepts the scientific consensus that global warming is a result of human activity. Even before it was released, the encyclical was strongly criticized by climate change skeptics. “Laudato Si” is a challenge to these individuals, but not only to them. It offers a deep critique of the global capitalist system and, perhaps most radically, of the absolutist notion of private property, pointing instead to “the universal destination of goods.” This idea—that property does not belong to any one person but is a God-given resource for the commonweal—has long been a part of Catholic social teaching, but it is sometimes overlooked. Pope Francis reminds us that all of creation belongs to God and is in urgent need of common care and protection.

“Laudato Si” is also a challenge to those of us who live in developed countries. It is tempting to believe that technology holds the key to addressing the environmental

crisis. Pope Francis writes that while clean energy and other technical remedies are worth investigating, they are not sufficient to the problem at hand. We must also examine our lifestyles. It will be impossible to sustain life on this planet if we all expect to live according to the dictates of first-world consumer culture.

What may be most compelling about the encyclical is the way it connects environmental concerns to other social justice issues. In a fractured world, advocates for the poor, the sick or the marginalized are often separated into camps. In some quarters, environmental advocates are distinguished from advocates for human rights because concern for our natural world is seen as different from, even less important than, the plight of the people who inhabit it. “Laudato Si” exposes the error of this logic by offering a fully integrated theology. In the vision of Pope Francis, the people of the earth are inseparable from the ground upon which they walk. “We have forgotten,” he writes, “that we ourselves are dust of the earth (see Gn 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters” (No. 2).

There are many other strands to this encyclical. It is an ambitious document that strays down some unexpected pathways. It is surprising, for instance, to encounter a critique of society’s addiction to technological devices in an encyclical dedicated to the natural world. Some of these arguments are more effective than others, but taken together they are compelling. They force the reader to think about the myriad connections that tie us together as a human family living on a fragile planet.

“Everything is connected,” Pope Francis writes in a phrase that is sure to be widely circulated and taught. The poor are connected to the rich, paying the price for the latter’s ecological malfeasance. Humans are connected to the abundant species that inhabit this planet. We are all connected to God who gifted to us this created world. If we look at our problems in this way, Francis offers us hope that we can meet the challenges we face. “Laudato Si” redirects our attention to the spiritual resources in the Christian tradition that point the way forward. The world that needs saving, after all, is the world our Savior walked. “The very flowers of the field and the birds which his human eyes contemplated and admired,” the pope writes, “are now imbued with his radiant presence” (No. 100).

## REPLY ALL

### Nothing New

I found “The Gospel According to the ‘Nones,’” by Elizabeth Drescher (6/8), rather disappointing. The author drew broad generalizations about the alleged “Good Samaritan” spirituality of nones as opposed to the more restrictive “Golden Rule” spirituality of Christian adherents without any real evidence to back it up. She also treated the centuries-old “Jesus was a great teacher but not divine” approach as if it were a fresh new insight. (See Thomas Jefferson and his New Testament with the miracles edited out.) The very small percentage of young nones who are actually conversant with the Gospels should be reminded that they were compiled by people who believed that Jesus was much more than a cool teacher and neat guy.

MARK E. RONDEAU  
*Online Comment*

### Misleading Statistics

“Tracking Train Safety” (Current Comment, 6/8) has left me shaking my head because of the misuse of statistics. The fatalities cited are largely due to vehicle/train collisions at highway grade crossings and trespassing. Positive train control technology, which the railroad industry is fully committed to installing, will not prevent these collisions or keep people from entering on railroad tracks.

According to Federal Railroad Administration data, in 2014 there were 267 deaths as a result of grade crossing collisions and 527 trespassing fatalities.

Rather than using an alarmist number of one death per 84,300 miles to arouse concerns of railroad passengers, a more accurate number would take the annual total number of passenger train miles operated by the nation’s

commuter agencies and Amtrak and divide that number by the number of passenger fatalities. I am sure the number of miles a passenger would have to travel in order to have a chance of being involved in a fatal accident would be far higher than 84,300 miles.

Railroads favor the elimination of grade crossings; however, communities may feel differently about this for various reasons. Regardless, we definitely need to spend more money on infrastructure.

KELVIN MacKAVANAGH  
*Berlin, N.J.*

*The writer is the secretary of the New Jersey Short Line Railroad Association.*

### Impossible Teachings

It was refreshing to read “Relying on Each Other” (5/18), in which Rachel Espinoza and Tawny Horner approach the decades-old elephant in the room. The topic of family planning outside the “natural” method is almost never mentioned in any Catholic publication. There was nothing new in what the authors had to report. We are all too familiar with the impossibility of trying to live up to the church’s teaching.

Unfortunately, many thousands of people were severely affected by what the church imposed by its unrealistic, impractical and perhaps even cruel teachings. Many of us have seen the resultant mental strains (three nervous breakdowns suffered by my mother of 10 children), poverty and the unwanted pregnancies that resulted in child abuse.

I truly feel that the unhealthy attitudes regarding human sexuality could have been a cause of the tragedy of pedophilia in our beloved church. It may seem a stretch, but many disrespected “extra” children made for easy prey as they searched for a modicum of affection and recognition.

EILEEN LENT CASEY  
*Cape May, N.J.*

### Church in the Street

The picture accompanying “Archbishop Lori Seeks to Return Hope to ‘Two Baltimores,’” by Kevin Clarke (5/18), shows the archbishop walking in the streets of Baltimore within three days of the unrest. We read he “was pondering how the local church could respond to the crisis in the city’s street.” By contrast, last August I distinctly remember the response of Archbishop Robert Carlson of St. Louis after the Ferguson unrest, when he called the Catholic community to prayer and hosted an archdiocesan Mass to pray for peace.

Please don’t get me wrong; as a Catholic schoolteacher I am always encouraging my students to pray for the issues in our community. But I am encouraged by a news story that shows an archbishop dealing with our country’s civil unrest by exploring ways that our church can be a bridge builder.

In 2001 then-Auxiliary Bishop Lori of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., got involved in the case of a man who was protesting the church’s abuse scandal. Finding out that the man was himself abused while in Italy, Bishop Lori went out of his way to help the man get counseling and support. Bishop Lori understood the concept of structural sin and accepted that the effects of other erring churchmen must be shared by all churchmen.

If he can admit that structural sins of his fellow priests are a part of his consciousness as he invites police officers to the meeting table, then perhaps he can teach the rest of the civil community about their sharing in the structural sins of law enforcement.

DAVID KAPPESSER  
*Cincinnati, Ohio*

### Good and Right

In “A Call To Virtue” (5/18), Jeffery Sachs points out the conflict between

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the ideology of rights embraced in U.S. culture and Pope Francis' call to a virtuous life. The founding fathers would have been wise to endorse the primacy of the pursuit of goodness rather than of happiness as they defined the fundamentals for life in this fledgling nation. The pursuit of goodness brings much happiness in life and positions one to manage well when life is not happy.

By its nature, the pursuit of goodness disposes one to serve others, be compassionate and look for the blessing that surrounds them. Most religious traditions espouse the Dalai Lama's contention, "If you want others to be happy, practice compassion; if you want to be happy, practice compassion." The Beatitudes are Jesus' directions to the pursuit of goodness in one's life. That sermon, coupled with a prayerful reading of Psalm 119, provides a clear, simple spiritual direction for those who will take the Beatitudes to the streets of their homes, schools, workplaces and communities. This is the short route to the life of virtue posed by Pope Francis.

ANDRE F. LIJOI  
*York, Pa.*

### Neighborhood Catholics

Re "Your Average American Catholic," Mark M. Gray (5/18): As someone who came into the church through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in 1989 and has been an active member and daily Mass-goer since then, I've gradually learned about the mid-century church from my cradle-Catholic contemporaries. So often they talk about a complete small world in which everyone in the neighborhood was Irish or Italian or Polish or whatever. The parish was a place where people could speak their ancestral language and eat their traditional food, regardless of whether or not what they heard from the pulpit influenced the way they lived. Now, the grandchildren of those "ghetto Catholics" belong to a parish only if a shared belief in the

teaching of the church brings them there regularly on Sundays. It would be good to have more people join us as sincere believers, but the presence of those for whom the parish was mainly an ethnic club may have given a false idea of how many people actually believed in church teaching in past decades.

EVA ARNOTT  
*Online Comment*

### The Value of JINOs

Re "Company Men," by William J. Byron, S.J. (5/11): One has to look at the value proposition of attending any college, including Jesuit colleges and universities. Many of these schools are really JINOs (Jesuit in name only), where one rarely comes across a Jesuit instructor and the "Jesuitness" of the university is difficult to find. When universities have endowments in the billions of dollars but still charge high tuition (Boston College was recently rated among the 50 most expensive schools in the United States, yet it has an endowment north of \$2 billion), one has to question the true purpose of these schools. Is it education or narcissistic greed?

There are too many administrators with six-figure salaries contributing nothing to the educational experience. Get rid of at least 50 percent of these administrators, and then use half the savings to cut tuition and the other half to hire or increase salaries of professors. I would say cut 100 percent of the administrators, but you still need a janitorial staff and groundskeepers, who actually do provide value.

EDWARD RAY  
*Online Comment*

### Behind Prison Walls

Re "Family Breakdown," by Robert Polito (Reply All, 5/11): I am a prisoner in an Arizona prison. The state spends about a billion dollars on the Arizona Department of Correction, but little of that money goes to the "recreation, health care and education

for prisoners" that Mr. Polito writes of. Most goes to pay guards and security.

Prisoners who want a G.E.D. must pay \$100 for the test—from their \$0.25 per hour pay. Recreational equipment includes a dusty field, a few balls and bats and some conditioning equipment, less than what a junior high school would have. Health care is provided by a for-profit healthcare company. Older prisoners, like myself (age 71), are denied hearing aids and other elder care.

Maybe it is different in New York, but in Arizona, and I suspect in many states, prisoners are confined to cage-like cells with little to do and no future. The problem with Mr. Polito and others who believe prisoners are coddled is that they just don't understand what goes on behind prison walls.

ROBERT OLDFIELD  
*Florence, Ariz.*

### The College Question

In "Four Questions Before College" (4/27), Bill McGarvey appears to be saying that all high school graduates will enter or try to enter college. Perhaps the first question should be, "Do you want to go to college?" If the answer is no, than a follow-up question might be, "What are your plans for further education or career?"

There are many good, well paying jobs in manufacturing and the building trades; many of these jobs go begging because there are no people willing to fill them. I fear that we as a country have fallen into the trap of thinking that only a college education will help young people succeed. Do high school guidance counselors work with their youth to explore all the opportunities available, including trade schools and technical colleges?

If my first sentence above is true, then I think Mr. McGarvey does a disservice to our youth.

(REV.) GEORGE STAMM  
*Eau Claire, Wis.*



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# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

CLIMATE CHANGE

## Encyclical From Pope Francis Welcomed as Global Call to Arms

**DUSTSTORM.** A boy and a woman struggle against the wind while looking for water in Wajir, Kenya.



PHOTO: JERVIS SUNDAYS, KENYA RED CROSS SOCIETY

Addressing “every person on the planet” in a groundbreaking encyclical, “Laudato Si,” Pope Francis speaks frankly and passionately about the “global environmental deterioration” of “our common home,” appealing “for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet.”

Pope Francis expressed the hope that his first solo encyclical, released June 18, “can help us to acknowledge...the immensity and the urgency of the challenge we face,” because “if present trends continue, this century may well witness extraordinary climate change and an unprecedented destruction of ecosystems, with serious consequences for all of us.” But it will hit the poor hardest, since many of them live in areas particularly affected by climate warming. Like the prophets of old, Francis warns that the situation “will continue to worsen if we continue with current models of production and consumption.”

His encyclical leaves little doubt: climate change is happening; it is mainly the result of human activity; and it is up to all people of good will to do something about it. “We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all,” Francis writes.

The spirituality of the saint whose name he has taken as pope, St. Francis of Assisi, is the soul of the encyclical. It is this profound spirituality that gives the encyclical real power in generating a true conversion on the environment.

Explaining what this conversion entails, Francis says it is morally imperative that humankind take responsibility for what it is doing, act to slow down and reverse the trends and make every effort to prevent further damage. He says this requires a change of heart and lifestyles and establishing new ways of producing, distributing and consuming.

“Laudato Si” encourages families, religious and church communities and civic organizations each to play a part in caring for “our common home.”

His experience in Latin America taught Pope Francis to view critically the underpinnings of the global economy. He observes that “economic powers continue to justify the current global system, where priority tends to be given to speculation and the pursuit of financial gain, which fail to take the context into account, let alone the effects on human dignity and the natural environment.” He underlines the fact that “environmental deterioration and human and ethical degradation are closely linked.”

In “Laudato Si,” Pope Francis warns that “humanity has entered a new era in which our technical prowess has brought us to a crossroads.” Never before “has humanity had such power over itself, yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, particularly when we consider how it is currently being used.” The first pope from the global south urges everyone “to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” and to respond with action.

Despite the many challenges, Francis remains confident change is possible because “the Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.”

The pope takes note of the so-far “weak international political respons-

es” to climate change and remarks that “the failure of global summits on the environment make plain...too many special interests and economic interests easily end up trumping the common good and manipulating information so that their own plans will

not be affected.” He has positioned his encyclical to have maximum impact during upcoming world summits in New York and Paris, where “Laudato Si” may serve as a global wake-up call before it is too late.

**GERARD O’CONNELL**

## GUN VIOLENCE

### Mourning Charleston’s Victims

**E**xpressions of regret and horror, prayer services and moments of silence across the country followed in the aftermath of a shooting in a historic church in Charleston, S.C. The rampage on June 17 claimed the lives of nine people. Once again the nation faced the grim, inexplicable spectacle of a mass slaying while a police dragnet began for the 21-year-old suspect Dylann Roof.

His motives for the attack on an evening Bible study group were unclear at press time, but acquaintances described Roof as troubled since childhood and a website he apparently constructed was full of white supremacist rhetoric and imagery. The fact that the attack occurred in a church was bad enough; what has been worse is the clear likelihood that the rampage had been racially motivated—especially as the nation is already reeling from a number of controversies related to the questionable and at times homicidal use of force against African-American men and boys in recent encounters with police around the country.

When the suspect was eventually arrested 245 miles from Charleston in Shelby, N.C., the Internet was already crackling with revelations of racist gestures and comments made by the suspect that seemed to indicate this senseless attack had been rooted in racial animus.

For many, the massacre at a black church in Charleston was simply another mass shooting—more evidence that the number and severity of such attacks has been escalating in recent years even as efforts toward new gun control measures consistently fail to gather momentum in Washington.



But for African-Americans, church violence has historic dimensions that make this attack even more difficult to endure. The attack on the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the oldest A.M.E. church in the South, reflects “a pattern of random, racialized violence against religious institutions,” said Valerie Cooper, associate professor of black church studies at Duke University.

“Persons burned churches because they thought the congregating of blacks together meant that that was a foment for some kind of revolutionary action,” said the Rev. Teresa Fry Brown, historiographer of the African

Methodist Episcopal Church.

Robert E. Guglielmo of the Diocese of Charleston issued a statement the day after the handgun rampage. “The inside of any church is a sanctuary,” he said. “When a person enters, he or she has the right to worship, pray and learn in a safe and secure environment. For anyone to murder nine individuals is upsetting, but to kill them inside of a church during a Bible study class is devastating to any faith community.”

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, on June 19 expressed his “grief and deep sadness” upon hearing the news of the slaying of the Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney and other church members.

He said the nation’s Catholic community “stands with all people who struggle for an end to racism and violence, in our families, in our places of worship, in our communities and in our world.”

President Obama, commenting for the 14th time, by some media counts, on a shooting rampage during his presidency, said, “There is something particularly heartbreaking about the death happening in a place in which we seek solace and we seek peace, in a place of worship.”

He added, “I’ve had to make statements like this too many times. Communities like this have had to endure tragedies like this too many times.... Once again, innocent people were killed in part because someone who wanted to inflict harm had no trouble getting their hands on a gun.

“Now is the time for mourning and for healing, but let’s be clear,” President Obama said, “at some point, we as a country will have to reckon with the fact that this type of mass violence



does not happen in other advanced countries. It doesn't happen in other places with this kind of frequency... And it is in our power to do something about it."

KEVIN CLARKE

## Losing Their Religion

Americans have less confidence in organized religion today than ever measured before—a sign that the church could be “losing its footing as a pillar of moral leadership in the nation’s culture,” a new Gallup survey finds. In the mid-1970s, nearly seven in 10 Americans said they had “a great deal or quite a lot” of confidence in the church or organized religion. That has headed downward decade by decade to a new low of just 42 percent, according to the report. “In the ‘80s the church and organized religion were the No. 1” in Gallup’s annual look at confidence in institutions, said Lydia Saad, author of the report released on June 17. Now “almost all organizations are down, but the picture for religion is particularly bleak.” Overall, church/organized religion is now ranked in fourth place in the Gallup survey—behind the military, small business and the police, but still ahead of the medical system, Congress and the media.

## Holy Land Arson

The Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land issued a strong condemnation against an early morning arson attack on the Benedictine Church of the Multiplication at Tabgha on the Sea of Galilee on June 18. The council, which is made up of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, the Heads of the Local Churches of the Holy Land and the Ministry of Islamic Waqf of the Palestinian Authority, said they were outraged by the arson and vandalism. “Since December 2009, about 43

## NEWS BRIEFS

The U.S. Senate on June 16 approved a measure supported by Catholic and evangelical leaders that would **prohibit the use of torture** by any U.S. government agency as an interrogation technique. • The Philippine government on June 16 started the Catholic Church-backed process of decommissioning members of the country’s largest Muslim rebel group, a process bringing the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front** a step closer to its goal of self-determination after more than four decades of fighting. • In a 5-to-4 ruling announced on June 18, the U.S. Supreme Court said Kevan Brumfield, convicted in Baton Rouge, La., of the **murder of a police officer**, was entitled to have a claim heard that his low IQ and other evidence of mental disability should exempt him from the death penalty. • **Jozef Wesolowski**, the laicized former Vatican nuncio to the Dominican Republic, will stand trial on July 11 in a Vatican court on charges of the sexual abuse of minors and possession of child pornography. • A charity for youth established by Pope Francis **suspended a donations agreement** with a South American soccer federation on June 11, following the corruption scandal that erupted last month with the worldwide soccer federation, FIFA.



Farewell to arms in Philippines

churches and mosques were torched or desecrated, yet not a single person has been prosecuted by the authorities,” a C.R.I.H.L. statement said. It called on authorities to “bring the perpetrators to justice, prevent such attacks and restore safety and respect for holy sites of all religions.” The church is built on the spot where Christian tradition holds that Jesus miraculously multiplied five loaves and two fishes to feed the 5,000. A spokesperson said the blaze caused millions of dollars in damage.

## Two Bishops of the Twin Cities Resign

Pope Francis accepted the resignations on June 15 of Archbishop John C. Nienstedt and Auxiliary Bishop Lee A. Piche of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. In a statement, Archbishop Nienstedt said he hopes

his resignation might “give the archdiocese a new beginning amidst the many challenges we face.” He said, “My leadership has unfortunately drawn away from the good works of this church and those who perform them.” On June 5, the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office filed criminal and civil charges against the archdiocese, alleging that it failed to protect three boys who were sexually abused in 2008-10 by Curtis Wehmeyer, a former priest of the archdiocese. Wehmeyer was convicted of the abuse and is serving a five-year prison sentence. He was dismissed from the priesthood in March. Archbishop Nienstedt said, “I leave with a clear conscience knowing that my team and I have put in place solid protocols to ensure protection of minors and vulnerable adults.”

From CNS, RNS and other sources.

DISPATCH | LONDON

## Watch Your Waste

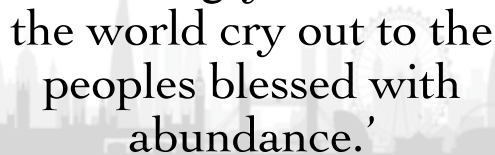
Recently, **America** readers enjoyed a great online article by Joseph McAuley (“Some Food for Thought,” May 28) about the scandal of food waste. And as I write this column all the talk is of “Laudato Si,” Pope Francis’ groundbreaking encyclical on protecting the environment. Even before its formal launch, it had already instigated a great deal of interest and controversy. The two substantive issues of food production and ecology are deeply connected. Each concerns how natural resources—in the Christian tradition, given to us for stewardship and care—are misused. When they are thus distorted, it is not only creation that suffers but people, almost always the poorest.

Some of the statistics on food waste are shocking and scandalous. Globally we waste or otherwise lose around one-third of the world’s total food production, amounting to around 1.3 billion tons each year. Here in Europe, we waste about 100 million tons annually. A report in 2013 showed that households in the United Kingdom throw out what amounts to 24 meals per month and discard the equivalent of 86 million chickens every year. Great Britain’s households toss out seven million tons of food and drink a year; in fact more than half of this lost food could have been eaten, according to antiwaste advocates at Love Food, Hate Waste.

Overall, industrialized nations waste more food than the whole of sub-Saharan Africa produces. Yet

hunger persists; you can find it in your back yard and around the world. Austerity policies here in Britain have led to a shocking rise in the number of food banks—and people who need them—while in the global south almost a billion people still go hungry daily. To state the obvious, something is not right with this system.

An unreflective glance at such sta-



‘The hungry nations of the world cry out to the peoples blessed with abundance.’

tistics might suggest overproduction is to blame for wastage, but there are at least three components involved in wasting food. First, at production crops are abandoned in the field, owing to, for example, their poor appearance. Next, food resources can be damaged and lost during distribution at local, national and global levels. And finally, there is household wastage from preparing too much food per meal or allowing food to spoil, usually fruits and vegetables. All three elements produce this scandal of waste.

Your correspondent can add a personal anecdote; seeing a supermarket employee hastily emptying shelves of breadrolls that were one day out of date according to the label, I asked to buy a pack, to save wasting them, because my Jesuit community would consume them that day. Before she could answer, her manager rushed over and intervened. Company policy, I was told, dictated that all those packs (I

guessed at least 200 packs of six) could not be sold and had to go straight to disposal.

As far back as 1967, Blessed Paul VI’s great encyclical, “Populorum Progressio,” noted that the “hungry nations of the world cry out to the peoples blessed with abundance” and said that the church is “cut to the quick by this cry.” Pope Paul VI proposed three major duties rooted in our common humanity: mutual solidarity, social justice and universal charity. What might these duties look like brought to bear on the contemporary disgrace of food waste?

More recently, Pope Francis, at the Mass to open the Caritas Internationalis Conference, took as his homily theme his phrase “to prepare the table for all,” which is our shared mission, honing his 2013 assertion that “throwing away food is like stealing from the table of the poor and the hungry.”

Could we, as we examine our consciences about how we waste energy, do the same for our food purchasing? Could this waste, like all sin, be rooted in selfishness, the refusal to serve and a denial of the common good?

Pope Francis has contrasted the “paradox of abundance” with this “culture of waste.” Can we challenge retailers to sell us our food on the basis of usefulness rather than tricking us into buying too much with sales too hard to resist? Must we continue to accept the unchallenged supremacy of the market?

In France, a remarkable new law forbids supermarkets from throwing out unsold food as waste. In Britain, several online movements are trying to whip up interest in a similar initiative. It is surely time for Christians everywhere to speak out, as, encouraged by Francis, we learn that it’s our duty.

**DAVID STEWART**

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# A Change of Focus

**T**his column is about broken precedents.

Presidents don't do panels. This president doesn't talk about "poverty." Coverage of Catholic and evangelical public policy collaboration focuses on abortion and marriage. Columnists don't write about events they help organize. And news is what happened an hour ago or a day ago, not a month ago.

Nevertheless, this column is about President Obama participating in a panel on poverty a month ago at a unique Catholic-evangelical summit seeking to make overcoming poverty a clear moral imperative and urgent national priority. President Obama came to Georgetown to have a civil conversation with Robert Putnam of Harvard and Arthur Brooks, president of the conservative American Enterprise Institute, moderated by E. J. Dionne of Georgetown and The Washington Post.

They discussed how to move from political neglect and policy stalemate to dialogue and common action to increase opportunity. President Obama described the task:

Not only to refocus attention on the issue of poverty, but also maybe to bridge some of the... ideological divides that have prevented us from making progress."

There are those on the conservative spectrum who...deeply care about the poor...but are suspicious of what government can do. And then there are those on the left who...see how important...family structures are...

but also believe that government and resources can make a difference....

If coming out of this conversation we can have a both/and conversation rather than either/or conversation, then we'll be making some progress.

For just a few days, Washington's obsession with the middle class gave way to focus on those at the bottom.

One summit goal was to help Catholics and evangelicals work together to make their churches, in Pope Francis' words, a church "of the poor and for the poor." At the June meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, several bishops challenged some conference plans because overcoming poverty was not an explicit priority for advocacy and action. Catholic bishops also met with African-American evangelical leaders to discuss how poverty and family life are mutually supportive or destructive.

A second goal was to help conservative and Republican leaders move from new rhetoric on poverty and opportunity to new policies and priorities. Senator Tim Scott's participation and a letter from Chairman Paul Ryan were signs of progress, but Congressional action and the presidential campaign will test whether new conversation leads to new policies and investments. Cuts in the safety net are not a way to lift up the poor. Summit leaders, through the Circle of Protection, are asking all presidential candidates for a video outlining their specific plans to overcome poverty.

The summit has already advanced

a third goal, to encourage President Obama to make poverty a priority for the next two years and for his future leadership. Democrats are talking about inequality, but it is not clear if these are populist talking points or signs of a real commitment to make overcoming poverty a central national priority.

President Obama shared perceptions in political circles that churches will "go to the mat" on "defining issues" like abortion but not poverty. These "self-interested" comments minimize religious commitment to serve and advocate for those in poverty. But, as the bishops' debate on priorities suggests, there may be a lack of connection between service and advocacy priorities.

**It is unclear if these are populist talking points or signs of real commitment.**

Frankly, the administration and much of Washington share this culture war mind-set, going to the mat to advance reproductive and gay rights even when this could threaten help for faith-based ministries that serve the poor.

There was broad agreement at the summit—from Opus Dei ministries to Nuns on the Bus, from Focus on the Family to Sojourners—that Pope Francis' visit to the United States in September could be and should be a turning point. As Francis meets with the president, Congress, Catholic and interfaith leaders and poor people themselves, he will have his own papal poverty summit. His words and example will challenge all of us to confront the scandal of too much poverty and not enough opportunity in a nation pledged to "liberty and justice for all."

**JOHN CARR**

*JOHN CARR is the director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.*



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# 'Pastors, Not Princes'

## The role of the bishop under Pope Francis

BY DIEGO FARES

**A**t the opening of the 68th General Assembly of the Italian Episcopal Conference on May 18, Pope Francis asked bishops not to be “pilots” but rather true pastors. Many times, the pontiff has called for “pastoral bishops, not princes,” using images he had previously employed when governing his former diocese.

In 2006, while giving the Spiritual Exercises to the Spanish bishops, in his introductory talk about the Magnificat he spoke about “feeling like stewards, not owners, humble servants like our Lady, not princes.” And he concluded the Exercises by saying—during a meditation on “The Lord who reforms us”—that “people want a pastor, not an elitist who gets lost in the frills of fashion.”

This pastoral option is not exclusive to bishops but is for all “missionary disciples,” each in his or her own state and condition. In his apostolic exhortation “The Joy of the Gospel,” the pope states: “Clearly Jesus does not want us to be grandees who look down upon others, but men and women of the people. This is not an idea of the pope, or one pastoral option among others; they are injunctions contained in the word of God that are so clear, direct and convincing that they need no interpretations that might diminish their power to challenge us. Let us live them *sine glossa*, without commentaries” (No. 271).

The image of “pastors, not princes,” which some in the media have portrayed as a reproach to bishops and priests, if properly read does not convey scorn; it is much more profound. It is part of a discernment about an epochal change; and, even more significant, it is an invitation that no bishop or priest let himself be robbed of the joy of being a shepherd. “By so doing we will know the missionary joy of sharing life with God’s faithful people as we strive to light a fire in the heart of the world” (No. 271).

### Bishops Who Watch Over Their People

There is a specific charism expressed in the word *bishop*—*episkopos* in Greek—upon which Cardinal Bergoglio reflect-

ed in the 2001 synod, which was dedicated to “The bishop, servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the hope of the world.” That charism, which is also a mission of the bishop, consists in “watching over.” It is worth citing the complete text here:

The bishop is he who keeps watch; he maintains hope by *looking out for* his people (1 Pt 5:2). One spiritual attitude places emphasis on *overseeing* the flock with a “look of unity”; it is the bishop who cares for everything that maintains the cohesion of the flock. Another spiritual attitude places the emphasis on *keeping watch*, being attentive to danger. Both attitudes belong to the essence of the episcopal mission and they derive all their strength from the attitude I consider the most essential, that of *keeping watch*.

One of the most powerful images of this attitude is that of the Exodus, in which it is said that Yahweh will keep watch over his people during the night of Passover, therefore called “the nightwatch” (Ex 12:42). What I would like to underline is the peculiar depth that the act of *keeping watch* has, in comparison with being vigilant in a more general way or a more specific way. *Vigilance* refers more to the care of doctrine and customs, while *keeping watch* alludes rather to care that there is salt and light in our hearts.

To be vigilant speaks of being on the lookout for the approach of imminent danger, while *keeping watch* has more to do with patiently supporting the processes through which the Lord carries forward the salvation of his people. To be vigilant it is sufficient to be awake, astute, quick. To keep watch one needs to be meeker, more patient and more aware in giving charity. To supervise or be vigilant speaks to us of a certain necessary control. *Keeping watch*, on the other hand, speaks of hope, the hope of the merciful Father who keeps watch over the progress of the hearts of his children. To keep watch manifests and consolidates the *parrhesia* of the bishop, who displays the Hope without altering the Cross of Christ

Together with the image of Yahweh who keeps watch over the great exodus of the people of the covenant, there is another image, more familiar but equally strong: that of St. Joseph. It is he who keeps watch

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**TAKE YOUR SEATS.** Bishops and cardinals attend the beatification of Pope Paul VI.

even in his dreams over the Baby Jesus and his mother with the tenderness of a good and faithful servant. From Joseph's profound keeping watch arises a silent look signifying that he is able to care for his little flock with poor means; and from the same place there arises the vigilant and astute look that succeeded in avoiding all the dangers that threatened the Baby Jesus.

The sleeping St. Joseph, to whom Pope Francis entrusts his petitions for him to "dream over," is the image of the bishop, the pastor keeping watch over his people.

### **Blessing His People**

Downward and outward toward all—with two simple pastoral, not princely, movements, the newly elected Pope Francis placed himself within the great tradition of the church and Vatican II and generated a new spiritual dynamism among God's faithful people.

The council tells us that just as Christ "emptied himself" and was sent to "bring the good news to the poor," the church is also called to follow the same path, and therefore it "encompasses with love all who are afflicted with human suffering and in the poor and afflicted sees the image of its poor and suffering Founder" ("Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," No. 8). When Pope Francis bowed his head

to receive the blessing of his people, and each time that he gets into the popemobile and travels around the plaza until reaching its edges, or when he chooses borderlands to make his visits, his movements make us not only see but experience an image of how a bishop can be in the midst of his people. This role does not seek to "replace" that of other bishops or popes but rather asks to be viewed and accepted with the attitude of "friendship and closeness" of one who knows how to discover "the harmony of Spirit in the diversity of charisms," as Francis himself asked of "his presbyters"—the cardinals—two days after his election.

Besides his actions, his teaching too expresses a lowering of self and an inclusion of those who are at opposite poles of spiritual worldliness. These things are not unique to him; they are what the council sought when it said simply, "Thus, the church, although it needs human resources to carry out its mission, is not set up to seek earthly glory, but to proclaim, even by its own example, humility and self-sacrifice" ("Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," No. 8).

And while it is true that the public and the media make harsh judgments when they see some prelate with haughty attitudes, it is also true that there is a great deal of sympathy for *any pastor*—priest or bishop—when he humbles himself and embraces all. The people of God feel that it is Christ who is pastoring through his pastors. As St. Augustine said:

“Perish the thought that there are no more good shepherds. Perish the thought that divine mercy has ceased to create them and invest them with their mission. Truly, if there are good sheep then there must be also good shepherds; the shepherds arise in the midst of good sheep. Nonetheless, good shepherds do not raise their voices, the friends of the Bridegroom are overjoyed when they hear the Bridegroom’s voice (Jn 3:29). The good shepherds are all in unity; they are one. In those who pastor it is Christ who is pastoring.”

At the end of his address to the Congregation for Bishops in 2014, Pope Francis asked, speaking of bishops who are kerygmatic, prayerful and pastoral:

Where can we find such men? It is not easy. Do they exist? How do we select them?... I am sure they are there, for the Lord does not abandon his church. Perhaps it is we who do not wander enough through the fields looking for them. Perhaps we need Samuel’s instruction: ‘We will not sit down until he comes here’ (cf. 1 Sm 16:11-13). It is this holy restlessness that I would have this congregation live.

### **Focused on Essentials**

What should be the characteristics of the bishop that the pope proposes as the one the Lord uses today to sanctify, teach and shepherd his people? Francis reminded the bishops of the Italian Episcopal Conference that the spirituality of the bishop is a return to what is essential, to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, who says, “Follow me,” and who makes them pastors of a church that is above all “a community of the risen One.” The pope had already said this several months before, during a meeting of the General Congregation for Bishops: “The witnesses of the risen One had to be selected from among those who followed Jesus. From this comes the essential criterion for sketching the profile of the bishops we want to have.”

And these are the two characteristics of the “witnessing bishop” that the pope mentions: that he “knows how to make everything that happened to Jesus contemporary”; and that he “does not stand alone as a witness but stands together with the church.” The pope had highlighted precisely this for the Assembly of the Italian Episcopal Conference: the “ecclesiastic relevance” of “pastors of a church that is the body of the Lord.”

In order to better capture these characteristics, we must

look at Francis, but not because all bishops need to be like the pope in their style. On the contrary, he encourages a diversity of charisms: “There is no standard pastor for all the churches. Christ knows the unique qualities of the pastor each church requires, so that he can respond to its needs and help it realize its full potential. Our challenge is to enter into Christ’s perspective, keeping in mind the uniqueness of the

particular churches.” Making the risen Jesus Christ present requires that each person take his or her place in that person’s unique reality, to be authentic, faithful to what is essential and to harmonize each one’s personal witness with that of other believers.

To speak of the essential, it may be meaningful to reread, two years on, the first mentions that Francis made of the “bishop.” He made multiple such mentions in his first blessing

“urbi et orbi.” Regarding the duty of the conclave, he said it was “to give Rome a bishop.” He was thankful for the welcome of the “diocesan community of Rome,” which he said “has its bishop.” He expressed his desire to “offer a prayer for our bishop emeritus, Benedict XVI.” He outlined his mission in terms of process: “Now we take up this journey, bishop and people.” And he valued “the prayer of the people asking blessing for their bishop.”

The other mention was in his homily during the Mass “For the Church” (“Pro Ecclesia”) with the cardinals. There, the pope included all pastors as disciples of the crucified Christ: “When we journey without the Cross, when we build without the Cross, when we profess Christ without the Cross, we are not disciples of the Lord, we are worldly: we may be bishops, priests, cardinals, popes, but not disciples of the Lord.” As the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church” says, the church “presses forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God, announcing the cross and death of the Lord until he comes (see 1 Cor 11:26)” (No. 8; see Nos. 3, 5, 42).

Also significant was the way he described the figure of Benedict XVI the following day in his address to the cardinals: “The Petrine ministry, lived with total dedication, found in him a wise and humble exponent, his gaze always firmly on Christ, the risen Christ, present and alive in the Eucharist.”

Lowering oneself, being inclusive and centered: these are three movements around the crucified and risen Christ with which the pope invites the bishops to live their role and take their place as shepherds of the people of God.

## **The spirituality of the bishop is a return to what is essential, to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, who says, ‘Follow me.’**

## A Vatican II Bishop: Anointed to Anoint

In his first Chrism Mass as bishop of Rome, Pope Francis situated pastors within the fundamental tension that makes them what they are: they are anointed to anoint the faithful people of God whom they serve. As Vatican II says, “That duty, which the Lord committed to the shepherds of his people, is a true service, which in sacred literature is significantly called *diakonia*, or ministry” (“Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” No. 24). The pope noted, “A good priest can be recognized by the way his people are anointed: this is a clear proof.” In this being for his people is concentrated the entire spirit of the council, which the pope does not say “should be lived” but rather “is being lived” together with all the bishops, priests and laypersons who are joyful as missionary disciples when going out on mission with him.

The relational and dynamic nature of the anointing is reflected in the simple and clear phrases of his first speeches. “Bishop and people...let us begin a common journey” in which “the entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One (cf. 1 Jn 2:20, 27), cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole people’s supernatural discernment in matters of faith when ‘from the bishops down to the last of the lay faithful’ they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals” (“Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” No. 12).

The phrase “common journey” translates the Greek word

for synod and expresses the synodal spirit of Vatican II: “From the very first centuries of the church bishops...pooled their abilities and their wills for the common good and for the welfare of the individual churches. Thus came into being synods...and plenary councils.... This sacred ecumenical synod earnestly desires that the venerable institution of synods and councils flourish with fresh vigor” (“The Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church,” No. 36).

Among the places where Pope Francis echoes Pope Benedict XVI, one gem is the words that Benedict spoke to the Argentine bishops in 2009, when he spoke of “the holy oil of the priestly anointing,” which makes the pastor be as Christ “in the midst of the people.” On that occasion, Pope Benedict reminded the bishops and their priests that they “must always act among his faithful as the servant” (“Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” No. 27), without seeking “honors,” caring for the “faithful” with “tenderness and mercy.”

This image of the bishop that Pope Benedict presented to the Argentine bishops is the one that Pope Francis is proposing to all bishops, so that they may live it fully in this moment in history.

## The Pastoral Image of the Bishop

In this spirit, it is possible to sum up Pope Francis’ view of the bishop in a single, thoroughly pastoral image: that of “the shepherd with the odor of sheep.” This is not so much an

DIGITAL HIGHLIGHTS

# America

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idiosyncratic expression as one that unifies the other images the pope gives us. The figure of the shepherd with the smell of sheep and the smile of a father attracts and leads to many other images that form a constellation, as if it were a great pastoral star.

In what sense is this pastoral perspective a key to the image of a bishop? Cardinal Bergoglio said in 2009:

In the language of the council and of Aparecida, “pastoral” is not in contrast to “doctrinal,” but rather includes it. Neither is pastoral a mere “contingent practical application of theology.” On the contrary, Revelation itself—and therefore all of theology—is pastoral, in the sense that it is the word of salvation, the word of God for the life of the world. As Crispino Valenziano says, “It is not about adjusting the pastoral to doctrine, but rather it is about not ruining doctrine’s constitutive pastoral seal of origin. The “anthropological turn” that one must follow in theology is without doubt and clearly something that goes in parallel with “pastoral” doctrine: people receive revelation and salvation by perceiving the knowledge that God has of our nature and his shepherd’s self-giving toward each of his little sheep.

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This integration of doctrinal and pastoral (which led to the use of the term *constitution*, which means a document containing permanent doctrine, not only for the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” but also for the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World”), is reflected very clearly in the “Decree on Priestly Formation.” The decree insists on the importance of forming pastors of souls, pastors who, joined to the only Good and Beautiful Pastor (beautiful in that he leads by attracting, not imposing), “care for their sheep” (Jn 21:15-17). In fact, “the image of the Good Shepherd is the *analogatum princeps* of all formation. In talking about the pastoral end as the ultimate end, both the council as well as Aparecida are understanding *pastoral* in an eminent sense, not in terms of how it is different from other aspects of formation but in terms of how it includes them all. It includes them in the charity of the Good Shepherd, given that charity “is the form of all of the virtues,” as St. Thomas says, following St. Ambrose.

Pope Francis is following Benedict XVI when he talks of the threefold mission of the church and the bishops. Benedict specified the threefold office in an enriching manner, placing the accents in a new way: “The church’s deepest nature is expressed in her threefold responsibility: of proclaiming the word of God (*kerygma-martyria*), celebrating

the sacraments (*leitourgia*) and exercising the ministry of charity (*diakonia*). These duties presuppose one another and are inseparable.”

We see how, when talking about teaching, Benedict uses the expression *kerygma-martyria*, the same expression that Francis uses when expressing his desire for kerygmatic bishops and witnesses to the risen Christ. When discussing the mission to lead, Benedict specifies by using *diakonia*, the service of charity, which Francis also prioritizes. This was an aspect that was “outsourced,” we could say, as an episcopal task, even though it is just as essential as the other tasks. Benedict said, “For the church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity that could equally well be left to others, but is a part of her nature, an indispensable expression of her very being.” The judgment of Benedict XVI, in writing his encyclicals, was that the world needed to be spoken to about charity. And that charity has “the smell of sheep.”

### ‘A Father’s Smile’

Pope Francis has no trouble speaking about “the sins of the pastors,” including himself and the Roman Curia, to a world like ours, in which the sense of sin has been diminished. But if we look closely, his most emblematic saying on pastors, the one that struck deepest into people’s hearts, curiously did not address ethics, which are imposed, but rather addressed aesthetics, which attract irresistibly. His signature phrase was: “I want shepherds with the smell of sheep...and a father’s smile,” as he added last Holy Thursday.

That is the image of the bishop that Francis has in his heart. And it is the same for priests, cardinals and the pope himself. Shepherds do not merely want to wear the wool of their sheep; they are passionate about serving them. As we see, it is about more than the role of bishop; it is about a smell. This smell, like all strong odors, clearly evokes many images, but the main one, the one that should be “read without gloss” (“The Joy of the Gospel,” No. 271), the one that needs to be “smelled,” is without a doubt that of pastors who shepherd their sheep and not themselves.

With the image of the “pastor with the smell of sheep,” the parable of the Good Shepherd, so often heard but so rarely lived out, enters our noses with the force of a brisk wind that wakes us from the daydream of ideologies and routines and puts us back on the path with evangelical fervor. The smell of sheep gets on a pastor when he is among his people. There is no way to create it in a laboratory. And it does not rub off on a pastor as he shepherds his people; rather it is his own sheep smell, which reminds him that he comes from the same community of the faithful that he is pastoring.

The “sheep smell” brings together the Bergoglian themes of anointing, keeping watch and caring for, discernment, attempting to feed the flock with healthy doctrine and to defend it from its enemies, and the wolves who are dressed

in sheep's clothing but cannot get rid of their "wolf smell." Thus, the spiritual sense of smell allows the bishop to discover and reject the temptation of spiritual worldliness, with its sophisticated perfumes, and provides him with a criterion for "olfactory discernment," to maintain the sense of belonging to the flock from which he was removed and to be recognized by the sheep so that they do not get lost.

### **Bishops Who Pray With Their People**

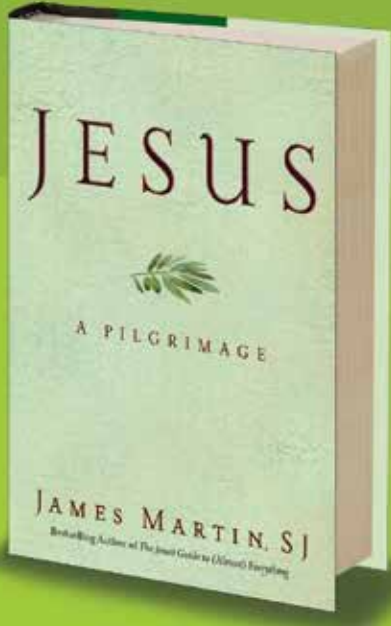
According to the thinking of the current pope, a pastor's personal prayer and liturgical prayer are not something to perfume one's person, just as anointing is not, but rather something that "spills and reaches the peripheries," like the oil that ran down Aaron's head and "reached the fringe of his cloak" (Ps 133:2). For this reason, the prayer of the pastor to which he alludes is always full of faces, an image that the pope made feel like an embrace from God to the priests in the most recent Chrism Mass: "Our weariness, dear priests, is like an incense which silently rises up to heaven."

One can outline the image of the bishop who prays by looking first at how, centered on Christ, he transcends in ministry to his people, and then by identifying some traces of his transcendence to God, his holiness and his personal prayer: "He ought to have the same *parrhesia* in prayer that

he has in proclaiming the word" ("Address of Pope Francis to a Meeting of the Congregation for Bishops," Feb. 27, 2014).

The spirituality that springs from concrete pastoral action is what St. John Paul II repeatedly recommended to pastors in his postsynodal apostolic exhortation on "The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day." He had outlined it already 12 years earlier (1992) in a homily called "The Spirituality of the Diocesan Presbyterate Today," in which he reminded priests of "the pastoral reason for being." "A priest (especially a bishop) who does not know how to completely immerse himself in an ecclesiastical community can certainly not present himself as a valid model of ministerial life, since that life is essentially inserted within the concrete context of the interpersonal relationships of the community itself."

St. John Paul II's apostolic exhortation presents as an example the bishop St. Charles Borromeo, who loved the spirituality of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. The Exercises call on pastors to join contemplation and action in the manner explained by St. Peter Faber: "Seeking God in good works by the Spirit, one will more readily find him afterward in prayer, rather than seeking him first in prayer to then later find him in action, as often happens." That is why he recommended that people with active lives "order all




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your prayers to the treasure of good works, and not the other way around." That is, they should look at what they have to do and the people they have to deal with and only then ask for the grace they need to carry out their tasks as the Lord desires.

Charles Borromeo wrote: "There is nothing so necessary to all churchmen as the meditation which precedes, accompanies and follows all our actions. If you administer the sacraments, my brother, meditate upon what you are doing. If you celebrate Mass, meditate on what you are offering. If you recite the psalms in choir, meditate on to whom and of what you are speaking. If you are guiding souls, meditate on whose blood they have been cleansed in. And let all be done among you in charity (1 Cor. 16:14)."

The transcendence, therefore, that the pope is always talking about is dual: toward God and his saints in prayer, and toward one another, the people of God. As he told the Mexican bishops: "Do not forget prayer. It is a bishop's 'negotiation' with God on behalf of his people. Do not forget it! And the second transcendence is closeness to one's people."

Therefore, the sheep smell is not only the smell of earthly sheep but also of those who are already grazing in heaven's pastures. It is the pleasant odor of holy sheep, which is acquired through frequent familiarity with them in prayer and in the reading of their lives. In the role of the bishop that the pope has in mind, the example of the saints, and especially of those who have been great evangelizers of peoples, is essential. The saints the pope has canonized recently in a procedure called equivalent canonization "are figures of great evangelizers who resonate with the spirituality and theology of 'The Joy of the Gospel.' That is why I have chosen those figures." They are evangelizing women and men, beloved by their people, who inculcated themselves in order to inculcate the Gospel.

This desire to "inculcate the Gospel" powerfully influences the prayer of the evangelizing and shepherding bishop. Bergoglio was always a bishop who prayed to the saints with his people, immersed from childhood in popular piety, thanks to his Nonna Rosa, his grandmother, who would "tell him the stories of the saints" and "took him to processions." The image of the transcendence of God in prayer, which the pope is proposing to the bishops, has to do with the mode of praying and worshiping God that belongs to the faithful. The pope wants bishops who pray with their people, bishops whose prayer is perfumed with popular spirituality and mysticism.

## The Christological Smell

The image of the shepherd with the smell of sheep is an emblematic image, of the kind Romano Guardini called primordial images with great evocative power. And although it has

been cited and used to the point of becoming commonplace, this image can lead to another brief theological reflection. It is only a sketch, an invitation to enter into the theological, anthropological and ontological density of the language of Pope Francis.

First of all, one must properly understand how the pope uses metaphors. There are people who do not understand this language; it seems simplistic to them, inappropriate for a pope and even devoid of theological content. This phenomenon is very curious and makes one think that the people "get it," while there are scholars who dismiss it. Some feel that appealing both to the heart and to the mind of people is nothing but "populism." Is that the case? Not at all. Enlightened faith is not only for enlightened minds. There is an enlightenment that comes from the anointing of the Spirit; it is given to the little ones and makes them wiser than the wise of this culture (cf. Mt 11:25-27, Jn 2: 26-27).

The metaphors the pope uses must be assessed for what they are: images that, in the sea of words of today's world, act as the whistle of the shepherd whose sheep recognize him perfectly and let themselves be moved by him. His language is not only distinctive—that of a Latin American—but rather, because it is beautiful, it is also true and does the heart good. And what Aristotle said applies in this case—that the ability to create metaphors is an indication of higher intelligence.

If we contemplate from a Trinitarian point of view the nature of the pastor with a sheep smell, and if we freely use that joy that the fathers of the church, like St. Augustine, felt when attributing a unique quality to one of the divine persons, the smell of sheep goes with the person of Christ. It is the "Christological scent," the smell of incarnation and passion, of diapers and blood. It is the sweat of him who walks with his disciples and is surrounded by crowds. It is the smell of foot-washing and the smell of the bandages of an already decomposing Lazarus. It is also the perfume of a woman, like Mary, that permeates the house, the aroma of lilies of the field and the wind of the open sea toward which Jesus commands Simon Peter to row.

St. John Paul II affirmed: "The Christological dimension of the pastoral ministry, considered in depth, leads to an understanding of the Trinitarian foundation of ministry itself. Christ's life is Trinitarian.... This Trinitarian dimension, manifested in every aspect of Christ's life and activity, also shapes the life and activity of the bishop. Rightly, then, the synod fathers chose explicitly to describe the life and ministry of the bishop in the light of the Trinitarian ecclesiology contained in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council."

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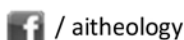
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This “Christological scent” illustrates the anthropology of Pope Francis and leads us to think of his choice to take beauty as the starting point, before truth and goodness. The choice is based on his discernment about what the ears of today’s sheep need to hear, ears that are saturated with dogmatic issues under discussion and moral advice that is impossible to fulfill. With the beautiful the good arrives, and then one truly desires the truth. This is the pedagogy of the shepherd.

If we think about it philosophically, the smell of sheep is related to the beautiful. It is a purely Christological beauty in that beauty and glory are manifested in a contrary manner, although not entirely, since the smell of sheep is not disagreeable to the shepherd. And if we reflect from a political perspective, keeping in mind Francis’ four principles, the olfactory metaphor of the smell of sheep brings us closer to the principle of “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts”: the smell of the sheep is the “smell of anointing” which makes the entirety of the faithful people of God “holy and infallible ‘in believing” (“The Joy of the Gospel,” No. 119, 234). If something has a strong smell, it is all-encompassing and evokes either total rejection, like food that has gone rotten, or irresistible attraction, like a pleasant perfume.

This smell comes from “the proximity of the Shepherd,” close to all but especially to the sick, the poorest and most

forgotten, the excluded and rejected. There are two principles that can be resolved only in proximity: the principle of unity as greater than conflict (because conflict is about distancing and confronting) and the principle that reality is better than an idea, because an idea can be experienced only by going down into reality, touching the wounds, letting oneself be affected by the other.

And if we think about the sweat of the shepherd who walks with his sheep, the image of a church that goes out, which is the “paradigm of all of the church’s work” (“The Joy of the Gospel,” Nos. 15, 17, 20), what comes to mind is the conviction that time is superior to space, because the path must be opened and walked without becoming locked by contradictions or taking over the spaces. As “The Joy of the Gospel” says, “Giving priority to time means being concerned about initiating processes rather than possessing spaces” (No. 223).

The pope does not teach lessons on how a bishop must be. When he speaks to pastors, one notes that he has one ear on the Gospel and the other on the faithful (No. 154). One sees, then, through his words, his pauses, his examples, his smiles and gestures, a solidly unified figure of a pastor who is centered on love for Jesus and who unifies his people: a man of communion.

This was the centerpiece of his address to the Italian bishops in May 2014. Francis offered a significant gesture: he gave the bishops the words of Paul VI, who demanded of the same Italian Episcopal Conference on April 14, 1964: “an effusion of the spirit of unity,” which would create a “unifying renewal in spirit and in works.” This union is key for the world to believe, to be able to be “pastors of a church...a foretaste and promise of the kingdom” that goes out into the world with “the eloquence of the actions” of “truth and mercy.”

## Men of Communion

This role as “men of communion” who give hope to the world is the last one we will highlight as the role of the bishop put before us by the one who is today the bishop of Rome, the church that “presides in charity over all the churches.”

As the pope said to the Italian bishops last May 18, to be men of communion requires a certain “ecclesial sensitivity.” Unity is the work of the Spirit, which works thanks to shepherd bishops and not pilot bishops. These pastors reinforce “the indispensable role of laypersons willing to take on their responsibilities to them.” Their ecclesial sensitivity “is revealed concretely in the collegiality and communion between the bishops and their priests; in the communion among the bishops themselves; between the dioceses that are materially and spiritually wealthy and those in difficulty; between the peripheries and the center; among the bishops’ conferences, and the bishops with the successor of Peter.”

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**PORT OF CALL.** Pope Francis greets immigrants in Lampedusa, Italy, July 8, 2013.



# The Migrant Pope

How Pope Francis focuses world attention on modern sojourners

BY J. KEVIN APPLEBY

A hallmark of Pope Francis' papacy has been his ability to focus the attention of the church and the world on human beings who live on the margins of society. In no area has he accomplished this more profoundly and effectively than in defending the rights of persons on the move—immigrants, refugees and victims of trafficking—who struggle to survive on the outer edges of the global community.

In his first trip outside of Rome, for example, the pope did not land in some glorious European capital in order to make a grand entrance on the world stage. He instead visited

a small, rocky Italian outcrop about 70 miles off the coast of Africa in the Mediterranean Sea.

During his trip to Lampedusa, Italy, in July 2013, the pope celebrated Mass and laid a wreath in the sea to remember the many hundreds of migrants who have died attempting to reach Europe by sea. Thousands of migrants, both those trying to escape from economic hardship and those fleeing persecution, each year attempt to reach Europe by boat; Lampedusa is the closest European soil. (The capsizing and sinking this spring of several vessels overloaded with migrants on the Mediterranean claimed hundreds of lives and demonstrated how perilous that passage can be.)

He joined his powerful actions that day with words that sent ripples throughout European capitals and beyond. As

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a moral matter, he said, the world can no longer ignore the human rights and human lives of those seeking a better life and safety in a foreign land. He decried the “globalization of indifference” toward migrants and charged world leaders with responding to their plight.

“In this world of globalization, we have fallen into globalized indifference. We have become used to the suffering of others; ‘It does not affect me; it does not concern me; it is none of my business,’” he said. “Father...we beg your forgiveness for those who by their decisions on the global level have created situations that lead to these tragedies.”

In addition to his visit to Lampedusa, the pope has skillfully combined his words with small but profound acts of compassion toward forced migrants and solidarity with them, thus amplifying his message. He has had Christmas gifts delivered to residents of a migrant shelter near the Vatican, visited a Jesuit-run refugee shelter in Rome and, more recently, sent Easter cakes to Christian refugees in Iraq. He also has highlighted their struggles in his trips outside Rome, meeting with Syrian refugees in Jordan and immigrants in Naples.

Through his deeds and messages, the pope has placed the issue of migration—and the human rights of persons forced to migrate—at the center of his papacy. He also has moved it to the center of policy debates in world capitals. As a result, he has forced elected leaders worldwide to rethink their approach to this timeless and vexing human rights issue.

## **The Francis Effect on Migration Policy**

The pope’s actions have helped influence the direction of migration policy globally, shaming governments into addressing migration issues.

Nowhere has he had more influence than in Europe. Soon after the pope’s visit to Lampedusa, the Italian government launched a rescue operation called *Mare Nostrum* (Our Sea), which saved the lives of 150,000 persons attempting to reach Europe by sea over the course of a year. Sadly, the operation ended in November 2014 because of costs and the lack of support from other European governments.

In a speech to the European Parliament in Strasbourg that month, Pope Francis urged European nations to join together to protect migrants. “We cannot allow the Mediterranean to become a vast cemetery,” he said. European officials are now discussing how to work more cooperatively to respond to the most recent crisis in the Mediterranean.

In the area of refugee protection, Francis’ focus on the Syrian conflict and its human consequences has helped create political space for governments to take action. The United States, for example, intends to resettle several thousand Syrians in 2015, up from a total of only 583 during the first three years of the conflict. Other nations should follow suit. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

has set a worldwide resettlement goal of 130,000 Syrians by the end of 2016.

“The voice of the pope and the testimony of the pope have an enormous importance to help us all and to help those who struggle for refugee protection to be maintained in our societies,” said António Guterres, the U.N. High Commissioner.

As for refugees fleeing the Islamic State, Pope Francis has called international attention to their situation, which otherwise might have been ignored or overshadowed by indifference. In August 2014, he called for an end to the persecution of Iraqi and Syrian religious minorities, including Christians, and called upon the international community to work together to stop it.

“In these cases, where there is an unjust aggressor, I can only say that it is licit to stop the aggressor,” he said. Although many took that statement as an endorsement of the use of force against the Islamic State, the pope clarified that the international community should look at all options and also address the political, social and economic exclusion that extremists exploit: “I thank those who, with courage, are bringing succor to these brothers and sisters, and I am confident that an effective political solution on both the international and local levels may be found to stop these crimes and reestablish the rule of law.”

Building on the pope’s statement, Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, the representative of the Holy See to the United Nations in Geneva, endorsed a multilateral military option against ISIS, within the framework of international and humanitarian law. “We have to stop this genocide,” he said.

The pope’s focus on the Syrian and Iraqi refugee crisis, one of the largest humanitarian crises in memory, has emphasized the importance of two primary issues for the global church: the protection of the rights of those fleeing persecution and the preservation of religious minorities, particularly Christians, in the Middle East. His interventions have helped keep these issues at the forefront of the international response to the crisis.

Finally, the pope has made the fight against human trafficking a top priority, using his most forceful language in attacking it. In 2013 he called human trafficking a “crime against humanity” and signed a joint declaration with other faith leaders to end human trafficking by 2020.

## **America’s Lampedusa**

On April 1, 2014, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration, led by its chairman, Bishop Eusebio Elizondo of Seattle, and Cardinal Seán O’Malley, O.F.M.Cap., of Boston, celebrated Mass at the U.S.-Mexico border to commemorate the thousands of migrants who died attempting to cross the unforgiving U.S. southwest deserts or soon after doing so. Hundreds attended the Mass,

which received widespread media attention.

The idea for the Mass had its roots in the pope's visit to Lampedusa. The U.S.-Mexico border, the bishops said, is the Lampedusa of the United States, a place many migrants have attempted to reach, sometimes at the cost of their lives. The Mass and its powerful images of the bishops giving Communion through the border fence gave some momentum to the immigration reform debate in Washington, although legislation eventually died in the House.

As a general matter, the pope has not directly weighed in on U.S. immigration issues, although he reportedly discussed immigration reform with President Obama at the Vatican last year. But his well-publicized and successful intervention with the U.S. government at the time to halt the deportation of the father of a 10-year-old Mexican-American girl, Jersey Vargas, made it clear where his sympathies lay.

He also wrote a letter to the Mexico/Holy See Colloquium on Migration and Development held in Mexico City in July 2014, in which he called for the protection of unaccompanied minors fleeing violence in Central America: "Such a humanitarian emergency demands, first of all, urgent intervention, such that these minors are received and protected." To date, legislation in Congress that would send children back to Central America without an asylum hearing has failed to advance.

Last December, Pope Francis wrote a letter to teenagers in Arizona who had volunteered for the Jesuit-sponsored Kino Border Initiative, lauding them for helping immigrants at the U.S.-Mexico border. In perhaps his most provocative comment on U.S. immigration policy, Pope Francis told reporters that he would like to walk across the U.S.-Mexico border to show solidarity with Mexican immigrants: "To enter the United States from the border with Mexico would be a beautiful gesture of brotherhood and support for immigrants," he said.

Come September, the Holy Father will have an opportunity to address the U.S. Congress on immigration and other issues important to him and the church. His address should have a major impact and, at a minimum, help create a more positive political atmosphere and tone toward immigrants on Capitol Hill and beyond.

## A Message of Hope

What is the main message that can be taken from Pope Francis' strong defense of persons on the move—immigrants, refugees and victims of trafficking? It is that these persons are our brothers and sisters and should be afforded

the same rights as all of God's children—to live their lives in safety and with the opportunity to reach their God-given potential. As he told the Seventh World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants, authentic human development requires full participation in the human community: "The authentic right to development regards every person and all people, viewed integrally. This demands that all people be guaranteed a minimal level of participation in the life of the human community."

Pope Francis has been unafraid to hold governments accountable for respecting these rights and for their restrictive policies against migrants. "The time has come for us to abandon the idea of a Europe that is fearful and self-absorbed,"

he told the European nations. His greatest contribution has been his ability to change the international discourse on an issue that continues to perplex and challenge governments. "Obviously, as citizens of the world, we see Pope Francis as a symbol of hope for many things," the U.N.'s Guterres said.

As the pope said in his 2014 message, his primary goal is to help change global attitudes: "A change of attitude toward migrants and refugees is needed on the part of everyone, moving away from the attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization—all typical of a throwaway culture—toward attitudes based on a culture of encounter, the only culture capable of building a better, more just and fraternal world." While this is a challenge, given the nativist sentiments in many nations, Pope Francis has not hesitated to forcefully engage and define the conversation.

Significantly, Pope Francis' outreach to persons on the move also has affected the life and mission of the church. In his statement for the 2015 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, he placed pastoral ministry and service to migrants at the center of the church's mission: "The church without frontiers, Mother to all, spreads throughout the world a culture of acceptance and solidarity, in which no one is seen as useless, out of place or disposable." At a minimum, he is telling us, on his watch the church will reject and transcend the "throwaway" culture and set an example that governments should follow.

In the final analysis, the Pope Francis' words and actions—his visit to Lampedusa, his frequent meetings with refugees, his acts of kindness to immigrants—are those of a pastor, whose goal is to deliver a message of hope to a portion of humanity that often feels only hopelessness. This is a powerful witness that should continue to weigh upon the conscience of the world. **A**

## The pope's actions have helped influence the direction of migration policy globally, shaming governments into addressing migration issues.



# 'Far Away From God'

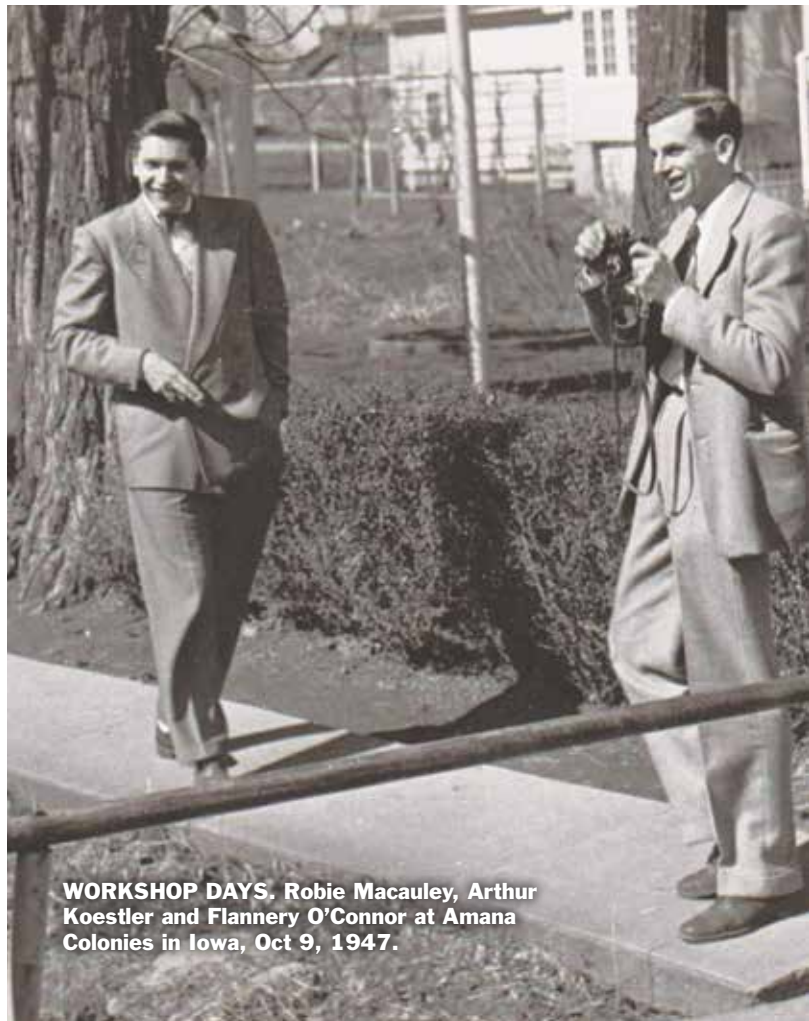
Flannery O'Connor's struggles with a demanding faith

BY SUSAN SRIGLEY

In a letter to Louise Abbott in 1959, Flannery O'Connor sympathizes with what her correspondent must have been describing as a struggle of faith: "All I would like you to know is that I sympathize and I suffer this way myself." We may never have known the details or the extent to which this confession of doubt was true without the interior witness of O'Connor's recently published *A Prayer Journal*, written in 1946 and 1947 while she was a student at the University of Iowa. *Prayer* offers a rare glimpse into the nature of O'Connor's spiritual longing. She maintained the difficulty of this struggle of faith her whole life: "When we get our spiritual house in order, we'll be dead. This goes on. You arrive at enough certainty to be able to make your way, but it is making it in darkness" (*Habit of Being*, pg. 354).

What does it mean to get one's spiritual house in order? If completion comes only with death, then this, I believe, is the spiritual path, the real practice of faith. O'Connor articulates this trajectory of spiritual practice, implicit in her assumption that this is a lifelong pursuit. Although she had not yet been diagnosed with lupus when she was writing her journal, she had witnessed her father's death from that disease, and she put death at the very center of a story's mysterious power: "In every story there is some minor revelation which, no matter how funny the story may be, gives us a hint of the unknown, of death" (*Conversations*, pg. 17). All of O'Connor's characters, including O'Connor herself, are working toward their death, a path necessarily shrouded in darkness.

O'Connor's journal reveals a maturing faith and a desire for a sustained practice that will both align with her artistic pursuits and resist the challenges to belief that she was encountering in school. Her most poignant call for help with her own spiritual practice comes in the form of a dramatic plea written in *Prayer* on Nov. 6, 1946: "Can't anyone teach me how to pray?" It is a remarkable request because O'Connor's published letters and essays demonstrate such a conviction of faith. But here we are speaking of practice, not belief. O'Connor is struggling for a meaningful practice, which is



**WORKSHOP DAYS.** Robie Macauley, Arthur Koestler and Flannery O'Connor at Amana Colonies in Iowa, Oct 9, 1947.

fueled by the dissonance between what her mind is willing to accept and what her heart feels: "Intellectually, I assent: let us adore God. But can we do that without feeling?" Her preoccupation with feeling should not be undervalued in these writings. O'Connor repeatedly notes the disruption between what she has been raised to believe and her subtle realizations about what she no longer feels.

## Faith Versus Art

*Prayer* reveals the initial stirrings of a restless heart, marked as the scholar Bill Sessions notes, by the influences of O'Connor's new intellectual surroundings, and bringing with them "questions and skepticism." I would put an even finer point on those

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SUSAN SRIGLEY is a professor of religions and cultures at Nipissing University in Ontario, Canada. This article is adapted from a talk delivered at a symposium co-hosted by *America* and St. Joseph's Seminary in November 2014.

searching questions and argue that she was attempting to work out the route and practice for her spiritual path. More specifically, the journal describes in detail O'Connor's efforts to discover her vocation, and this vocation is the subject of tension throughout the journal: for writing and prayer, or artistry and spiritual practice. She wants both to write well and love God. And when her urgent requests to be a good

to fill but that requires assistance. She asks "to get down under things" to find God. This is the contemplative language of inward practice. She feels compelled to get herself out of the way in order to know God better and asks God to help her "push myself aside." We are back to those opening words—and the apparent displacement of God in her heart's desire by a stronger and more urgent desire to make her way as a writer.

Yet O'Connor wants to learn how to focus and train the heart. She asks God to make her mind "vigilant" about charity. And this is not a request for some kind of magical fix, she is willing to do the work but the lack in her attention inhibits a sustained practice of faith.

From the start she expresses a desire for desire. And the culprit impeding her way is what she calls her "fugitive attention"—attention being the one thing needed for meditative and contemplative practice. Her recognition, however, is coupled with the language of disenchantment, or at least of disconnection, from the traditional prayers that have formed her spiritual pursuits thus far: "I have been saying them and not feeling them." This confession of her "fleeing" or fugitive attention marks the earnest acknowledgment of an unpracticed mind in need of a new and more meaningful practice. She describes herself as someone who is turning away from a younger frame of mind as she admonishes herself to grow spiritually.

Central to this search is balancing the grace of God and the effort required to still the mind and quiet the heart. It is a process of opening but also of action. While offering thanks for her spiritual good fortune, she admits that she is not "translating this opportunity into fact." What is the fact of spirituality but real practice? O'Connor wants to move beyond words, beyond saying to willing. In her letter to Alfred Corn in May 1962 she says, "If you want your faith, you have to work for it. It is a gift, but for very few is it a gift given without any demand for equal time to its cultivation" (*Collected Works*, pg. 1,165). Here O'Connor indicates her own efforts to find her way to a more authentic expression of

faith. *Prayer* presents the intense grappling in her own heart and mind, and it helps us to appreciate that the advice she gives to Alfred Corn, among others, is born of her own deeply felt struggles.

The most significant tension in *Prayer* is between O'Connor's desire to be a successful writer and to be spiritually committed. This tension indicates a parallel desire, which she makes considerable efforts to align—as though she fears one might preclude the other. Again she echoes St. Augustine's cry, when she says, "Help me to feel that I will give up every earthly thing for this. I do not mean becoming a nun." Clearly there are limits to her desire for a religious vocation, and perhaps a naïve sense of what that means, but what



O'Connor is adamant about what she does not want in the face of that absence: 'I don't want any of this artificial, superficial feeling stimulated by the choir.'

writer reach ascendancy, she quickly reverts back to her need for spiritual attention, as though she had been remiss in the subject of her prayers.

The first cryptic words we have in *Prayer* come from an excised section, so we catch them mid-phrase. What words do we find? "...effort at artistry...rather than thinking of You and feeling inspired with the love I wish I had." The opening confession belies a felt disjunction between her artistic pursuits at the University of Iowa and a marked loss of feeling for the faith that has carried her there. In her next full address to God, reminiscent of St. Augustine's *Confessions*, O'Connor writes, "Dear God I cannot love Thee the way I want to." She sums up the heart of spiritual practice, a need that she wants

we find is an underlying need to feel God's presence. Indeed, near the end of *Prayer* she asks to be a mystic! What it comes down to, I believe, is this: Flannery O'Connor wanted a kind of divine blessing on the direction of her life and her work. She was seeking a vocation, but did not know how to draw the line, if any, between her writing and her spiritual practice: "I want so to love God all the way. At the same time I want to be a *fine* writer."

O'Connor admits that her desire to be a fine writer must be egoistic and therefore contrary to her faith. She assumes that any motivation for success and recognition is bad, convinced, if only negatively, by the psychologists, who "say that bad impulse is natural." She wonders aloud how the psychological gurus of her educational process at the University of Iowa might be undermining her already tenuous grasp on faith.

In the face of this, O'Connor continually returns to a need for order, a discipline or practice that is not simply habitual: "I would like to order things so I feel all of a piece spiritually." And yet, we perceive her dissatisfaction with her current practice, admitting "the rosary is mere rote for me." She grapples with focused attention, wanting to hold God in her mind at all times but unable to do so.

Her need for disciplined spiritual practice however, is coupled with a desire to *feel*. This is the most agonizing aspect of *Prayer* for me. The only spiritual practices she has known are not yielding any effects in her. Near the end she writes that "getting to go to Mass again everyday" leaves her "unmoved," and she perceives herself as "too weak even to get out a prayer for anything," adding, "I want to *feel*." The urgent need to feel something is at the forefront of her petitions.


## Faith Through Music


Her final entries in the journal tend toward the excessive: "make me a mystic. Immediately." Her fugitive attention is impatient once again: "I can't stay in the church to say a Thanksgiving even, and as far as preparation for Communion the night before—thoughts all elsewhere." O'Connor's last paragraph discloses a powerful lament: "My thoughts are so far away from God. He might as well not have made me." O'Connor can only conclude that as a creature of God, made in God's image, she should be equipped to know and feel that God. And yet she does not. O'Connor is adamant about what she does not want in the face of that absence: "I don't want any of this artificial, superficial feeling stimulated by the choir." And, as if by some effort to enshrine her resistance to artificial feeling, she expresses her final thoughts in music.

On the very last pages of O'Connor's journal we discover a rudimentary grand staff consisting of a treble staff and a bass staff joined by a bracket. The bass clef is upside down, the treble clef has unnecessary dots and the bracket is misplaced, not fully connecting the two staves. I played the notes on the piano and they sound decidedly unmusical. Why are these notes here and what is O'Connor possibly communicating with them?

I asked a colleague in music education, Dr. Adam Adler, and he made a few interesting observations. What struck him most was the childlike form of the notation. It appeared to be done by someone who had learned piano for a short time but was struggling to remember the basics. The inverted bass clef, which to him seemed accidental given the other mistakes, nonetheless revealed a clever palindrome, a sequence of notes, in this case B, D, F, which read the same forward and backward. If we were to turn the staff upside down, following the cue of O'Connor's upside-down bass clef, the notes would be the same.

One can perhaps read more into this than was intended by O'Connor's simple notation, but Dr. Adler got the sense of someone caught in the frustrating position of trying to notate music and yet finding herself unequal to the task. I cannot help but see these notes anew in light of this brief musical analysis: *Prayer* reveals the soul of a young woman struggling with her search for artistic and religious symmetry.

The discordant tones of O'Connor's notation, the dislocation of the two staves by the misplaced bracket, the inversion of the bass clef and the double movement of the palindrome provide a metaphor for the dissonance and absence of feeling so plaintively noted by O'Connor throughout her prayers. While the journal's unmusical ending may indicate her inability to express adequately the complexities of her inner longing, O'Connor's artistry continued on another page, entrusting her endlessly searching characters to her world of fiction. 



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# False Beauty?

The tension between ethics and aesthetics in Wagner

BY PAUL J. SCHAEFER

I first listened to the operas of Richard Wagner when I was 11 or 12 years old. I have come to realize that spinning Wagner recordings was more an impish attempt at bravado than evidence of any great love for opera. When I found thick albums of Wagner at the local library and impulsively brought them home in the basket of my bicycle, I was reacting rebelliously as an emerging teen to that moment in history. It was near the end of World War II, and everything German, especially the guttural language being sung, was suspect—you might say *verboten*. There was an edginess about it, even though I had only heard rumors of the intimate connection between Wagner's music and the Nazis.

What still fascinates me about Wagner, almost 70 years later, is the question of the relationship, if any, between art and ideology, between aesthetics and ethics. Years before I listened to opera, I was aware that what was perceived wrongly as beauty could camouflage something evil. Wasn't Satan once the most gloriously beautiful of all the angels, according to my second grade teacher, Sister Mary Caspar? And in the 1940s world of my childhood, wasn't there something enticingly beautiful about Hedy Lamarr in the role of Tondelayo in "White Cargo," a movie thought to be so evil that it was forbidden even to adults by the National Legion of Decency?

Oscar Wilde writes of this relationship in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which I read while a freshman at Marquette University. It was at about the same time that a Jesuit priest and professor told me that goodness, truth and beauty were all necessarily concurrent facets of the same object. This was true, he said, of painting, music, literature, architecture—all the arts. If an object had an aesthetic flaw and was therefore not truly beautiful, it was also neither good nor true. And if its goodness and truth were questionable, it might not be beautiful. Each despicable act the fictional Dorian commits changes his youthful portrait into a dark reflection of the evil he embodies, even though he himself neither changes nor ages from the handsome young man that he had been



Daniel Barenboim, center

when the portrait was modeled and painted.

As Wilde's short novel again demonstrated to me, our identification of beauty may be mistaken. Faked or false beauty is everywhere. How do we decide? Can we objectify beauty? Or is beauty "in the eye of the beholder"? These exact words were written by Margaret Wolfe Hungerford in 1878 but had been expressed earlier in different forms by philosophers and poets as early as the third century B.C. If they and my Jesuit professor were correct, then goodness and truth are also detectable through the eye or mind of the beholder. If we think about it this way, beauty might solve an essential problem for all of us in our constant search for truth and goodness.

## Critical Controversy

When my Jesuit professor suggested his formula about the relationship of beauty to goodness and truth, I immediately thought of Wagner and wondered if there was a way to determine if his music was truly beautiful or if it contained a fatal flaw that made it false or even immoral. I was not the first. The operas of Richard Wagner have been the focus of continuing

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PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/ WOLFDS9

controversy among critics since the late 19th century.

One of the critics whose early praise of Wagner is said to have begun the Wagner-mania that swept Europe in the mid-19th century was Charles Baudelaire. Baudelaire was a poet who united the themes of beauty with the illicit and the “sensuous,” which is the word he used to describe Wagner’s operas. He is perhaps a key to Wagner because Baudelaire boasted about the conjunction of evil and what he called the beautiful when he entitled his notorious book of poems *Les Fleurs du Mal*, or *The Flowers of Evil*. Baudelaire’s “flowers” bloomed in the world of the prostitute, the bordello, the demimonde. He declared the opposite tenet from that of my priest teacher, while being overwhelmed by the sensuous beauty of the music of Richard Wagner. It is not surprising that this Frenchman shared with the German Wagner one other passion: virulent anti-Semitism. For both, it was not just the blindness of the age. It was seminal and can be found explicitly in Baudelaire’s poetry and, some think, in light disguise in the librettos of Wagner’s operas and openly in his letters, notebooks and diaries.

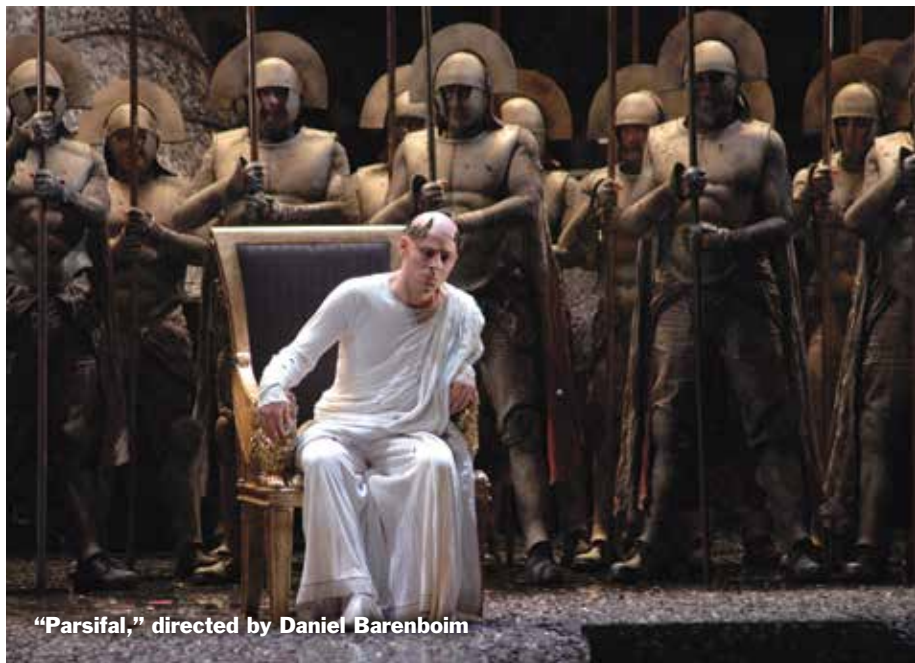
How does anti-Semitism make a difference when one is listening to music? If it does, does it become an irrelevant argument against Wagner’s music when Wagner’s defender is Daniel Barenboim? If as a Jew, who bravely led the Berlin Staatskapelle in a selection from Wagner’s “Tristan and Isolde” in Jerusalem in 2001, Mr. Barenboim can love Wagner’s music and play it, there must be a way to separate the music from the text and from the man. (No Wagner opera has ever been staged in the State of Israel.) In an article in *The New York Review of Books* (“Wagner and the Jews,” 6/20/13), Mr. Barenboim explains how he uses mathematical latticework to appreciate Wagner’s work:

In Wagner’s operas, there are frequent cases in which the musical material swells up and down in two bars the first time it appears. The second time Wagner allows the same material to grow for two bars with a *subito piano*—sudden quiet—immediately afterward. Only the third time is there a climax after four bars of crescendo. A mathematical equation therefore gives rise to sensuality and fervor.

I fully respect Mr. Barenboim’s musical genius, but can an objective mathematical equation give rise to subjective emotions like fervor and sensuality? Does it happen every time to every listener, as if we were robots and a button had been pushed? And is pure mathematics the critical way to listen

to music? Even if that is so, how many music lovers have the skills of a musician like Daniel Barenboim to hear equations? It would be as if a poet analyzed Baudelaire’s “Flowers of Evil” by emphasizing the scan of the meter and noting the rhyme scheme, forgetting that the meter and rhyme gave meaning and allure to the words. Would we read Baudelaire in prose, or stage Wagner’s librettos without music?

Friedrich Nietzsche, in his youth, was as enthusiastic about



“Parsifal,” directed by Daniel Barenboim

Wagner’s operas as Baudelaire. But Nietzsche, whom some have called the anti-anti-Semite, derided Wagner for sinking to the vulgarity of anti-Semitism. Nietzsche also recanted his early praise of Wagner’s music and accused him of being at best an actor’s musician whose music was only a support for the libretto, the theatrical, somewhat the way Baudelaire’s meter and rhyme are for his words. As music, Nietzsche said, it played second fiddle to the play. This criticism points to the problem. Wagner’s music is one with the theater, and even with its mathematical, musical brilliance, I don’t see how anyone except Mr. Barenboim and a few others can listen only to the equations and forget the incest, lust, ethnic nationalism and perhaps latent bigotry the music enhances.

### Considering ‘Parsifal’

“Parsifal” is the exception, some Wagner apologists say. The hero is a gallant and pure-hearted knight who is tempted by the magical beauty of Kundry, a demonic woman. (Even Wagner seems to agree with my teacher’s theory of evil possibly being cloaked as beauty.) Parsifal’s compassion is his Christian badge. Since there are scenes that take place on Good Friday, “Parsifal” is traditionally performed during

the Easter season almost as a religious rite. But Wagner's Christian theme is his version of the myth of the Holy Grail, never part of Christian doctrine, and his treatment of it is as fictional (though less logical, if that is possible) as it is in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*. The plot is "ludicrous," as the composer Claude Debussy said after he attended a performance. And because "Parsifal" and many of Wagner's other librettos are ludicrous, Wagner is easy to parody, as the comedian Victor Borge so often demonstrated in his comic musical routines. While in no way as evil, Wagner's over-the-top pomposity (demonstrated in characters like Siegfried in the "Ring" cycle) is a prequel to the Nazi superman parodied with equal effectiveness by Mel Brooks in "The Producers." That which can easily be tipped over the line from the superserious to the supercilious is always suspected of untruth.

But of course, like Dan Brown's novels, Wagner's colorful musical storytelling is entertaining in a way, particularly the seduction scenes in "Parsifal" with Kundry and the flower maidens. Pauline Kael's comment in *The New Yorker* (3/14/70) about the moviemaker Cecil B. DeMille, who also often depicted Christian themes, is perfectly applicable to Wagner. She called Mr. DeMille "a sanctimonious manipulator—[who] used to satisfy the voyeuristic needs of the God-abiding by showing them what they were missing by being good and then soothe them by showing them the terrible punishments they escaped by being good." Kundry's attempted seduction of Parsifal, which occurs before the sweet music of religious feeling appears, is of the same kind as Hedy Lamarr's seduction of Victor Mature in DeMille's "Samson and Delilah" before the temple comes crashing down.

The questions raised by Wagner/DeMille's use of sexual fantasy prior to a religious denouement do not comport with Ludwig Wittgenstein's rule that "ethics and aesthetics are one." Ms. Kael is correct in describing this strategy as "manipulation." Wittgenstein was an analytic philosopher and one-time student of Bertrand Russell, who said: the "incorporation of mathematics and its development of a powerful logical technique...is thus able, in regard to certain problems, to achieve definite answers, which have the quality of science rather than of philosophy."

You would think that Wittgenstein might agree with Barenboim that aesthetics is the logical extension of math-

ematical formulas. But while Wittgenstein wrote very little about aesthetics, he did specify one rule. He declared that there was no objective standard for aesthetics and that beauty must be judged on a case-by-case basis, using comparisons. I would interpret this as saying that beauty can be judged by the educated eye of the beholder or, in this case, the educated ear of the listener.




Without having Daniel Barenboim's ear, I can only judge by my mental state when listening to Bach, Chopin or Stravinsky as compared with Wagner. From the initial trio, I perceive no mathematical equation that gives rise to sensuality and fervor, only the pleasures of joyous serenity. Does each of these composers use permutations of certain equations to achieve this? If so, their equations are more attuned to goodness and truth, as my Jesuit professor demanded.

Despite my inclinations, differing opinions of sound and words should be honored, and I agree with Barenboim that censorship is unjustified. I would not picket a Wagner performance, and I must admit that if given a free ticket to the annual Wagner festival in Bayreuth, Germany, I might make airline reservations. For me, those *subito pianos* do not bring on nightmares, and so the spectacle might be entertaining, like DeMille's movies, if not sublime. I can still enjoy those moments of fervor and sensuality as I did when I was a preadolescent, while knowing I can wash out my ears with Mozart. ▲

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# Offering Up Easter

**P**ope Francis surprised the world when, speaking to an international gathering of priests in Rome on June 12, he announced that the Catholic Church was “ready to renounce” its method of calculation of the date of Easter in order to reach an agreement with the Orthodox Church, so that all Christian churches can celebrate Easter on the same day.

Picking up on what his predecessors from Paul VI onward proposed, his offer would have a greater impact than theirs. It extends not just to the Orthodox but to all the Eastern churches in the Middle East. Francis wants all the Christian churches to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on the same day.

His offer of renunciation brought to mind something that Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, S.J., then archbishop of Milan, told me in the mid-1990s, when in an interview I asked him what he considered the greatest obstacle to Christian unity. His reply: “the spirit of possessiveness.” He explained that none of the Christian churches wanted to lose anything of what they each possessed; each one wanted to hold onto all it had. He rated that as the main obstacle to unity; whereas he believed that what is really needed is the spirit of *kenosis*, the emptying of oneself. Francis has now taken that kenotic step—the latest but probably not the last in his effort to reach unity with the Orthodox.

He began the walk to unity with the Orthodox on the night of his election, when he appeared on the central

loggia of St. Peter’s Basilica for the first time and called himself bishop of Rome, not pope. He has continued that journey ever since.

That first public gesture less than an hour after his election so impressed the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, that he decided to attend the ceremony for the inauguration of Francis’ pontificate. It was the first time in history that an Orthodox patriarch attended such an event. It marked the beginning of what has developed into a very deep and close relationship between the two Christian leaders, marked by warm friendship and mutual esteem.

On that occasion Bartholomew invited the Argentine pope to join him in Jerusalem for the 50th anniversary commemoration of the historic meeting between Patriarch Athenagoras and Paul VI in January 1964, which opened a new chapter in Catholic-Orthodox relations. Francis agreed. The two leaders met in private in Jerusalem for some hours on May 26, 2014 and later prayed together at an ecumenical service in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher. The good chemistry between them was visible to everyone present, including **America’s** correspondent.

During their encounter in Jerusalem, Patriarch Bartholomew issued a second invitation to Francis, this time to join him for the celebration of the feast of St. Andrew, the brother of St. Peter, at the Phanar, Istanbul, on Nov. 30, 2014. Francis joyfully accepted. This new encounter

began the previous evening, when the bishop of Rome joined the patriarch at a solemn prayer service in the Church of St. George and, at the end of it, went and bowed his head in front of Bartholomew and asked for his blessing. This act of humility made a big impact on the Orthodox.

More recently, Francis invited Bartholomew to be one of the presenters of his encyclical, but having a prior commitment he sent instead Metropolitan John of Pergamon.

The pope believes in “doing” ecumenism, not talking about it—hence his offer of renunciation of the Roman method for calculating Easter (following the Gregorian calendar of 1582) and his readiness to reach an agreed date with the Orthodox

(who follow the Julian calendar of 46 B.C.), so that the Christian churches in Constantinople, Moscow and Rome can celebrate the resurrection of Christ on the same day.

On the same quest for unity, Francis has reached out more than once to Patriarch Kiril of Moscow, expressing his desire to meet and talk with him at a venue of the patriarch’s choosing. Kiril has not yet agreed to do so, but he has praised the direction Francis has taken as bishop of Rome and expressed appreciation for the stance taken by the Holy See, under his leadership, on the conflict in Ukraine. Francis waits patiently. He hopes, moreover, that the Pan-Orthodox Synod in 2016 may accept his offer about Easter.

**GERARD O’CONNELL**

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

# Fortified Faith

Defending my beliefs with more than just words

BY ROBERT MINTON

From a bird's eye view, Jesuit High School in Tampa, Fla., presents itself in regular geometric shapes. Academic buildings constructed of burnt-red brick lie in a disciplined rectangle around the centerpiece of the campus chapel. Sidewalks branch out of every building at 45-degree angles and form intricate webs of cement—mostly so students don't take shortcuts across the campus's sweeping lawns. When the class bells ring, students file out of the buildings and disperse quickly in many directions. Each student knows where he is going, but the greater picture always looks like a scarcely controlled, frenzied mass.

There is a similar tension between order and chaos, direction and freedom, in our spiritual lives. We find comfort in the burnt-red, brick buildings of familiarity. We find comfort in certainty, and we find comfort in structure—our weekly Mass attendance, those friends around us who share our faith, the prayers we know by heart. Involuntarily, we spend most of our time in well-defended forts, and only the process of stepping



out of these forts makes us aware of them at all. Outside the forts, on the sidewalks between classes, reigns the chaos of conflicting ideas, doubts and challenges to our faith.

At Jesuit, where most students are Christian, the standardized nature of our religion classes meant that any question of faith could be answered in

short order. During my time there, I was sustained by the community, by the virtues of brotherhood and fellowship the school instilled and by the conviction that if I put in my best efforts, I would grow tremendously in my faith.

There are times, however, when I am caught in psychological and spiritual doubt, caught between classes, and yet still must play the role of defender of the faith. A year at the University of Chicago has shown me that time spent dwelling in forts is a luxury. Conversations constantly pull my thoughts into new domains, and I must defend my beliefs from nuanced, interdisciplinary perspectives. I have to draw on every scrap of religious knowledge I gathered at Jesuit. Frequently it is not enough.

At the University of Chicago, a conversation about religion quickly devolves into a mixture of business and philosophical propositions. Pros and cons are weighed, and differences in systems of logic or fundamental premises are compared with those of other religions. This is not to say that students are looking for the easiest religion to follow—far from it. Most of us follow the religion that we feel most comfortable defending, the religion that strikes us with an undeniable sense of certainty, of spiritual

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ART: SEAN OUIJK

security and of truth.

This makes for an enormous variety of religious beliefs and interesting religious discussions, but it doesn't often lead others toward conversion or deeper exploration of the Catholic faith. And for me, it doesn't lead to a great deal of fulfillment or validation that I'm leading a successful Catholic public life. These interactions always leave me with questions: How does one best convey the unique and compelling spirit of the Catholic faith, and how does one instill interest in a setting where the presence of so many religions and overlapping beliefs often prevents any one faith from getting noticed in the crowd?

One of my friends who is very active in the Episcopal Church once asked me how papal infallibility is justified in Catholic literature. I confessed that I lacked detailed knowledge, but I was able to explain how papal infallibility stems from the core principles of apostolic succession and applies only to matters of faith and morals. She proceeded to tell me that the Episcopal Church believes in apostolic succession yet doesn't also preach the doctrine of papal infallibility—so the former need not imply

the latter. The discussion continued for another half hour; but looking back now, it is clear to me that I was floundering.


While I could have just returned to the dorm, read up on papal infallibility and gone back to my friend with a better answer, I realized that would only be a short-term remedy. I might be approached the very next day with a question that would leave me in a similar position. I'm left in a state of constantly accumulating knowledge of the Catholic faith yet failing to communicate the logic and beauty of these beliefs effectively to others.

One of my religion teachers at Jesuit regularly employed the well-known saying, "Preach the Gospel, and if necessary, use words." And so many of my high school teachers did just that; they embodied the joy of the Gospel so well that they seemed immune to negativity. I wish I could say that I too preached the Gospel without words, but hindsight shows me I have become increasingly mired in the opposite. I have argued for the principles of the Gospel vigorously, but almost exclusively with words, and in doing so, have allowed the negativity of failure and excessive

self-criticism to seep into and shape my faith life.

Earlier this year, one of my friends asked a student at the University of Chicago Law School how her experience there differed from her undergraduate and graduate experiences at Yale and Oxford. She responded that while academic convention suggests supplying students with both compliments and criticism of their work, the University of Chicago had cut out all coddling. Teachers would only criticize, hoping to impart the message that no work is perfect and that we all ought to strive for improvement.

Like my professors, I tend to evaluate myself and the progress of my faith life in an exclusively critical manner; each time I try to argue my beliefs, my faith undergoes a similar trial by fire. So often, the desire to avoid defeat becomes my motivation for improvement. The challenge for me, and, I think, many others struggling with faith internally or in the public sphere, is to forget the failures for a moment and gaze, however obliquely, upon the good in others and ourselves. More important, we need to use that good as the well-spring for growth, allowing it to fill us with the joy of the Gospel so that we may share it with the world.

It is easy to dwell on disappointments, both spiritual and academic; and for me at the University of Chicago, the struggle to meet my own expectations is a recurring fact of life. The challenge remains to view failures and shortcomings not as negative events but as opportunities. In striving to live out this lesson, I have learned that it is not just a trick of psychology or a construction of an elaborate feel-good delusion. It is a matter of perspective: viewing the loss of an argument as a breath of insight into another's faith, and seeing my own failure as an open invitation to grow in knowledge of a faith abounding in beautiful complexity. 



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# BOOKS & CULTURE



**“Nessun Dorma” (2013), Rome**

**ART** | LEO J. O'DONOVAN

## IN LIVING COLOR

*Timothy J. Clark's poetic realism*

In the delicate, radiant medium of watercolor, light can be part of the scene itself, as in Winslow Homer's paintings of fishermen in the Adirondacks or wind-tossed palm trees in the Bahamas. It can contrast the warmth of a woodland scene by John Singer Sargent with the magic of his Venetian street scenes. In Edward Hopper's vision of isolation and loneliness in American life, light becomes integral at once to the immediacy and the distance that throbs through the art. At the pinnacle of achievement, J. M. W. Turner's enraptured love of light and atmosphere brought his watercolors almost to the dissolution of form. (It was he who championed watercolor as a medium equal to oil painting.)

In the best work of our contemporary Timothy J. Clark, though, light

seems itself to create the scene before us—to reveal it not simply in the sense of showing it to us but in the deeper sense of actually bringing it into existence. We see the church nave, the craftsman's workshop, the mystical moonscape as though it were just now appearing, a revelation in and of the moment.

This is what makes the light in Clark's watercolor paintings sacred. It is given to us as a gift, a creative act beyond our comprehension. Each of the artists mentioned above—all of whom have influenced Clark deeply—are masters of light in various ways, taking us deeper into the world while dazzling us with their virtuosity. But Clark probes the creative act itself, the “otherness” it offers, the mystery of appearing (not mere appearance)—the

sacred. In this respect he is indeed an heir to Abbot Suger of Saint Denis and his metaphysics of light in the 12th century.

One of seven children, Timothy J. Clark was born in Santa Ana, southern California, in 1951. At the age of 9 he realized he was meant to be an artist and at 17 enrolled in the Art Center College of Design. In 1972 he was awarded a certificate in fine arts from Chouinard Art Institute and two years later a B.F.A. from the California Institute of the Arts, which had been formed by the merger of Chouinard and the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music. He added an M.F.A. from California State University, Long Beach, in 1978.

But the degrees mattered less than instructors like Harold Kramer and Don Graham and, later, artist friends like Will Barnet, each of whom Clark, with characteristic warmth, often recalls gratefully. Other major influences have been his annual trips to Europe (the first in 1982) and, above



**"Maine Woodworking Shop of Raymond C. Small" (1997-98), Bath, Me.**

all, Marriott Small Kohl, whom he married in 1991 and with whom he shares homes in Capistrano Beach, Calif., and West Bath, Me., as well as an apartment in New York City. After first painting with oil, he now works almost exclusively in watercolor—and is never satisfied if at the end of a day he hasn't painted, a discipline that charges his often cited book "Focus on Watercolor" (1987).

The majority of the paintings in the current exhibition (May 23–Aug. 2) at the Loyola University Museum of Art in Chicago present interior and exterior views of churches Clark has visited with Marriott. ("Searched out" might be the better term.) They take us from Northern France south to Languedoc and on to the Pyrenees, from Rome (especially) to New York and Chicago (in the very recent views of Madonna della Strada and St. James Chapel). In each case the light is proper to the terrain visited and its own distinctive palette. And the showstopper is surely "Nessun Dorma," an operatic tour de force that takes its title from Calaf's aria in the third act of Puccini's "Turandot"

and combines a gleaming vision of Michelangelo's peerless dome for St. Peter's Basilica, a stunning Roman night sky and the quite ordinary rooftops over which the painter saw the scene from the sixth floor of his hotel. (He completed the painting on the night of the day when Benedict XVI resigned from the papacy.)

Visitors will notice how much Clark loves the domes of Baroque churches, as in "Salute Impressions," "Piazza del Popolo" and "San Carlo al Corso" (which could be a preparatory study for "Nessun Dorma"). More subtle is his ease at manipulating actual architecture to present a stronger sense of a church's interior space. (Notable in two extraordinary pieces, "Cathedral Luminescence, Rouen" and "Baroque Altar, Aragon," in which windows large and small flood a place of worship with light.)

The atmosphere created by contrasting light and darkness is also essential to dream-like nocturnes like "Moonlit Night, Casco Bay" and gritty urban scenes like "Sunday Morning Steam" and "New York Studio View,

Empire State Building." Both the New York scenes are slyly multivalent, confidently evoking the tradition of artists painting in their studios (and about their studios), while also evoking in a subtle way Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's famous dictum, "Everything that rises must converge."

Clark's evocative way with the human figure is evident in paintings like "Saint Nicholas Church, Prague," "Roman Interior" and a sculptured "Saint John Baptist de la Salle" (from St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York), each a winning display of Clark's compositional skills and mastery of occasional abstraction. Equally engaging are his still lifes of "Summer Lemons," "Dory Fleet, Fresh Catch" and "Table for Two in the Pyrenees," in which the

exquisite, brightly painted still life on the table plays the violin to the cello of the empty, dark wood chairs. (Who is coming? How will the dinner go? Or have the guests somehow been prevented?)

"The Maine Workshop of Raymond C. Small" is a kind of synthesis of all the work in the show—a workshop that is also a kind of studio and a sanctuary as well. (It belonged to Marriott Clark's father.) All the workman's tools—the auger and the adze, razor strap and mallet, wrenches, knives and chisels, the caulking mallet and the band saw—are as if alive in the cool morning light of autumnal Maine. Seeing them we feel that they were used in imitation, whether acknowledged or not, of a creator who has wrought our world out of nothing but love and continues to create it still, toward a true and more just humanity—for which the beauty of work like Clark's is a redeeming pledge.

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**LEO J. O'DONOVAN, S.J.**, is emeritus president of Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. This article originally appeared in the exhibit brochure.



## 'GOD ONLY KNOWS'

I'm writing a teenage symphony to God," Brian Wilson told guests gathered at his home for dinner in late 1966. The leader, songwriter and producer of the Beach Boys was fresh off the success of the groundbreaking single "Good Vibrations"—the biggest hit of his career—and the album "Pet Sounds," which was hailed by critics as a pop masterpiece.

Sadly, the symphony he hoped to create, to be entitled "Smile," was soon abandoned because of Wilson's deteriorating mental health and substance abuse. His breakdown marked the end of the most intensely productive and creative period of his life and the beginning of a tortuous, decades-long struggle with mental illness, addiction and perverse manipulation by an unethical psychotherapist.

"Love & Mercy," Bill Pohlad's biopic of Wilson, artfully reflects the genius, madness and tragedy of its subject. It is a kaleidoscopic Amadeus tale set in late 20th-century Southern California. Though it is far more grounded in actual events than Milos Forman's Mozart movie, it shares that film's ability to evoke the transcendent—and often troubled—mingling of beauty and inef-fable truth in the creative soul.

Readers who are now rolling their eyes at the thought of including the composer of "Fun, Fun, Fun" and "Help Me, Rhonda" in such rarefied air might be surprised to learn that in the mid-1960s, the Beatles' only real creative rivals were the Beach Boys. Paul McCartney and Brian Wilson were intensely competitive with one another as they both pioneered ways to use recording technology to expand the limits

of what was possible in popular music. Pop, which was once roundly dismissed as gooey pap for kids, was now stretching boundaries musically and sonically and attracting the attention and respect of luminaries like Leonard Bernstein.

McCartney and Wilson engaged in a trans-Atlantic musical arms race of sorts with the Beatles' "Rubber Soul," spurring Wilson to create "Pet Sounds," which in turn inspired McCartney to answer with "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." Their youthful rivalry eventually mellowed into lifelong admiration. In 1990, McCartney told an interviewer that he had bought each of his children a copy of "Pet Sounds." "I love the album so much.... I figure no one is educated musically until they've heard [it]." He also named Wilson's "Pet Sounds" track, the aching "God Only Knows," as his favorite song ever. "It is one of the few songs that reduces me to tears every time I hear it," McCartney said in 2007.

Pohlad's film cleverly bounces between the 24-year-old Wilson in the 1960s (played by Paul Dano) and the artist in his late 40s (John Cusack). The younger Brian works to give life to the beautiful music he hears in his head—despite the onset of auditory hallucinations—while the elder version struggles to have a life under the 24-hour surveillance of his quack/therapist, Eugene Landy.

Landy, who once aspired to be in show business, was not the only Salieri figure haunting Brian's life. Murry

Wilson, the artist's father, was a struggling songwriter and managed the Beach Boys for a time. He was also a legendarily abusive man. (Brian's loss of 90 percent of his hearing in one ear is believed to be partially the result of a blow to the head from his father.)

Unlike Mozart, Wilson survived his tormentors. He never regained the white-hot brilliance of his muse in the

1960s but he continues to tour and record, and his influence has been seminal on generations of musicians from the Ramones to Radiohead.

The effects of his long struggle with schizoaffective disorder make him appear a bit loopy at times, but Wilson's great gift was never self articulation. It was channeling. "Don't forget: music is God's voice," he reminded people at his induction to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

"His music is by no means just entertainment; it contains the whole tragedy of human existence," said then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger about Mozart in 1996. He also noted that for him, having grown up in the shadow of Mozart's hometown of Salzburg, Mozart's music "thoroughly penetrated our souls."

Much of the same could be said about Brian Wilson. Separated by centuries and thousands of miles, he survived incredible physical and psychological abuse, dark paranoia and psychiatric breakdowns and made some of the most extraordinarily beautiful and inventive music of his time. How he did it, God only knows. **BILL MCGARVEY**

'Love and Mercy' artfully reflects the genius, madness and tragedy of Brian Wilson.



**BILL MCGARVEY**, a musician and writer, is the author of *The Freshman Survival Guide*, owner of *CathNewsUSA.com* and was the long-time editor in chief of *BustedHalo.com*. Twitter: @billmccgarvey.



# THE OLDEST TRADITION

## NO MAN'S LAND

### Preparing for War and Peace in Post-9/11 America

By Elizabeth D. Samet  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 240p. \$25

## LOVING OUR ENEMIES

### Reflections on the Hardest Commandment

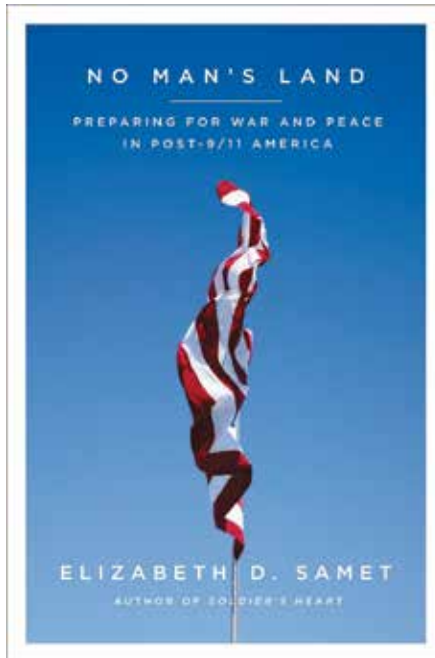
By Jim Forest  
Orbis Books. 160p. \$20

Polite conversation tends to avoid the issues of war and peace. Many believe that conflicts leading to war are tragic but inevitable. A less common conviction, one often maligned as naïve, insists that conflicts can be addressed nonviolently. Without intelligent discourse about resolving conflicts, we are left with a widespread acceptance of war and romantic links to patriotism, sacrifice, honor and glory. We fail to see war as a short-term solution to conflict. The long-term effects mark societies and cultures for generations.

Elizabeth D. Samet is professor of English at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Her mission of preparing young cadets for “the battlefield as ultimate destination” has evolved over the years. Other voices have helped her to revise her story. An essay by the writer Joan Didion acknowledged, “the imperfect fictions we weave with such desperation.” In 2013 President Obama warned the nation of a post-9/11 tendency toward “perpetual war.”

Combat experience and the “heroic drama of muddy boots” might be the permanent validation for a soldier, but Samet judged the romance to be wrong. Coming home and reintegrating as a citizen should surely be more important goals for the soldier in a civ-

ilized society. When the military’s role is isolated from society or carried out in remote areas or for reasons vaguely defined, the soldier returns home to a “physical and emotional landscape” much like no man’s land. A military career in a nation where war and peace are ill defined (an official declaration of war against another state was last

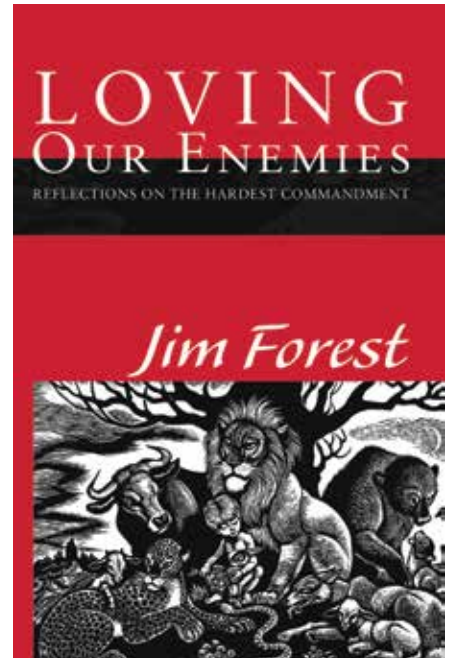


issued in 1942), tends to make the career soldier a multi-deployed war commuter.

Samet underlines the consequences of living in no man’s land with references to wanderlust, violence and compulsive restlessness throughout history and classical literature. She mentions Homer’s Odysseus, who returns to Ithaca restless and filled with loss; Dante adds to the story in the *Inferno*, having Ulysses embarking again “till the sea closed over us and the light was gone.” Plutarch writes of the exploits of Alexander the Great and of the ambition that was his undoing. Even

Shakespeare’s Othello finds himself in no man’s land, trusting implicitly his battlefield companion “honest Iago,” and condemning his own wife. Samet applies many similar references to the contemporary veteran, who finds home to be an alien place and often-times follows the patterns of classical prototypes.

Pragmatism, self-esteem and short-term results tend to be the standards for a military academy, but Samet broadens those standards, and sets a goal of “full-spectrum thinking” for her



students: “patience, deep attention, the capacity to admit error” and even the “proper place of bold dissent and resistance to custom and tradition within military culture.” A tribute to her effectiveness as a teacher is an on-going correspondence with many of her former students. Given such strong bonds and passionate commitment to learning, it is unsettling to see, on the dedication page of the author’s book, the names of two gifted students who lost their lives in Afghanistan.

Literature, in Elizabeth Samet’s curriculum, fosters a type of integral thinking to unmask false stories, learn

analytic and narrative skills, trigger improvisation and creativity, prepare for life within or without the military structure. It is understandable that much of her chosen literature has the soldier in mind. How would critical thinking be advanced if her syllabus contained material about an army that sheds no blood?

Each side in a conflict has the goal of disarming the enemy. Conventional wisdom interprets this to mean overpowering the opponent by force. Loving our enemies may also be a way of disarming them. As a creative and long-established Christian principle, it is the theme of Jim Forest's reflections on making peace.

In the Introduction to his book, Forest proposes loving our enemies as a worthwhile human goal. It involves a personal change in course and willingness to understand love and the enemy in different terms. Love is more than emotion or attraction; es-

entially it is action and responsibility for the well-being of another. An enemy can be a faceless opponent or one who incites fear by being different. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the enemy as "one that cherishes hatred, and who works to do ill to another." Seen in that light, the author suggests that "the enemy of my enemy is me." Differences may surely separate us, but Forest prefers to look at similarities and interdependence. He quotes what Thomas Merton wrote shortly before his untimely death: "What we have to recover is our original unity."

While loving our enemies might be the hardest commandment, as the author affirms in the book's subtitle, it is also the path to true humanity and inner freedom; hatred is a blockade, and hell is the inability to love.

The author finds helpful advice about active love in Dostoevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. On

following one's conscience, he cites Henry David Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience. Well-known advocates for nonviolence—Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Martin Luther King Jr., Mohandas Gandhi—join the voices of peacemakers over the centuries, from early Christian writers and Orthodox saints to a sage Jewish rabbi and the valiant men and women who posed a serious nonviolent resistance to the Nazis in the Second World War. Forest's nine practical disciplines of active love could enrich and challenge any military training manual.

It is safe to say that a strategy of preparing for war and peace in military terms will continue to be our conventional wisdom. Those killed in action, like many of Elizabeth Samet's gifted students, will be remembered and mourned. Fortunately, others will propose making peace by resisting the enemy in a nonviolent manner. If

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they are Christian, their actions will reflect the oldest tradition, that of Clement of Alexandria's "army that sheds no blood." By doing so they will be affirming life, much as Jim Forest does by dedicating his book to his

grandchildren, and by showing us in concrete terms how limited our conventional wisdom can be.

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**DENNIS LEDER, S.J.**, a sculptor, is director of the Central American Institute of Spirituality.

JOHN A. COLEMAN

## THE COSTS OF CLOSINGS

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### LOST CLASSROOM, LOST COMMUNITY Catholic Schools' Importance in Urban America

By Margaret F. Brinig and Nicole Stelle Garnett  
The University of Chicago Press. 224p  
\$45

In the last two decades, 1,600 Catholic schools have closed. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia, for example, closed 48 schools in 2012. Similar steep statistics on Catholic school closures can be found for other dioceses, including Detroit, Chicago and Indianapolis. The number of students attending Catholic schools has decreased from a high of 5.2 million students in the late 1960s to only 2.1 million today. Many of these school closures have been of inner-city Catholic schools that served minority racial populations.

We have long known, since the pioneering work of James Coleman, that minority students in Catholic schools score higher on standardized achievement tests and are more likely to attend and graduate from college than their public school counterparts, regardless of their family's educational or financial background. As Nicholas Lemann observed in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1986: "In the ghetto today, the only institutions with a record of consistently getting people out of the underclass are the parochial schools."

Brinig and Garnett are intent on showing that it is not just the inner

social capital of Catholic schools (discipline, parental involvement, teacher dedication) that counts but that this social capital has a spillover effect on neighborhoods. Using data from Chicago, they compare the crime rates and other disorderly behavior in police beats where Catholic schools have closed (Chicago closed 63 of its 225 neighborhood schools between 1984 and 1994) to police beats where the Catholic schools remained open. They show, for example, a pastor-effect on school closing. Schools were more likely to close if there was just an administrator rather than a long time pastor, or if there was a new pastor. But the crime rate in neighborhoods where Catholic schools remained open was 33 percent lower than in similar neighborhood police beats where Catholic schools had closed. They are looking at Catholic schools not only as educational institutions but as civic or community institutions. As one commentator noted: "flourishing inner-city Catholic schools make for flourishing inner-city neighborhoods. We'll sorely miss them when they are gone!"

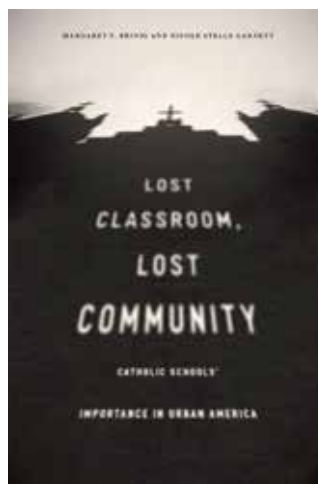
Because of a peculiarity of the decision to found Catholic schools at the parish level, Catholic schools are often

more neighborhood schools than the nearby public schools. Given the widespread move to allow greater school choice in public schools, many draw large numbers of students from other neighborhoods. The authors do a very careful statistical analysis using data on Chicago neighborhoods and crime data to argue that Catholic schools generate civic and neighborhood social capital. Closing inner-city Catholic schools, then, not only lessens educational opportunity for minorities but has an effect on neighborhood cohesion and crime. The authors draw on similar data for Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

Given the general failure of inner-city public schools, many school districts have turned to charter schools. At first, charter schools might look like competition to Catholic schools. As Dianne Ravitch once put it: "Where Charter schools are expanding, Catholic schools are dying."

Data on the success of charter schools is quite mixed. While charter schools in Chicago, for example, seem to outperform noncharter public schools, this is not true in Washington, D.C. Moreover, many abandoned Catholic schools lease their building to a charter school. For example, 90 percent of closed Detroit Catholic schools are now charter schools. In Miami, Washington and Indianapolis also, many closed Catholic schools are now charter schools. But the authors marshal data to show that charter schools do not at all have the same social capital spillover effect on their neighborhoods. Indeed, the data show that in Chicago crime has risen in charter school inner-city neighborhoods.

The authors review the arguments





for and against schemes that allow school choice—tuition tax credits for private schools, for example, or a voucher system for parental choice of schools. (This is constitutionally allowed, since the aid goes to the parents, who then have a choice of where to spend it rather than directly to the school from the government.) They also marshal evidence that shows that “Catholic school students exhibit a greater understanding of democratic principles, more civic knowledge, higher levels of community engagement and a greater tolerance for diversity than public schools.” Discipline inside

the classroom may lead to greater discipline outside of it.

*Lost Classroom, Lost Opportunity*, a seminal and well-written book, as Michael Sean Winters put it, should become “a ‘must read’ for every bishop, every school superintendent and every director of a state Catholic conference, as well as for anyone, Catholic or not, who cares about bringing relief to the often miserable conditions that confront urban America.”

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**JOHN A. COLEMAN, S.J.**, a sociologist, is assistant pastor at St. Ignatius Parish in San Francisco.

J. GREG PHELAN

## PASTOR FROM ANOTHER PLANET

### THE BOOK OF STRANGE NEW THINGS

By Michel Faber  
Hogarth. 512p \$28

Imagine you are separated from the person you love most by an insurmountable distance. Your life, however strange and disorienting, is filled with possibilities and hope, while your love faces only devastation and death. Your faith grows stronger, while she has lost hers. What do you do?

This dilemma is at the crux of Michel Faber’s extraordinary novel, *The Book of Strange New Things*, where sometime in a not-so-distant future, Peter, a devoted pastor and former homeless drug addict, travels to a distant planet as a missionary. Peter leaves behind his wife, Beatrice, as Earth is devastated by natural disasters, economic collapse and war—the calamities of our world occurring to an exponential degree.

Though the setting is science fiction, Faber’s novel is literary in the best sense. It is compelling, wondrous and strange as we join Peter for his journey to Oasis, where he has been recruited

by USIC, the corporation that is colonizing the planet, to minister to the natives who mysteriously are eager to know the Bible. The Oasans are small, hooded beings that embody a sense of otherness: they have no discernable mouth, nose or eyes; their faces resemble a “massive whitish-pink walnut shell” or “a placenta with two fetuses—maybe three-month-old twins, hairless and blind—nestled head to head, knee to knee.” As we are repulsed, Peter, a better man it seems, is eager to begin his mission.

Unable to read their expressions, he finds their fervor to learn about God inscrutable, prompting him to move into their community, which is dismissively called Freaktown by the USIC staff. Faber masterfully evokes Peter’s mental and sensory experience as he lives with these ego-less people outside in an atmosphere where—“the air immediate-

ly ran up the sleeves of his shirt, licked his eyelids and ears, dampened his chest.” Working with the Oasans, harvesting and building a church, Peter comes to admire how they exist only in the present. He slowly learns their language, which with its absence of words for human-like emotions reflects their utter lack of self-absorption.

As Peter struggles to understand his purpose on Oasis, many questions accumulate. Why did USIC spend millions to bring him here? What are the corporation’s real intentions with the planet? Why is the oddball staff so complacent? Are the natives as innocuous as they seem? And most troubling of all, what happened to the previous pastor and the linguist who had disappeared without a trace? (The staff jokes that the freaks of Freaktown ate them.) Indeed, though the threat of evil stirs in the humid air, it is ultimately not an outside malevolent force that provokes Peter’s deepest fears. It is the very human concerns of disconnection, doubt and loss.

Eventually, living with the Oasans, Peter experiences significant physical and psychological changes, conveyed in subtle and persuasive ways. As he adopts their native habits, he becomes emaciated and dangerously sunburnt; he forgets what his wife looks like and loses tolerance for what he sees as “the complicated trivia of human intercourse.”

Peter also finds it increasingly difficult to respond to Beatrice’s despondent emails that chronicle the misery of her life back home. Shaken by her husband’s lack of support, she grows to resent that while Earth is dying, he has a cushy job a billion miles away preaching to a docile congregation who hang on his every



word. And like her, we can't help wondering whether Peter shouldn't be back on Earth alleviating the suffering of his wife and church, instead of being with these faceless aliens. Christ came to our world; shouldn't that be a priority?

Faber's artistry puts a mirror up to our own biases and shortcomings by

confronting problems of faith without any hint of irony or cynicism. Whether his narrator is invoking a letter of Paul to reassure his wife or discussing the purpose of prayer with a colleague, Faber weaves in practical theological questions that never feel preachy or affected. When his USIC driver ques-

tions whether the Oasans, who seem incapable of sin, need Christianity, Peter's responds with characteristic vigor:

Christianity isn't just about being forgiven. It's about living a fulfilled and joyous life. The thing is, being a Christian is an enormous buzz: that's what a lot of people don't understand. It's deep satisfaction. It's waking up in the morning filled with excitement about every minute that's ahead of you.

Rallying to support his wife, Peter encourages her to turn to God, as they had done together during so many crises in the past. But it's too late; she has lost too much and is beyond consolation. She writes, "We need a certain proportion of things to be O.K. in order to be able to cope with other things going wrong. Whether it's a human body or Christian endeavor or life in general, we can't keep it going if too much of what we need is taken away from us."

Beatrice tells him there is no God, and Peter realizes that for all the sustenance the Bible has provided him, it has a cruel flaw: "It was not very good at offering encouragement or hope to those who weren't religious."

"With God, nothing shall be impossible," proclaimed Luke. That message, which Peter had always thought was the most joyously positive reassurance you could wish for, now turned itself over like a dying insect, and became "Without God, everything shall be impossible."

Peter struggles to deny this grim logic as he debates whether he should stay with his alien congregation, who have grown to depend on him, or abandon his new church to return to his wife and his dying home. Faith is a matter of life and death to him—and we get the sense to the author, too, in this remarkable novel.

**J. GREG PHELAN** has written for *The New York Times*, *The Millions* and other publications.

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# Where Do You Live?

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), JULY 12, 2015

Readings: Am 7:12–15; Ps 85:9–14; Eph 1:3–14; Mk 6:7–13

*“Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave” (Mk 6:10)*

Jesus sends (*apostellô*) his messengers (*apostoloi*) out into the world to share his message and his ministry, but the sending of the apostles is not so much about traveling vast distances as it is about being present for the people around them. Wherever you live, that is the place evangelization occurs.

Jesus stresses this aspect of presence when he says, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave.” A word missing from this translation (NRSV) is the Greek adverb *ekeithen*, “from that place.” As a whole the sentence would read, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave from that place,” indicating presence in the place where you are. We are to be grounded to a place, which today we might call inculturation.

In Canada, First Nations people today are dealing with the aftermath of residential schools, in which a number of Christian churches contracted to run schools on behalf of the government of Canada. Such schools, instead of being sources of Gospel presence, were often places of sexual, physical and emotional abuse and even death. They were also called by Judge Murray Sinclair, the head of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a source of “cultural genocide.” The prime minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, apologized for the residential schools in 2008, as did the United Church

of Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church of Canada and various groups within the Roman Catholic Church of Canada at earlier dates. Much still remains not just to be said, but to be done.

But how could evangelization turn so foul and lead in so many cases to abject cruelty? A large part of the sinfulness had to do with not respecting the inherent dignity of native peoples and not living with them in their place, but attempting to turn the Gospel into a particular instantiation of European Christianity. Pope Francis reminds us in “The Joy of the Gospel” (No. 190), that “the mere fact that some people are born in places with fewer resources or less development does not justify the fact that they are living with less dignity.”

Jesus sent his apostles to live with people as they were and where they were, and to invite them to live with him. Indeed, when two disciples of John the Baptist encountered Jesus, they did not ask him, “Who are you?” but “Where are you staying?” Jesus told them to “come and see,” and they remained with Jesus that whole day (Jn 1:38).

It is the encounter with and dwelling with Jesus that creates disciples. The apostles are able to represent Jesus because they know him and have lived with him. Just as he welcomed them, they are to welcome and stay with all they meet, relying not on material

goods but on God and the kindness of strangers.

A part of their evangelistic proclamation of the coming of the kingdom of God is the call “that all should repent.” Embedded in the call, though, is the cost of rejection. Those who hear the message and reject it bear a burden, but it is a burden that weighs especially heavily on those who have been commissioned to proclaim the message but refuse to live it. We all need to hear the message anew and to be prepared always to repent, for “the church does not evangelize unless she constantly lets herself be evangelized” (“The Joy of the Gospel,” No. 174).

What is amazing is how many First Nations people heard the Gospel message in spite of its



## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Be with Jesus where you live. How are you evangelizing for the kingdom?

flawed and sinful bearers, in spite of the cruelty inflicted on their people and their culture. This is because the Gospel, when encountered in its joyous truth, reveals “a single home” for all people in the church to dwell (“On Christian Joy,” Pope Paul VI, 1975). This “single home” must always be ready to welcome strangers into the family.

Even more, we must be able to repent when the Gospel of joy and hospitality has been tarnished with the cruelty of racism and prejudice. When we bring the Gospel, it must be with a spirit of humility. If we are asking people to stay with us in our single home, we must be willing to remain with them, where they are, and recognize that God dwells with them too.

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# Shepherd Us

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), JULY 19, 2015

Readings: Jer 23:1– 6; Ps 23:1– 6; Eph 2:13– 18; Mk 6:30– 34

*“I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them” (Jer 23:4)*

The problem is not a new one among the flocks of the Lord. The prophet Jeremiah sounded a warning over 2,500 years ago, chastening those who would mislead the sheep: “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” says the Lord.” It is also a current problem, as a priest at the parish my family attended for over 10 years was recently jailed for sexual abuse of minor boys. The lack of oversight by the shepherds of the archdiocese was laid bare in the local and national media for all to see. It is a reality that drives people out of parishes, and even from the church.

Each of us is responsible before God for our behavior, but those who have been assigned to care for the people of God, the shepherds who have been asked to guide the sheep, have a heavy burden when the sheep are scattered and driven away due to the actions, or lack of action, by the shepherds. God chastises the shepherds “who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away.”

Through Jeremiah, God promised that the scattered “remnant of my flock” would be gathered up and good shepherds raised up to guide them. While the historical context of the Babylonian Exile is clear in these promises to Israel through the prophet Jeremiah, the eschatological context is also evident in God’s promise to “raise up for David a righteous branch,” who would “reign as king and deal wisely.”

This promised Messiah was raised up as the Good Shepherd not just for the people of Israel, but also for all of the sheep who did not belong to that one fold (Jn 10:16).

And it was through the life of the Good Shepherd that we “who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” The shepherd not only protected his sheep, but gave up his own life to bring us to life eternal. This compassion for the flock, both those who knew the voice of the shepherd and those who were not yet aware of their heritage as God’s people, enlivened all that Jesus did in his mission. His work was for the life of his flock.

Jesus also raised up shepherds to continue to guide the flock. After being sent out to evangelize, the apostles reported back to Jesus on everything “they had done and taught.” The Good Shepherd’s compassion extended to these protégés, whom Jesus knew needed rest, so he took them to a deserted place. But though they “went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves,” they could not find much time alone, for the people had already tracked them down and discerned the place they were going, waiting there when the disciples arrived.

Yet Jesus, when he “saw a great crowd,” did not turn from the flock and focus on the shepherds. Jesus’ compassion was poured out on the sheep “because they were like sheep

without a shepherd.” Jesus’ compassion instead was a model for the shepherds who would continue his mission. In responding to the needs of the flock, Jesus gives us the priorities of the Good Shepherd: serve the people; care for the people; build up the people. These are the priorities not just of the Good Shepherd; they must be the priorities also of the successors to the apostles, who have been called to shepherd the people.

There are no excuses for shepherds who scatter the flock and drive people away. It is not that there is not forgiveness from God for all those who repent, for sin stalks all of the sheep of the flock. But when shepherds are unable to bear the burden of caring for the sheep, protecting the sheep, and even aid in the destruction of the sheep, they will indeed be forgiven when they genuinely repent. But they must not be

## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Pray for your shepherds that they model themselves on the Good Shepherd.

allowed to guard the sheep any longer. It is for this reason that Pope Francis has recently established tribunals to deliberate on negligence among bishops.

All of us stumble, but true shepherds do not repeatedly put the sheep, especially not the little ones, in harm’s way, time after time, year after year, and then claim to be doing the work of the Lord. The Good Shepherd gave himself up for the sheep; woe to those shepherds who give up the sheep to protect themselves.

**JOHN W. MARTENS**

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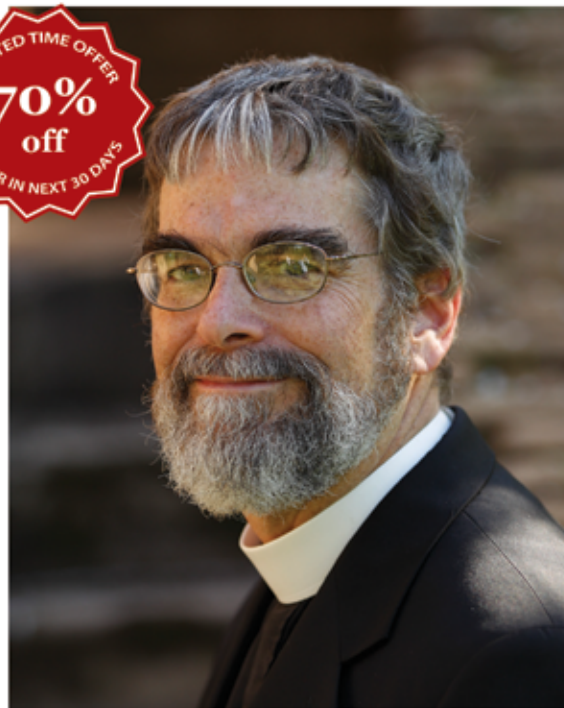
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