

# America

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## Cesar's Choice

**BARRY HUDOCK**



**Jobs on the  
Homefront**  
**CLAYTON SINYAI**

# OF MANY THINGS

One of the great figures in contemporary Jesuit history died this summer. On June 22, Vincent T. O'Keefe, S.J., died at age 92 at the Jesuit infirmary at Fordham University in New York. "Vinny," as he was almost universally known ("Vince" to his family), was not only a former president of Fordham (1963-65) but also served in Rome as an assistant (beginning in 1965) and then as a general assistant and general counselor (1975-81) to Pedro Arrupe, S.J., the superior general of the Society of Jesus. After Father Arrupe had a debilitating stroke in 1981, he appointed Father O'Keefe to be vicar general of the Society.

Shortly after Father O'Keefe's appointment, Pope John Paul II appointed his own "personal delegate," an Italian Jesuit, Paolo Dezza, to take over the governance of the Society of Jesus, effectively replacing Father O'Keefe. Jesuits worldwide were stunned, and hurt, by the pope's decision. Father Arrupe wept when he heard the news.

When Father O'Keefe was serving as superior of the America House Jesuit Community in the late 1990s, he was often asked by Jesuit superiors to speak to young Jesuits not only about his own life as a Jesuit and his work alongside Father Arrupe, but also about this painful chapter in Jesuit history. Vinny's take was that a few of John Paul's advisers had spoken against the Jesuits and had convinced the pope of the Society's (supposed) widespread disobedience. And, as Vinny frequently noted, when Father Arrupe spoke to John Paul, he was often so deferential that he was unlikely to mount a "defense." At the same time, Father Arrupe would say to some Jesuits, "Please make it easier for me to defend you!" Despite Father General's efforts, the mistrust continued.

After the "papal intervention," many commentators predicted widespread disobedience among the Jesuits: public

statements, mass exoduses and acts of disobedience. That never happened. Both Father Arrupe and Father O'Keefe pointed Jesuits worldwide to their vows of obedience. Later Pope John Paul would speak warmly of both the Society's obedience and of Father Arrupe; the pope also visited Arrupe in the Jesuit infirmary shortly before his death in 1991. (Privately the Holy Father was said to have been dismayed about having been misled about the Jesuits.) In 1983 Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., was elected superior general in a general congregation of Jesuits from around the world, and he became a trusted adviser of Pope John Paul.

Many Jesuits credit Vinny's faithful response to the papal intervention as a calming influence in the Society of Jesus at that critical time. For that reason, among many, he was beloved among thousands of Jesuits worldwide.

For myself, besides being privileged to listen to Vinny's lighthearted recollections of Father Arrupe and his more anguished stories about the papal intervention, I will most remember Vinny as a consummate host. After so many years in the Jesuit headquarters in Rome, where he welcomed guests from around the globe, he had a rare talent for welcoming with a smile pretty much anyone who dropped by. He also told some of the best jokes I've ever heard.

Vinny often told of the Jesuit superior general's being asked (frequently), "Where is the Society of Jesus going?" and surprising everyone with his response. Father Arrupe, comfortable with the mysterious workings of the Holy Spirit and with living in times of uncertainty, answered, "I don't know!"

Where is Vinny going? To reside forever, we pray, with his friend Servant of God Pedro Arrupe, with all the saints, and with the Lord he served in both good times and bad.

**JAMES MARTIN, S.J.**

# America

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*Cover:* A large portrait of Cesar Chavez at a Mass remembering him in May 2012 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles. CNS photo/Victor Aleman, Vida Nueva

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A report on ministry at the **Olympics**, and an analysis of **vocations among women religious**. Plus, David Van Biema talks about the life of **Mother Teresa**. All at [americamagazine.org](http://americamagazine.org)



### Foreclosure Forgiveness

For four years the housing crisis has been dragging down the U.S. economy, impoverishing homeowners, preventing a robust recovery and stifling job creation. The Obama administration has taken a number of actions to relieve the situation: reducing principal for some homeowners through the Home Affordable Modification Program, urging mortgage companies to do the same through multistate foreclosure settlements and assisting distressed homeowners with refinancing. Still, these efforts have failed to forestall the cascade of problems gushing from the home-loan debacle. Economists, and now the Treasury Department, have begun to think the unthinkable: forgiving substantial repayment by homeowners whose properties are “under water,” that is, whose mortgages exceed their market value. Even Secretary of the Treasury Timothy Geithner has come to hold this view.

But Edward J. DeMarco, the acting head of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, the office that supervises the country’s largest mortgage lenders, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, has rejected the idea of principal reduction. Mr. DeMarco, analysts say, has taken his action to uphold the principle of debt repayment. In a country that can bail out its banks and permit mega-bonuses for bankers, it is unjust to hold the line on homeowners. Mr. Geithner has written Mr. DeMarco, asking him to reconsider. The secretary argued that reducing payments on principal would relieve “a significant number of troubled homeowners, help repair the nation’s housing market and result in a net benefit to taxpayers.” The F.H.F.A. should heed Treasury’s request, and if it does not, the administration would be well-advised to find new leadership for the agency.

### Marketing Health Insurance

Despite a U.S. Supreme Court challenge, foot-dragging by opponents and 33 votes in the House for repeal, President Obama’s health care reform law is crawling toward the finish line of full implementation. Health exchanges, a sort of insurance supermarket to help people compare policies, are supposed to be up and running for consumers in every state by 2014. But as the November 2013 deadline for putting them in place draws near, only 13 states have applied to set up an exchange. Additional states probably will apply, but the federal government expects half of all the 50 states to abdicate their role in creating an exchange. So much for the federal “takeover” of health care. In some cases the failure is a blatant act of political rebellion, even sabotage, against the federal law; in other states noncom-

pliance reflects budget woes, reduced staffing and other local setbacks.

The federal government must redouble its efforts and add to its own budget the cost of setting up so many state exchanges. It must also aggressively counter the political fallout sure to follow. For state detractors, even those who have abdicated their duty, can complain about whatever the federal government does or does not do. It is always easier to criticize than to lead, especially if local voters support tactical defiance. Resistance by states also helps those members of Congress who are already prone to starve the federal government of revenue and appropriations for health insurance.

Voters should look closely at the health care reform law. Basically it is a long-range plan to see that nearly all Americans are insured against the huge financial risk of illness and injury, whether chronic or sudden. The insurance exchanges, then, are vital to our nation’s health.

### Status of Christians

In this age of over-sharing, many Americans are still keeping their religious identities to themselves—at least online. According to a new study from the Public Religion Research Institute, 50 percent of Americans refrain from describing their religious beliefs in their Facebook profiles. Of the half that choose to identify their beliefs, 20 percent describe themselves as Christian, 9 percent call themselves Catholic, and 4 percent identify as atheist, agnostic or nothing. In addition, only 5 percent of Americans say they follow a religious leader on Twitter or Facebook. White evangelical Protestants are the most likely to have engaged with a religious group or leader online. Nearly 20 percent have posted a status update about being in church (for Catholics, the number is 2 percent), and 25 percent have listened to a sermon online (compared with 6 percent of Catholics).

So should churches just give up on reaching out through digital media? Not yet. Younger Americans are far more likely to engage with religious groups and leaders online. Four in 10 Americans between the ages of 18 and 34 say they use Facebook multiple times each day. The same percentage of younger Americans say that their church provides a Facebook page or a Web site where people can interact, and 26 percent say their church encourages them to use social media. Still, it is possible to become too plugged in. Sixteen percent of young Americans admit to sending or reading e-mails during a worship service. In the end, it is real-life actions, not online identities, that define a person’s commitment to his or her faith. One hopes others will know we are Christians by our love—even if they cannot tell from our status updates.

# R2P May Still Work

The Responsibility to Protect, the legal doctrine that establishes a framework for international intervention, seems tailor-made for the current civil war in Syria. The principle affirms a common duty of nations to resist the mass killing of innocent civilians by their own government. Evidence of indiscriminate Syrian government attacks on its citizens is sufficient to warrant an array of measures under the doctrine to protect the Syrian people from Bashar al-Assad and his murderous regime. Unfortunately, the United Nations has hesitated to do more than commission former Secretary General Kofi Annan to undertake what turned out to be two ill-fated peace missions to the region.

Commentators lay blame for the failure to intervene militarily on the opposition of Russia and China, veto-wielding members of the U.N. Security Council. But even if no vetoes blocked international action, there are many reasons to hesitate. Syria's defensive capabilities would make armed intervention costly. The unsettled outcome of the 2003 Iraq invasion cautions against outsiders trying to resolve ethnic and religious differences with an enforced settlement. In addition, the fragmentation of the armed Syrian resistance strongly suggests that any post-Assad future will be afflicted by interreligious violence.

All the same, the unremitting violence of the Assad regime, not only against the current militia forces but especially, earlier, against unarmed demonstrators and their sympathizers, provides ample reason to conclude that international intervention to end the slaughter is justified. Before armed rebellion began and since its spread, the regime has kidnapped, tortured and assassinated civilians in their homes. The victims of torture have included many children. Sharpshooters have killed unarmed demonstrators as they marched, and artillery barrages have demolished entire neighborhoods suspected of sympathy with the regime's critics. All the attacks on civilians are violations of the laws of war and crimes against humanity. Without doubt there is just cause for international intervention. But altogether too much public debate has focused on the issue of international military intervention as if it were the only option.

The framers of the doctrine of responsibility to protect anticipated situations in which the Security Council might be deadlocked and acknowledged that it would be "unrealistic to expect that concerned states will rule out other means and forms of action to meet the gravity and urgency of these situations." So the need for action can be

met in other ways than through an all-out military intervention under the authority of the Security Council.

Hesitancy about intervention derives in large measure from the lack of unity among the opposition forces in Syria. The transition can be better secured and postconflict instability reduced through efforts to unify them. This can be done through outside mediation between factions and through arms transfers and other aid given on condition that the opposition closes ranks and accepts a unified command. The Syrian National Council should make public the elements of a transition plan prepared for it by the U.S. Institute for Peace, a federally funded research institution. Publicity will allow others in the diffuse opposition to buy in or negotiate for changes in a postconflict regime. This could reduce the squabbling that is bound to come after the overthrow of the Assad government.

A particularly thorny problem in regime-changing conflicts is the question of transitional justice—that is, how to hold those responsible for atrocities accountable for their crimes. To wind down the conflict, Syrians may have to make a choice between full accountability and advancing the end of armed conflict by extending amnesty to some of the perpetrators. A cessation of hostilities could be speeded up by extending amnesty to military and government officials who surrender or defect by a specified date.

Given the regime's history of violence against its own people, the opposition will be wary of amnesty; but except in egregious cases, amnesty may be the price to be paid for peace. Worries about former agents of the regime returning to power could be handled, as was done in some Eastern European countries after 1989, by lustration (political cleansing) laws that prohibited their return to political or civil office. In any case, the tradeoffs between justice, peace and the basic functioning of government should be made by the liberated Syrians themselves.

Finally, neighboring states, the U.N. refugee agency U.N.H.C.R. and the Syrian Red Crescent are doing good work providing aid to refugees and others displaced by the fighting. The international community should take steps to expand efforts to meet this complex humanitarian emergency, prepare for winter and begin the work of postconflict reconstruction. Given the global economic recession, planning and the acquisition of resources must begin as soon as possible.



# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

## State Department Issues Annual Report

**T**he State Department issued its annual report on religious freedom on July 30. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton offered a “sobering” global depiction of fundamental human rights at risk. “More than a billion people live under governments that systematically suppress religious freedom,” she said. “New technologies have given repressive governments additional tools for cracking down on religious expression. Members of faith communities that have long been under pressure report that the pressure is rising. Even some countries that are making progress on expanding political freedom are frozen in place when it comes to religious freedom.”

Secretary Clinton added, “When it comes to this human right, this key feature of stable, secure, peaceful societies, the world is sliding backwards.” But the report also found some reason for hope in the near future regarding the expansion of religious freedom, including in some perhaps unexpected places like Myanmar and Egypt. “Several countries with diverse faith communities are now in the process of navigating transitions toward democracy,” she said. “They are wrestling with questions of whether and how to protect religious freedom for their citizens. This goes from Tunisia to Burma and many places in between.”

Secretary Clinton said that during a recent visit to Egypt she had a “very emotional, very personal conversation” with Christians who are deeply anxious about what the future holds. “What Egypt and other countries decide,” she said, “will have a major impact on the lives of their people and will go a long way toward determining whether these countries are able to achieve true democracy.”

She said, “I personally feel very strongly about this, because I have seen firsthand how religious freedom is both an essential element of human dignity and of secure, thriving societies. It’s been statistically linked with economic development and democratic stability. And it creates a climate in which people from different religions can move beyond distrust and work together to solve their shared problems.”

According to the report, the interim government of Egypt began to take measures toward greater religious

inclusiveness, passing an anti-discrimination law, arresting and prosecuting alleged instigators of sectarian rioting and allowing dozens of churches previously closed to reopen. “Nevertheless,” it added, “sectarian tensions and violence increased.”

The report documented the Egyptian government’s failure to curb rising violence against Coptic Christians and its involvement in violent attacks, including an attack by Egyptian security forces on October 9, 2011, against demonstrators in Cairo that left 25 dead and 350 injured, “most of whom were Coptic Christians.” The report notes that no government officials have been held accountable for such abuses so far.

In Myanmar, according to the report, the government took steps toward overcoming a “longstanding legacy of intense religious oppression,”

eased some restrictions on church construction and “generally permitted adherents of religious groups registered with the government to worship as they chose.”

China was again included on the list of nations of “particular concern.” According to the report, China experienced a “marked deterioration” of religious freedom in 2011, including further religious repression in the “Tibetan Autonomous Region,” continuing repression of Muslims in China as well as continuing friction with Catholics loyal to the Vatican.

Other states designated as “countries of particular concern” for alleged violations of religious freedom included three other Asian nations—Myanmar (Burma), North Korea and Uzbekistan—and Eritrea, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Sudan. Other countries with notable religious conflicts includ-



Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kium, retired archbishop of Hong Kong, takes part in a demonstration for religious freedom outside the China Liaison Office in Hong Kong on July 11. The Chinese characters on his placard read, “Protest against restriction.”



ed Pakistan and Nigeria, but European nations also came under scrutiny in the report.

According to the report, rapid demographic changes in Europe have been accompanied by “growing xenophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim sentiment and intolerance toward people considered ‘the other.’”

## Syrian Refugees Face Uncertain Future

Refugees from Syria are in “complete darkness” about their future, said Father Simon Faddoul, president of Caritas Lebanon, which has been working with Syrian refugees in Lebanon for 14 months. He said there was a large influx of people during the last week of July as more than 20,000 refugees fled violence in Damascus and Homs.

“The situation we are in at the moment is terrible. What tomorrow will bring? Unfortunately, we estimate a worse situation,” Father Faddoul said.

Refugees in border communities in Jordan and Lebanon are fraught with concern for relatives and friends left behind as they were forced to flee the escalating violence with little advance notice. “People are feeling generally broken and that they might not ever become whole again,” Caroline Brennan, senior communications officer for CRS, said.

The United Nations said July 31 that there were 34,096 displaced Syrians receiving protection and assistance in Lebanon through the efforts of the government, the U.N. and non-governmental partners. However, Father Faddoul said the number of refugees in Lebanon could be well over 100,000.

## Few Health Care Plans Change on August 1

August 1 is the first possible date when health plans could be required to cover eight new preventive services for women—including all Food and Drug Administration-approved contraceptives—under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

However, most Americans saw no change in their health insurance that day, because their plans renew on another date or are covered by a one-year “temporary enforcement safe harbor” or a “grandfathering” provision that delays changes.

The Department of Health and Human Services has estimated that up to 87 percent of the 133 million Americans who get their health insurance through large employers (those with 100 or more workers) and 80 percent of the 43 million who work for

small employers remained in grandfathered plans in 2011. The numbers go down to about 66 percent for large employers and 51 percent for small employers in 2013.

## Church Challenges Female Feticide

Participants in sex-selective abortions should be charged with murder, said Holy Spirit Missionary Sister Helen Saldanha, secretary of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India Office for Women. Her opinion comes as momentum builds to end female feticide in India, a practice that finds families terminating a pregnancy because the child they are expecting is a girl. Filing criminal charges for killing a child in the womb because of its sex would “change the killer attitude” toward girls in Indian society, Sister Helen said.

Although the practice of sex-selective abortions is illegal under Indian law, there is no provision for criminal prosecution. Recent census statistics indicate that the practice appears to be widespread. The census data show that the national ratio of girls to boys younger than 6 years old has dropped from 927 for every 1,000 boys in 2001 to 914 for every 1,000 boys in 2011.

The call for mandatory murder charges was endorsed in July at a convention of more than 300 leaders from village councils in northern Indian states where there are now about 800 girls for every 1,000 boys. A similar call came a week later from officials in Maharashtra state when they urged the national government to amend the Indian Penal Code to require the filing of murder charges against parents as well as physicians involved in female feticide.

From CNS and other sources.



# Suppressing the Vote?

Jill Ciciarelli, a high school civics teacher in Florida, distributed voter registration materials to teach students about the electoral process and encourage 18-year-old students to register to vote. By doing her job she and other teachers inadvertently ran afoul of Florida's draconian new voter suppression laws, which impose fines of up to \$1,000 on third parties who help voters register if the registration forms are not returned within 48 hours. Since the postal service may take more than 48 hours to deliver them, the law has done what the Republican authors desired.

It has stopped groups like the League of Women Voters from registering people unlikely to vote Republican: the old, the young, the poor, the working class, minorities and women. Minority voters are twice as likely as whites to register at a school or through a voter registration drive. The poor, the elderly, the disabled and those who lack the means to drive to a state office during business hours also rely on groups like the League of Women Voters to register. So Republicans passed laws making it very difficult for such groups to register voters.

In 2008 Democrats won more early votes and absentee votes than Republicans, so the Republicans have now limited early and absentee voting. Twenty five percent of African-Americans and 20 percent of Latinos lack government-issued photo ID's, so Republicans enacted laws requiring the types of ID's that minorities lack.

Today in Texas, a gun license is accepted as an ID for voting, but state photo ID cards issued to students at state universities are not.

When the Bush administration Justice Department ran extensive investigations on voter fraud, they found there were more deaths by lightning strike in the United States each year than cases of voter fraud. The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law notes that most of the very few cases of irregularities (only 86 cases in the whole country over a five-year period), were cases of clerical errors and misunderstandings about voter rules, not fraud.

Why then are Republican legislators and governors squandering hundreds of millions of scarce taxpayer dollars in these difficult economic times on unnecessary measures in response to a nonexistent problem? Republican legislatures in 16 states, including the battleground states of Florida, Ohio, Virginia, Wisconsin and New Hampshire, passed restrictive voter laws in the past year alone. The new laws restrict voter registration, limit early and absentee voting and remove many legally registered voters from official electoral lists. These laws are the opposite of electoral reform; they are aimed at preventing the votes of citizens who might not vote Republican.

Paul Weyrich, founder of the Heritage Foundation and the Moral Majority and an advocate for the new laws, is quite candid: "I don't want everybody to vote. As a matter of fact,

our leverage in the elections quite candidly goes up as the voting populace goes down." Instead of competing for votes, Republicans seek to bar the votes of those who might disagree with them.

Photo ID laws are poll taxes, because state issued photo ID cards are not free. The ID costs money, and so do the supporting documents (copies of birth certificates and, for women, marriage licenses to document

a name change from maiden name to married name). If a person no longer lives in the state where he or she was born or married and cannot go in person to that state's office to procure copies of required forms, additional processing and shipping fees are incurred. A U.S. passport costs \$165, not counting additional document (\$150) or expedited shipping (\$60) fees.

Many Americans may not realize votes are being stolen months before the election. These are the tactics used by Southern Democrats to suppress minority voters in the 1960s. This shameful legacy is now being revived by new sponsors. The laws are being challenged in court, but legal challenges take time. Many legal voters will be turned away in the meantime. The Catholic Church supports voting, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops urges parishes to help register voters. Citizens must actively protect their votes before election day. Voter suppression has no place in our democracy, no matter which party practices it.

Restrictive  
voting  
laws are  
the opposite  
of electoral  
reform.

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



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**Army Reserve veteran Peter Trost, right, walks past exhibits with his wife, Courtney, and daughter during a job fair in Naperville, Ill., in October 2011. The job fair was open only to current and former military men and women and their families.**

PHOTO: REUTERS/FRANK POLICH



VETERANS ARE FIGHTING FOR JOBS  
ON THE HOMEFRONT.

# The Next Battle

BY CLAYTON SINYAI

**A**fter 24 years in the military, including three tours in Iraq and service as a scout sniper in Afghanistan, Joe Tretta was ready for a change. “I wasn’t young anymore,” he said. “It was no fun sleeping on the ground.” Mr. Tretta had also spent six months in a hospital recovering from injuries to his leg, head and shoulder after a roadside bomb exploded. He retired from the military in February 2010, but he still wanted to work. His Veterans Affairs representative directed him to Helmets to Hardhats, a national employment and training service that connects veterans with opportunities in the construction industry.

Mr. Tretta, who now lives in Bel Air, Md., filed an application online and waited. Given the massive downturn in the construction industry, openings were few and far between. But a year later he got a call from the carpenters’ union apprenticeship program in Baltimore and jumped at the opportunity. His is a success story, but one to which fewer and fewer returning veterans can relate.

With a decade of military engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan winding down, the armed forces anticipate a major reduction in personnel. The number of active duty soldiers in the U.S. Army is to be cut by nearly 60,000; tens of thousands of marines, sailors and air force members will join them. This newest generation of veterans will soon re-enter a struggling civilian economy that is not generating sufficient employment for job seekers.

They will face daunting challenges in the labor market. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, just over 8 percent of adults were unemployed in 2011. But among the 1.9 million who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan since Sept. 11, 2001, that number rises to 12.1 percent. For the youngest veterans, between the ages of 18 and 24, the

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CLAYTON SINYAI is a member of the Catholic Labor Network.

unemployment rate is 29.1 percent.

It is no wonder, then, that for the second year in a row, the group Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America has made veteran unemployment the focus of its “Storm the Hill” legislative initiative. The Great Recession has made life difficult for every American seeking work, but I.A.V.A. has helped shine a light on issues that complicate the job search for post-9/11 veterans: (1) since veterans leaving the service are automatically enrolled in the reserves and subject to call-up, some employers hesitate to hire them; (2) stereotypes about post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries cause unnecessary anxiety in potential employers and colleagues; and (3) employers—fewer of whom today than in the past have a history of military service—find it difficult to translate military experience into civilian job qualifications.

In the fall of 2011, in one of the few successful bipartisan initiatives of the year, Rep. Jeff Miller of Florida, a Republican, and Senator Patty Murray of Washington, a Democrat, who chair the veterans’ affairs committees of their respective houses, combined elements of each one’s initiative to create the “VOW to Hire Heroes Act.” By July 2012, the act offered tax credits to employers who hire veterans, expanded G.I. Bill opportunities for higher education and vocational training, directed the Department of Labor to help translate terminology for military skills and training into civilian sector job qualifications and strengthened antidiscrimination laws protecting service members.

## Protecting Veteran Rights

“There is definitely evidence that members of the Guard and Reserve are finding it difficult to gain employment because employers appear to be increasingly reluctant to hire employees who may be called for multiple tours of duty,” said Representative Miller. Although much of the public does not know it, employment discrimination against a person because of veteran status or military commitments is unlawful. Under the 1994 Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, employers are not only forbidden to discriminate in offers of employment but are required to provide prompt re-employment to those returning after a tour of duty. This is a critical protection in today’s military, which relies heavily on members of the Guard and Reserves who may have to leave a civilian job on short notice. (The Department of Defense reported that as of May 15, 68,734 reservists were on active duty with the various branches.)

Reports to Congress show that the Labor Department looks into 1,400 or more Userra-related complaints per year. If a complaint is substantiated and an employer refuses to make whole the employee in question, the complaint can be referred to the Department of Justice for legal action. In some

cases, the employers involved are household names. Last November Justice reached a settlement with Lowe’s Hardware in one such case; in April, the department filed suit against Home Depot. Justice said store managers in Flagstaff, Ariz. complained about a veteran’s absences due to military duties and unlawfully fired the department supervisor. (Home Depot declined to comment for this story). In May, Home Depot agreed to pay the supervisor a settlement of \$45,000 and to make changes to its military leave of absence policy.

In February The Washington Post, relying on documents gathered under the Freedom of Information Act, identified the federal government itself as the single biggest violator of veterans’ employment and re-employment rights. Of the 1,548 complaints filed in 2011, The Post reported, more than 18 percent involved federal agencies, with the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs as the top two offenders. The report deeply embarrassed the White House. John Berry, director of the Office of Personnel Management, announced a “zero tolerance” policy for Userra violations by federal managers. But paradoxically, these figures remind us that the federal government is a remarkable success story when it comes to hiring veterans. Uncle Sam racks up the most complaints because he is far and away the largest employer of veterans.

Under the Veterans’ Preference Act of 1944, the United States made a commitment to favor veterans for civil service jobs, a decision that has turned the federal sector (including the U.S. Postal Service) into a major employer of vets. While veterans made up about 8 percent of the American work force over all in 2011, they accounted for 28.5 percent of new hires by the federal government, according to reports by the Office of Personnel Management. Bureau of Labor Statistics figures show that while 2 percent of the civilian work force is employed by the federal government, over 14 percent of post-9/11 veterans with jobs work for Uncle Sam.

“Veterans’ preference means that, all things being equal, the job will go to the veteran,” explained Mary Jean Burke, an American Federation of Government Employees executive vice president who represents employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Overall, about a quarter of federal employees have served our nation in uniform.

This generation of veterans, however, is leaving the military during a time when the federal work force is being targeted by deficit hawks, whose proposed cuts would shrivel a major source of employment for those leaving active duty. Between 1969 and 1978, when the last generation of veterans returned from Vietnam, the work force employed by civilian agencies of the federal government grew steadily. Today, by contrast, the White House anticipates freezing federal employee counts at current levels. And the budget proposed by Rep. Paul Ryan, Republican of Wisconsin, calls for a 10-percent reduction in these positions over two years.

Outside of Veterans Affairs, there will be few federal openings in the coming years. And the jobs coming on line in Veterans Affairs are not the sort for which enlisted personnel readily qualify.

## Healing Invisible Wounds

Veterans Affairs, for example, recently announced plans to hire 1,900 mental health professionals. "There are a lot more invisible wounds than visible wounds," said Ms. Burke, "mental health issues, addiction disorders." Improved medical treatment and body armor have increased survival rates for troops injured on the battlefield. The war in Afghanistan is the longest war in U.S. history, surpassing World War II, Vietnam and Korea, with only a fraction of the fatalities. Multiple tours of duty and improvised explosive devices have taken a toll on our servicemen and women in other ways, including traumatic brain injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder and addiction problems.

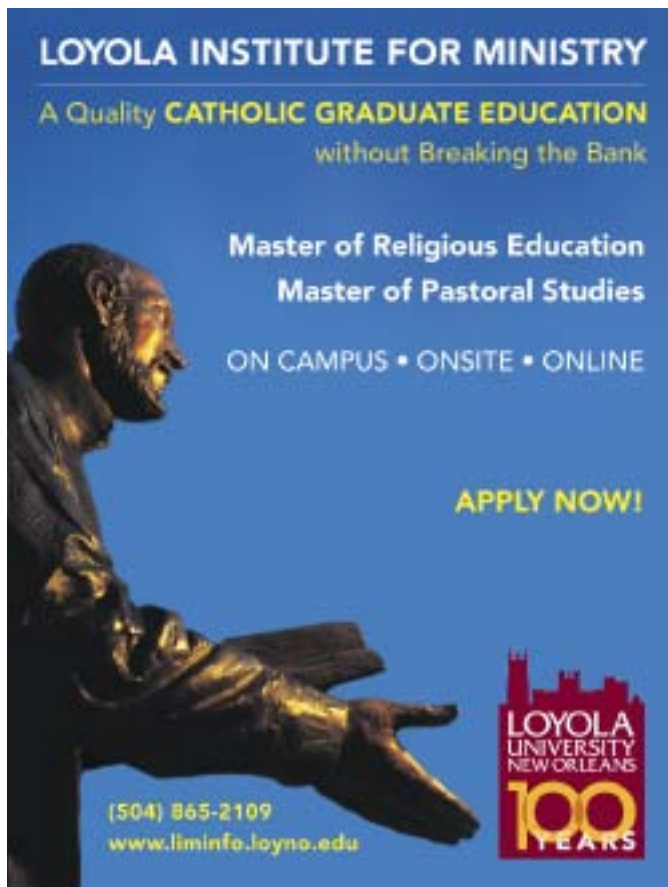
Dwain Sliger sees the results. Mr. Sliger, who served as a Navy chaplain in Iraq, now counsels returning veterans at St. Patrick's Center in St. Louis, Mo. As part of the Archdiocese of St. Louis Catholic Charities Federation, the center helps the homeless and those threatened with homelessness. "Today's veterans are coming back to a society much more attuned to veterans affairs, with better behavioral therapy options and treatment for P.T.S.D.," Mr. Sliger

said. But, he adds, many veterans from the National Guard or the reserves can easily fall through the cracks because they do not return to a military base where these support services are available.

Mr. Sliger's program, Project HERO (Housing, Employment and Recovery Opportunities) helps veterans make the transition to civilian life and work. V.A. Hospitals and offices in the St. Louis area connect vets in need with St. Patrick's, where Mr. Sliger and others help them stabilize their lives, find housing, improve their interviewing skills and prepare resumes that translate their background into terms that civilians can appreciate. "A strategic corporal in Afghanistan or Iraq is leading people, working with translators, executing missions—that's middle management. But to get employers to understand that requires education," said Mr. Sliger. Last year, HERO provided comprehensive housing and employment assistance to 125 veterans.

## From Helmets to Hardhats

Although P.T.S.D. is widespread, civilian perceptions about the disorder are overblown, said Robert Schwartz, a Wounded Warrior program director at Helmets to Hardhats, the agency that helped Joe Tretta begin his post-Army career. "People see the worst-case scenario on the six-o'clock news and think that's what P.T.S.D. is about. But they probably already have someone in their office who sees



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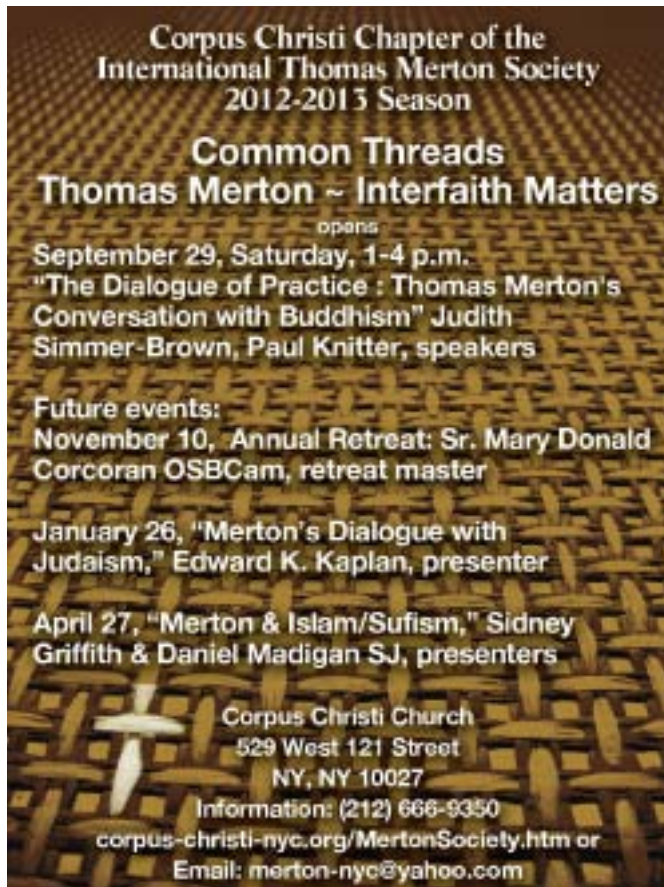
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a therapist every Wednesday night, and nobody says anything about it.” Mr. Schwartz helps explain facts like this to prospective employers in order to place veterans in jobs.

Union construction contractors call the union’s hiring hall when they need a plumber, painter or electrician and in turn pay a fixed contribution, perhaps 50 cents per hour while that worker is on the job, into a training fund. The fund is jointly administered by the union and contractors in order to train new tradesmen to replace retirees. Helmets to Hardhats takes advantage of this system to place returning veterans in construction industry careers.

The program involves some classroom study combined with a great deal of on-the-job training under the direction of experienced journeymen in the field. Apprentices earn a prorated salary as they build experience, and they can become journeymen themselves after four years of progressively more demanding work. General Superintendent Rob McFaul, who supervises Mr. Tretta at Kimball Construction, based in Maryland, has been impressed. Vets like Mr. Tretta “are very grateful for what they have,” he said. “They appreciate a regular 9-to-5 job after what they have been through.”

Last year Helmets to Hardhats placed 662 veterans in joint labor-management apprenticeship programs. But that is less than half the placement at the program’s 2008 peak.

Back then, a budgetary earmark with bipartisan support provided the seed money to recruit and place vets. Apprenticeship programs paid for the training.

“That \$3 million earmark leveraged more than \$30 million in training funds from the apprenticeship programs,” explained executive director Darrell Roberts, a Navy vet and former sheet metal worker. (Sheet metal workers construct ductwork for air conditioning systems, among other duties.) But in 2010 the new Congress prohibited earmarks, and the program’s funding disappeared overnight. “I had to lay off the majority of my staff,” Mr. Roberts said. “You never heard about the earmarks that were about putting veterans to work.”

Contributions from the construction unions and employers keep the program running, albeit at a reduced level. But Mr. Roberts worries about the future. “We have one million veterans coming out of the service in the next five years,” he said. “People who planned careers in the military are being told that they will have to leave. Where will these people go?”

That sentiment is echoed by Steve Kimball, senior vice president at Kimball Construction. “These guys put their lives on the line for all of us,” he said. “If anyone should go to the front of the line, it’s them.”

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**Richard Gaillardetz** calls us to a future faithful to the vision of Vatican II.

# Cesar's Choice

## How America's farm workers got organized

BY BARRY HUDOCK

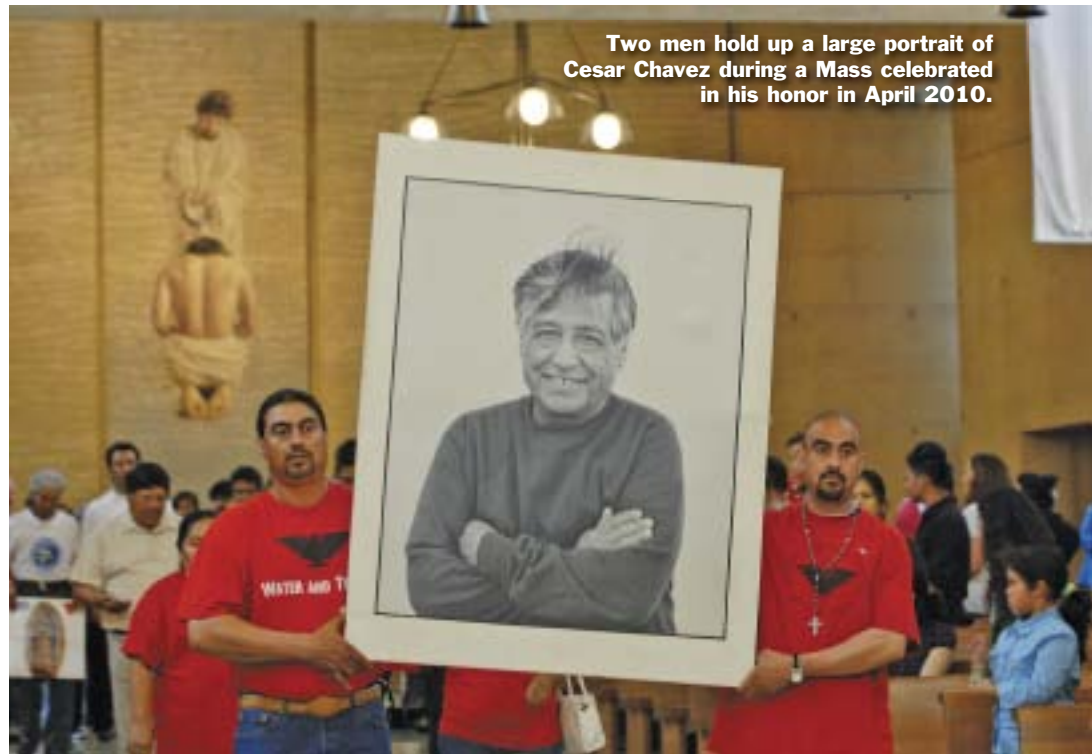
**O**n March 31, 1962, the day he turned 35, Cesar Chavez marked his birthday by quitting his job. This unusual (at the time many would have said called it foolish) choice of birthday observances changed the course not only of his own life, but also of the U.S. labor movement and the Catholic Church. Mr. Chavez quit in order to establish a labor union for migrant farmworkers.

He knew well the life of the *campesino*: backbreaking work under dangerous conditions for demeaning pay that did not begin to provide adequate food and shelter. Cesar Chavez spent his entire childhood and many of his young-adult years living in the miserable circumstances he intended to combat with a union. But it would be a mistake to see his occupational move as a desperate effort to improve his own difficult situation.

Since 1952, Mr. Chavez had managed to achieve what most farmworkers could only dream of: steady and meaningful employment in a comfortable environment with pay and benefits that reasonably supported his growing family. As an employee of the Community Service Organization, an early and important California Latino civil rights group, he conducted voter registration drives, protested police brutality and led evening citizenship classes at neighborhood schools. In 1962, he was C.S.O.'s general director and, by all accounts, a success at it. He had already spent 10 years out of the fields. He had even turned down a job offer from Sargent Shriver, head of the Peace

Corps, to oversee the group's operation in four Latin American countries.

So quitting his job was not a move of calculated self-interest. A bit reckless, the choice destroyed the security he had established for himself, his wife, Helen, and their young children. Mr. Chavez's later achievement would have been impossible without the generous cooperation of his wife and



Two men hold up a large portrait of Cesar Chavez during a Mass celebrated in his honor in April 2010.

children. For as he spent the next several months crisscrossing the San Joaquin Valley to talk with farmworkers in their shacks and garage apartments, Helen worked in the fields to support the family.

### Structures of Sin

Cesar Chavez's organizing efforts also placed him at serious personal risk. For the previous half century, California agribusiness had opposed, by means both legal and illegal, all attempts at labor organization. The Associated Farmers had coordinated a notoriously harsh campaign against early unionization attempts by field workers; it included

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**BARRY HUDOCK** is the author of *The Eucharistic Prayer: A User's Guide* (Liturgical Press, 2010). He lives in Albany, Minn., with his wife and children.

CNS PHOTO/MICHAEL ALEMAN, VIDA NUEVA

widespread violence and mass arrests.

The problem the field workers faced was not simply a few unscrupulous businessmen, but the entire system. When New Deal legislation brought sweeping protections to American workers in the 1930s (unemployment insurance, regulation of hours and wages, age requirements and protection of unionization efforts), field laborers had been specifically excluded. This allowed the agriculture business model to be structured on a presumption of cheap labor provided by workers who were treated more like farm equipment than people.

“Agribusiness in California has developed on cheap labor—and not by accident; it’s been planned,” Mr. Chavez once told an interviewer. “To maintain cheap labor the growers have worked out a horrible system of surplus labor—a surplus labor pool that they are experts at maintaining.”

The interests of agribusiness were interwoven with banks, government agencies and local law enforcement. Grower-maintained farm organizations set wage terms without the involvement of workers and made sure surplus workers were always available. Labor contractors on both sides of the border were a key component of the system and cooperated in the exploitation. Mr. Chavez believed this system, although legal, was profoundly unjust. He insisted that it violated the human dignity of all of those involved, growers and workers alike.

Many of the *campesinos* the labor organizer visited in mid-1962 told him a union was an impossible goal. There was too much—money, law and history—working against him. He was undaunted. Six months after he turned 35, at a fall gathering of 232 farm workers in Fresno, Calif., the National Farm Workers Association was born. (September 30, 2012, marks the group’s 50th anniversary.)

The association was off to a good start three years after it was formed. Members had a credit union, an auto repair cooperative, burial insurance and a newspaper. Cesar Chavez knew it would take several more years of intense organization and fundraising before his organization could mount a strike. But the N.F.W.A. was not afforded that time. On Sept. 8, 1965, members of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, another new organization founded by the A.F.L.-C.I.O. in 1960, began a strike from the grape fields of Delano, Calif., with little enthusiasm or funding. The N.F.W.A. could either watch from the sidelines or join the fight; after intense deliberation, Mr. Chavez chose the latter.

The Delano grape strike lasted for five years and includ-

ed two years of organized grape boycotts in major cities throughout the country. The N.F.W.A. and the A.W.O.C. merged to become the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, headed by Cesar Chavez. (In 1972, with a charter from the A.F.L.-C.I.O., the committee became the United Farm Workers of America).

California’s Gov. Ronald Reagan defiantly consumed grapes and called the strikers “barbarians.” He ordered state agencies to send welfare recipients and prison inmates to replace striking workers, a move the California State Supreme Court later struck down. President Richard Nixon appeared on camera, like Reagan, eating grapes. And in 1969, the U.S. Department of Defense bought three million pounds of grapes more than in the previous year to counter the boycott’s effect.

Finally, in July 1970, triumph came. The collective bargaining contracts signed were the very first in U.S. history between

growers and a farm labor union. With them came the hiring hall (to eliminate the capricious and unfair hiring and firing practices common until then), bathrooms, drinking water, fixed hours and overtime. In 1975 the landmark Agricultural Labor Relations Act codified collective bargaining rights for California’s farmworkers.

### **Rooted in Faith**

The story of the following 25 years is rich and complex. Alongside inspiring successes, courage and faith, there were also real failures and shortcomings as a leader and a Christian. These include a leadership style marked by suspicion of disloyalty by those with whom he worked closest, a deep need for an enemy to battle and insistence on micro-managing daily U.F.W. business.

Until his death in 1993, Mr. Chavez worked to help business owners, politicians and workers themselves grasp that *campesinos* were endowed with the same human dignity as every other person, a dignity laws and business policies must reflect. He also insisted that advocacy on behalf of farmworkers had to be nonviolent.

The convictions that supported Mr. Chavez’s brave actions did not spring from a general sense of moral rectitude. They were rooted in his Catholic faith, passed on to him and his siblings in childhood by their mother and learned more deliberately in adulthood through his study of Catholic social teaching. Around 1950, Chavez had come under the influence of San Francisco-based missionary, the Rev. Donald McDonnell. The priest had explained to him the broader eco-

## Many of the *campesinos* Cesar Chavez visited in mid-1962 told him a union was an impossible goal.



nomics of California agribusiness and much more.

“That’s when I started reading the encyclicals, St. Francis and Gandhi and having the case for social justice explained,” Cesar Chavez later said of that time. By “the encyclicals,” he meant the major documents of modern Catholic social teaching: Pope Leo XIII’s “Rerum Novarum” (1891) and Pius XI’s “Quadragesimo Anno” (1931). In the former, Leo had in the midst of the Industrial Revolution taken a strong stand for the rights and dignity of the common worker; in the latter, Pius, during the Great Depression, called for a radical restructuring of the capitalist system.

Besides reflecting the teaching of these documents, Mr. Chavez’s work during the following decades anticipated and echoed themes being developed in further social encyclicals by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II. Mr. Chavez’s life became a living illustration of the key ideas they proposed, especially the importance of human solidarity, the church’s “preferential option for the poor” and the call to confront the “structures of sin” built into culture and law.

But Cesar Chavez’s Catholicism was about more than social justice. It was profoundly Christ-centered, in a way that saw Jesus as both the motivation for the work and present in the suffering he sought to relieve. “I think Christ taught us to go and do something,” he said. “We can look at his sermon, and it’s very plain what he wants us to do: clothe the naked, feed the hungry and give water to the thirsty. It’s very simple

stuff.” He once spoke of the long hours of work involved in thinning acres of lettuce as “just like being nailed to a cross.”

To the chagrin of many, even among his close associates and supporters, he did not hesitate to incorporate his faith into the activities and mission of the United Farm Workers. The Eucharist was a central expression of this spirituality, and its fundamental form of nourishment. Cesar Chavez went to Mass almost every day. For decades under his leadership, the celebration of Mass was a common element of the union’s demonstrations, as well as part of his personal activities and fasts.

A strong devotion to Mary, under the title Our Lady of Guadalupe, also nourished his faith and that of many Chicano fieldworkers. Banners of La Moreñita led the first marches, adorned altars and dotted prayer vigils. Marian devotion is expressed in the name Mr. Chavez chose for the union’s new national headquarters in Keene, Calif.: Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz (commonly known as La Paz). This devotion to Mary was complemented by warm acquaintance with other saints, including Francis of Assisi and Martin de Porres.

### ‘¡Sí, Se Puede!’

Fasting is another spiritual practice that played an important role in Cesar Chavez’s spiritual life and work. Short fasts on various occasions were frequent. Three major fasts punctu-

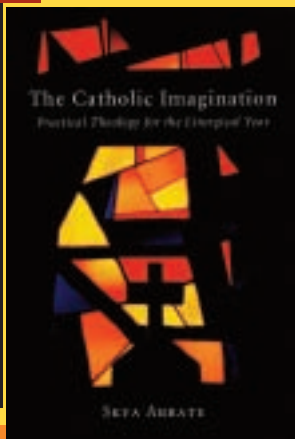
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ated his 30 years as head of the U.F.W.: a 25-day fast in 1968, a 24-day fast in 1972, and a 36-day fast in 1988. Each fast included daily Mass for him and his supporters, and each fast ended in the context of the Eucharist. Mr. Chavez made clear that he undertook fasting first for his own personal good and secondarily for the good of the union.

Cesar Chavez modeled an authentic integration of important elements of Catholic faith and life that is rarely seen today. Many Catholics today seem to think they must choose either the sacramental, spiritual or devotional aspects of Catholicism or its social aspects—a dichotomy that was as foreign to him as it was to his friend Dorothy Day. To both of them, these different elements depended upon and nourished each other.

Cesar Chavez died on the road, defending the U.F.W. against a grower's lawsuit in San Luis, Ariz., on April 23, 1993, not far from the small family farm in the Gila River Valley where he was born. He is remembered on his birthday, March 31, with state holidays in California, Colorado and Texas. Today, the U.F.W. continues its work on behalf of American field laborers, though in far smaller numbers and with diminished strength compared with its heyday. This is partly a result of an internal power struggle that arose from Cesar Chavez's late-in-life failures in leading the organization. Still, his example has strengthened and inspired millions who work for social justice on various fronts in the United States and abroad. Four years ago, presidential candidate Barack Obama borrowed as one of his major campaign themes the U.F.W. slogan "¡Sí, Se Puede!" ("Yes, We Can").

It is a legacy that runs dramatically counter to the notion of religion as an opiate of the masses. "I don't think that I could base my will to struggle on cold economics or on some political doctrine," Cesar Chavez said. "I don't think there would be enough to sustain me. For me the base must be faith." **A**

# BOOKS & CULTURE

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## SUMMERS WITH SHAKESPEARE

*America's many festivals, indoors and out, stage the Bard.*

**T**his year the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C., which for 25 years has given pleasure to some 2.5 million theatergoers, won the Tony Award for regional theater. In holding that honor the company joins two earlier winners: the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland and the Utah Shakespeare Festival in Cedar City. Shakespeare is much appreciated, read and performed in the United States.

"We keep returning to Shakespeare

because we need him," said Harold Bloom. "No one else gives us so much of the world most of us take to be fact." Shakespeare, who was a great vitalist, helps us celebrate life and at the same time "let it be" as we face our little lives, which are "rounded with a sleep" ("The Tempest"). His plays engage us with their drama and rich language, their intrigue, humor and fantasy.

For 35 years I have trekked from my home in California to Ashland, Ore., for an annual Shakespeare infu-

sion. Summertime is Shakespeare time. I keep returning year after year because Shakespeare's universal characters (Coriolanus, Hamlet, Malvolio and Othello, for example) echo persons I have known or traits in myself; his plays help me limn their characteristics and qualities in greater depth. I agree with the critic Samuel Johnson, who attributed Shakespeare's eminence to his stunning diversity of persons. No one before or after, noted Johnson, created so many separate selves and gave them depth.

Perhaps we can best fathom life and accept its vitalities and vagaries when relaxing under a summer sky of stars or in a leafy grove listening to Shakespeare.

"Henry VIII" at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Ore.





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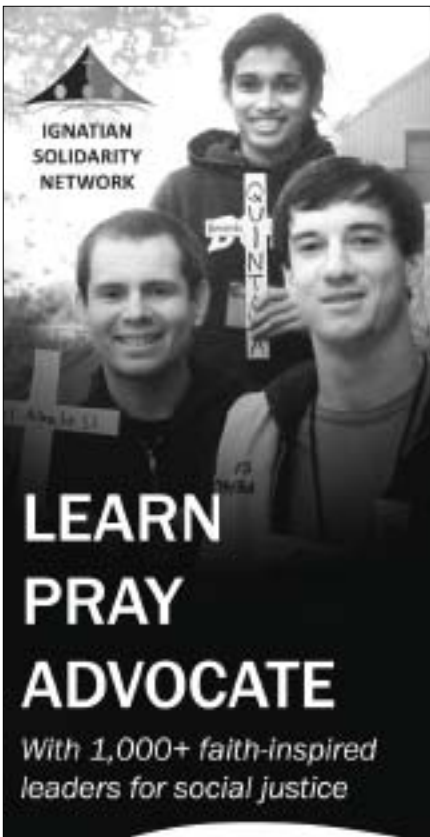
*A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care*

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, currently in its 76th year, is the Grand Daddy of U.S. Shakespeare festivals. Most of the nation's 150 or so other Shakespeare festivals are 15 to 25 years old. Ashland draws some 400,000 playgoers each season to its 11 plays (four of them always Shakespeare). While it boasts a longish season (from late February to the end of October), its Elizabethan outdoor theater only gets up and running in June. A professional equity company, Ashland's productions rival anything I have ever seen on Broadway. Like several other festivals (the Colorado Shakespeare Festival in Boulder, for example), Ashland is committed to performing the entire Shakespeare canon over the years. This summer, besides "Henry V," "As You Like It" and "Romeo and Juliet," they will present "Troilus and Cressida."

Similar to Ashland in scope, age and reliance on professional equity actors are festivals in Alabama, Utah, Colorado, Illinois, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The Alabama festival draws some 300,000 playgoers a year; Utah's 140,000 and Colorado's 40,000.

Shakespeare festivals tend to show plays for free or for a set ticket price and use one of three venues. The first venue (modeled on the New York's Public Theater tradition in Central Park) presents Shakespeare plays in a park or parklike setting. San Francisco's Shakespeare in the Park performs at Golden Gate National Park and travels to nearby Pleasanton, Cupertino and Redwood City. (You can find this kind of venue in Fort Worth, Seattle, Buffalo, Richmond, Nashville, Saint Louis, Louisville, Omaha, as well as Lake Tahoe, Nevada and Pella, Iowa.) Other outdoor settings include vineyards, waterways, valleys and green commons.

The second venue is a university campus. Santa Cruz Shakespeare, noted for its somewhat daring takes, is



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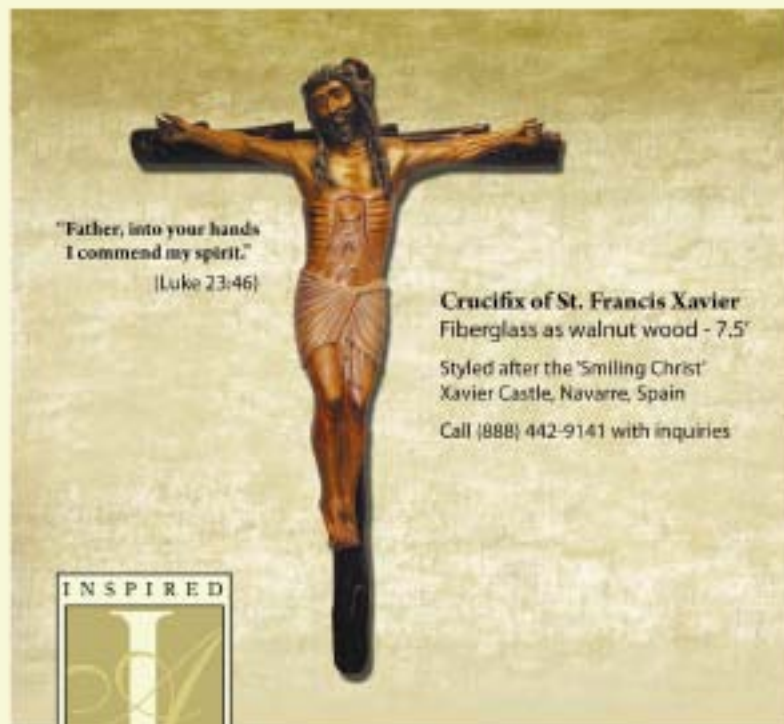
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staged indoors at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Universities like Brown, De Sales, Tulane, William and Mary, Dominican and Xavier also host Shakespeare festivals; some offer summer camps for pre-teens and teenagers.

An amphitheater or freestanding theater is the third venue. Maryland Shakespeare uses the Annapolis Summer Garden. California Shakespeare Theatre in Orinda (north of Berkeley) performs four plays each summer in a large outdoor amphitheatre under the direction of Jonathan Moscone, who is also a playwright.

While some festivals produce only one Shakespeare play each summer, others may present three or four. Some companies (like Arizona's Southwest Shakespeare Company) mount non-Shakespeare plays too, including classics by Chekov or Ibsen and musicals and comedies. Ashland has a long history of presenting world premieres, such as "Equivocation" by the Jesuit Bill Cain, which takes "Macbeth" as its background.

Shakespeare festivals sometimes include extensive educational outreach. Southern Oregon University, near Ashland, offers summer workshops and courses on the plays, plus "park talks" four times a week: midday, hour-long conversations with actors, directors, choreographers and set designers about the plays. Alabama's Camp Shakespeare serves some 36,000 schoolchildren each year through special student performances and school outreach. Fairbanks Shakespeare Theatre, which has run two summer camps since 1992, sponsors an annual bard-a-thon in which, over a 24-hour period for about eight days straight, volunteers read aloud every word of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets. All of this is broadcast on the Internet.

Online, under "Shakespeare Festivals and Theatres," you will find links to festivals around the country. Except for West Virginia, every state

has at least one. Texas, Florida, New York, Massachusetts and California have abundant choices. If you have already made plans for this summer, check out next summer's listings.

Most Shakespeare festivals, if not free, are relatively affordable theater, with \$20 or \$30 seats. And many festivals are staged near other attractions. Utah's festival is not far from two national parks, Zion and Bryce; Tahoe, a gorgeous lake, is the backdrop to its festival; Ashland is near Crater Lake National Park, the Rogue River, for whitewater rafting trips, and the Oregon wine country.

This year I intend to take in the play "King John" in July at Marin Shakespeare and attend Ashland in

### ON THE WEB

A review of the film  
"Where Do We Go Now?"  
[americamagazine.org/culture](http://americamagazine.org/culture)

late August and the San Francisco Shakespeare in September. This will allow me to compare different productions of the same play.

Shakespeare festivals are an extraordinary feature of our nation's summer culture. As the bard himself once noted: "Shall I compare you to a summer day? Summer's lease has all too short a date."

Yet, in the same sonnet, he utters what can be truly said of his own works: "So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, so long lives this and this gives life to me."

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**JOHN A. COLEMAN, S.J.**, is an associate pastor at St. Ignatius Church in San Francisco. For many years he was the Casassa Professor of Social Values at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

JOHN R. DONAHUE

## ROOT STUDY

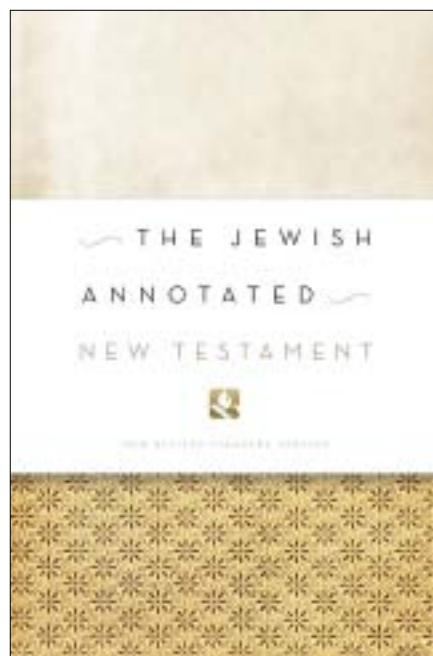
### THE JEWISH ANNOTATED NEW TESTAMENT

Eds. Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler  
Oxford University Press. 637p \$35

Among the major developments in biblical scholarship and church life in recent decades has been the accumulation of a treasury of accurate knowledge of the world of first-century Judaism, which gave birth to the New Testament. Once this world was described mainly by contrasting a stereotypical legalistic and narrow-minded Judaism to a Christian Gospel of graced freedom. Now there exists a substantial collection of studies by Jewish and Christian scholars that we can hope has eradicated this way of thinking.

Ten years in the making, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* is a monument to past achievements in New

Testament scholarship and a beacon for future study. While Christian scholars have written major commentaries on the Old Testament, better



described as the *Tanakh* by Jewish scholars, this work is the first major commentary on the New Testament entirely by Jewish scholars. The modest title scarcely conveys the quality of scholarship packed into its 637 pages. The authors are really a Who's Who of Jewish experts on Second Temple Judaism who have educated a generation of Christian scholars. Adopting the *New Revised Standard Version* as its text and following a pattern found in works like the *Catholic Study Bible* and the *Oxford Annotated Bible*, after a brief introduction of standard information on authorship, date and structure, explanatory notes are offered on every chapter of every book.

The work itself is both a model one-volume commentary on the individual books of the New Testament and a compendium of necessary information for engaged reading and study by scholar and student alike. The collection of maps, charts and diagrams, along with the short sidebar essays, are guiding lights throughout the volume, which contain a fund of information that leads readers to a rich understanding of texts in their literary and historical context. Unique to this work is its demonstration of how utterly Jewish are the writings of the New Testament, not only in relation to their Old Testament heritage but also to the faith and culture of their origin. A major contribution of this work are the notes that list close similarities between New Testament statements and the writings of post-biblical Judaism, especially the *Mishnah* and *Talmud* (described in a helpful glossary).

The editors, who deserve our lasting gratitude, describe the two-fold purpose of this book. The first is to invite Jewish readers to see the New Testament as a way of understanding their own religious heritage. This is itself a tribute to the growth in understanding between Jews and Christians over the past decades. The

New Testament for the most part contains writings by Jews and for Jews who accepted Jesus as a Jewish prophet and a messiah. Jewish readers will find significant information on


first century Jewish practice, beliefs and lives of ordinary people, including monotheistic faith at the center of life, cycle of festivals and religious groups, along with insight into the



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social and economic context of first-century Judaism.

But Christians, the second intended category of readers, may benefit most. The 18 extended essays that follow the commentaries could qualify as an independent collection and are themselves, to use a commonplace, “worth the price of the book.” I would highlight the initial essay by Amy-Jill Levine, “Bearing False Witness: Common Errors Made About Early Judaism”; I recommend that it be read first. While others will have their favorites I found especially helpful the essays “The Law,” “Jewish Movements of the New Testament Period,” “Messianic Movements,” “The Concept of Neighbor in Jewish and Christian Ethics” and “Afterlife and Resurrection.”

The authors face squarely the lethal effect of such texts as the cry of the crowd, “His blood be upon us and our children” (Mt 27:25), which have poisoned attitudes toward Judaism over the centuries but which Aaron Gale locates in their historical context. Of Mt 27:25 he writes, “Matthew’s first readers likely related the verse to the Jerusalem devastation in 70 C.E.”

Of particular value is the superb commentary on the Gospel of John by Adele Reinhartz, of the University of Ottawa. Her introduction offers an eloquent epitome of this Gospel: “The Gospel according to John...is one of paradox and contradictions both in its content and in the reactions it evokes in its readers. It presents a sublime vision of a future salvation that is also in some inexplicable way already a present reality.”

Along with this praise and appreciation Reinhartz confronts honestly the sectarian quality of John and its at times venomous comments on the Jews. She faces directly the destructive power and use of, for example, John 8:44: “You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father’s desires,” which “has fueled

anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism from ancient times to the present day.” But she notes that this is a text that must be read in the context of John’s dualism, which “contrasts spirit and flesh, light and darkness, life and death...belief and unbelief,” and further notes that this language is part of a process of self-definition as John’s community distinguishes itself “from the synagogue and so from the Jews.”

As Catholics celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, we realize that *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* bears the legacy of two historic conciliar documents, the “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation,” with its affirma-

tion of the historical critical method, and the historic “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions,” which Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, recently highlighted as a “yes to our Jewish roots; no to anti-Semitism.”

*The Annotated Jewish New Testament* should be either a primary text or required accompanying work in every seminary and upper-division course in New Testament and should leave its mark on all preaching.

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JOHN R. DONAHUE, S.J., is the Raymond E. Brown Distinguished Professor of New Testament Studies (Emeritus) at St. Mary’s Seminary and University, Baltimore, Md.

PATRICK L. GILGER

## LOST AND FOUND

### THE VARIATIONS

By John Donatich  
Henry Holt. 288p \$25

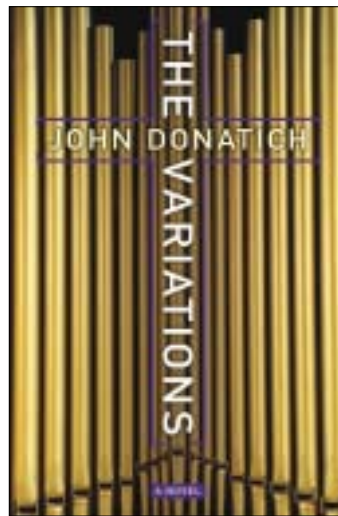
In a recent essay, Marilynne Robinson described the work of a writer as the continual attempt to “make inroads on the vast terrain of what cannot be said.” If we can take our cue from Ms. Robinson, John Donatich’s first novel, *The Variations*, attempts inroads into this terrain, but does not always succeed. And for this simple reason: with *The Variations* Donatich has attempted to stitch two books into one.

The first is the less compelling of the two. It deals centrally with Father Dominic, a member of that endangered species, the American-born, middle-aged Catholic priest, as he struggles to live

the life of faith. At the outset of the novel, Dominic is the associate pastor of Our Lady of Fatima, a rundown parish in a rundown section of New Haven, Conn. Although a talented writer who earns a book deal on the strength of his written sermons, Dominic is an unsettled, anxious man,

a frequent drinker and visitor of prostitutes. By turns pastorally sensitive to a young waif who seeks his help and yet tired of his aging parishioners, learned enough to quote Wittgenstein and yet given to fits of road rage that lead to his arrest, Dominic remains a difficult character to grasp.

All of these paradoxical traits certainly can coexist in a person, but in a fictional character they need to fit around some stable core,





and the core of Dominic is inconsistently drawn. As a result he provides a rather weak gravitational pull for the minor characters who orbit around him, and I found myself relieved whenever Donatich allowed him to exit the stage.

Perhaps the difficulty in understanding Dominic comes from the fact that Donatich wants him to represent a question that many, myself included, feel quite poignantly: Is there any need for faith in our secular age? I could not agree more with Donatich that this topic is worthy of serious exploration, but much of the success of the exploration hinges on the extent to which the central character can evoke the same struggle in us.

The descriptions of Dominic's struggle are not compelling. Donatich's prose here is choppy, repetitive and stylistically overwrought. In the effort to describe spiritual drought, for example, Donatich piles descriptive sentences one atop another. This creates the impression that he lacks a firm grasp of the experience of faith slipping through one's hands. With the challenge of conveying the struggle with faith unmet, the reader is left understanding neither Dominic nor why losing contact with the divine might move the heart. Without this tension to drive the novel, the story of Father Dominic's departure from the priesthood lacks the cathartic mixture of feelings over something lost and something gained.

It is certainly possible that any priest may lose both his faith and his vocation, and to my mind Donatich's questions press upon many today; but the first of the two books in *The Variations* maps little of that vast terrain we call the struggle to believe.

The same cannot be said, however, of Donatich's second book. It tells of James, a young African-American pianist at an Ivy League conservatory, and his teacher, the aged and increasingly forgetful Signora Rosa. Together

they rehearse Bach's "Goldberg Variations," whose name is one source of the novel's title. It is here that Donatich's real voice and narrative skill emerge.

An example: Describing James practicing passages from Bach over and over, Donatich writes that he "corrects his posture in the way that Father Dominic advised their parish choir—'Imagine that a string from the top of the sky was attached to your spine and was lifting you up higher and higher'—as if the discipline of good posture didn't deliberately push itself up from the abdomen but was an involuntary response to a pulling from above. To live life less as a burden and more like a submission to the force that would lift you." If Donatich's writings about the spiritual life of Father Dominic showed precision like this, the novel would have been stronger by far.

In the essay mentioned earlier, Ms. Robinson describes her personal library, saying, "I love the writers of my thousand books." She even loves "the large minority of the writers on my

shelves who have struggled with words and thoughts and, by my lights, have lost the struggle." It seems that this is what has happened in *The Variations*. Donatich has lost the struggle not because he is not a good writer; rather he has lost it because, as he said of himself in a recent interview, he is "somewhat like Dominic, a person for whom the spiritual impulse has outlived its day-to-day utility."

A novel that attempts to depict the variations of the life of faith cannot succeed if it forgets that, as in classical music, variations are developments of the original aria. In the same way, it will remain difficult to write about variations on the life of faith if the conclusion has already been drawn that the original is outdated. It is difficult for any of us would-be writers—Donatich included—to tell an engaging story about a struggle in which we are no longer engaged.

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PATRICK L. GILGER, S.J., is a theology student at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University and editor in chief of the Web site *The Jesuit Post*.

ELAINE MACKINNON

## IN A MAN'S WORLD

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### CATHERINE THE GREAT Portrait of a Woman

Robert K. Massie  
Random House. 656p \$35

Catherine II (or as history knows her, Catherine the Great), remains one of the most intriguing women in history. Thanks to the Pulitzer Prize-winning author Robert K. Massie, she is once again in the public eye. In *Catherine the Great: Portrait of a Woman*, Massie, who has previously written highly acclaimed biographies of the Russian rulers Peter the Great and Nicholas II, doubles as both an academically trained historian and a lively story-

teller as he describes this passionate and precocious woman who rose from minor Prussian nobility to become the empress of Russia from 1762 to 1796.

The author crafts a richly textured portrait of Catherine's life both as a woman and as a ruler and draws the reader into her world through his lively descriptions of the Russian court and the personages whose lives intersected with her own. Assuredly Catherine has not lost her power of seduction, for Massie is clearly in awe of his subject.

By Massie's account, Sophia Augusta Fredericka was a plain but intelligent girl who rose to greatness through a combination of fortuitous

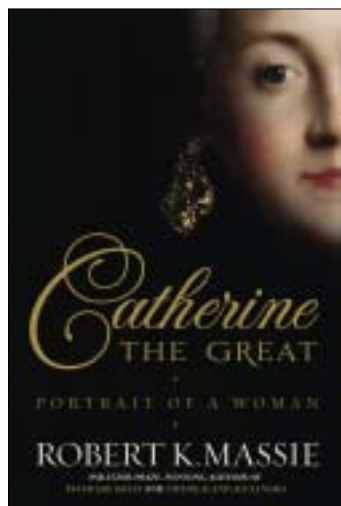
circumstance and her own determined will. Through her mother, Joanna, she was connected by birth to the Romanovs, the ruling family of Russia, and through this her family scored a major coup. In 1744, at age 14, she was betrothed to the heir to the Russian imperial throne, the future Peter III, a duke of Holstein and grandson of Peter the Great.

As was typical of the time, Sophia had no voice in the matter and found herself a virtual prisoner in a loveless marriage to an immature, capricious bully. She was forced to spend 17 years living with him at the court of Empress Elizabeth, who was herself quite jealous and often harsh to Sophia, who upon marriage took the Russian name Catherine and converted to Russian Orthodoxy. Yet during this time she took charge of her own fate by learning Russian, educating herself, particularly in the writings of the European Enlightenment and, perhaps more significantly, building a solid network of friends and allies.

When Peter III finally ascended the throne in 1761, apparently intending to replace Catherine and marry his long-standing mistress, she masterfully outmaneuvered him with the help of the Imperial Guard, who deposed Peter and proclaimed her Autocrat of All the Russias. This high-stakes gamble paid off, but it left Catherine with a perpetual sense of insecurity, always aware that she was a foreigner and usurper.

The book follows a standard chronological narrative, divided into seven parts, each of which covers a particular period in her life. Massie, more than many of Catherine's biographers, devotes nearly as much attention to her life prior to taking the throne in 1762 as he does to her reign as empress. In his

coverage of Catherine as ruler, Massie devotes chapters to major issues and events like her intellectual engagement with the Enlightenment; her unsuccessful attempt to codify laws through the



convening of a representative legislative commission; the massive popular rebellion led by an army deserter, Emelyan Pugachev; her wars against the Ottoman Turks; and the significant expansion in territory that she accomplished, in part through her leading role in the three partitions of Poland.

Massie gives equal weight to her personal life, including detailed portraits of her relations with a succession of lovers ("favorites"), particularly the man Massie suggests she may have married, Gregory Potemkin. But he does this without sensationalizing her situation as a single woman who craved physical and intellectual companionship but whose position as empress made it extraordinarily difficult to form lasting bonds.

Massie may not bring new insight into Catherine, but he does provide a multidimensional picture of her as a resourceful and talented woman operating in a world largely dominated by men. He does not separate Catherine the woman from Catherine the empress who sought to continue the efforts of her predecessor Peter the Great to expand Russia's stature in the world and integrate her subjects into a wider European culture. While much of Massie's treatment is familiar, what makes this biography special is that it makes Catherine accessible to a broader audience, thanks to Massie's gifts as a writer with a reputation as a best-

selling author. It also skillfully explores the interplay between individual will and personality and the larger forces of history.

Massie shows how Catherine took charge of her own destiny, defied social conventions and as ruler played a significant role in the reshaping of the European map; yet at the same time she herself was bound by the historical context within which she lived. Given her insecurity as an interloper and a woman, she could not defy the Russian nobility to reform the system of peasant servitude known as serfdom, even if she had wanted to do so. She did not believe that enlightened ideals of liberty and representative government applied to Russia and rejected any alteration in the absolute power of the monarchy.

More specialized readers may question the diminished focus on Catherine's reforms as well as the relative absence of critical analysis of her policies and actions. Massie relies heavily upon Catherine's own memoirs in telling much of her story but without much discussion of personal bias or offering a different perspective. He seems to accept her version of events at face value, and does not probe too deeply into her contradictions, including the fact that she refused to apply Enlightenment principles to her own power and unabashedly carved up

Poland, dividing the spoils with her fellow Prussian and Austrian rulers.

Nonetheless, this is an impressive

book about a remarkable woman who not only took power from her husband's hands but held onto it for 34 years, ruling over 20 million subjects in the vast Russian empire, all with a son and three male grandsons waiting as possible challengers in the wings.

#### ON THE WEB

David Van Biema talks about the life of Mother Teresa. [americamagazine.org/podcast](http://americamagazine.org/podcast)

**ELAINE MACKINNON** is a professor of history at the University of West Georgia.

## LETTERS

### Permissible Lobbying

Re “Politics and the Pulpit” by Nicholas P. Cafardi (7/30): Dr. Cafardi seems to imply that Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle engaged in impermissible lobbying by assisting in gathering signatures in support of Referendum 74 in Washington State to undo the same-sex marriage legislation. The tax code allows tax-exempt organizations to engage in lobbying as long as the lobbying does not form a substantial part of the organization’s activities.

Dr. Cafardi acknowledges this but seems to minimize to the vanishing point the degree to which lobbying is permitted. Whether it is “substantial” or not is judged in relation to an organization’s totality of activities in terms of time, effort and expenditure. Dr. Cafardi should be familiar enough with the activities of Catholic dioceses to know how “insubstantial,” though still important in itself, this effort of the archdiocese is in proportion to all that it does in worship, education and social service. And Dr. Cafardi does not sufficiently emphasize the fact that this limitation is placed on all non-profit organizations that come under 501(c)(3) of the tax code—not just churches.

Moreover, Professor Cafardi seems to draw into his discussion the totally extraneous issue of the “separation of church and state” to have the opportunity to quote James Madison in order to characterize the church’s opposition to the referendum on marriage as an initiative that would “repeal the civil rights of a significant sector of our fel-

low citizens” and seems “disposed ‘to vex and oppress.’” In doing so, Dr. Cafardi ignores the fact that all the rights of marriage have been granted to registered domestic partners in Washington State, and so even if the same-sex marriage law is overturned, these rights will remain intact except for the description of these relationships as “marriage.”

(MOST REV.) BLASE CUPICH  
*Bishop of Spokane, Wash.*

### Don’t Demonize

Re “After the Fortnight” (Editorial, 7/30): While I fully understand the overall goal of the Fortnight for Freedom campaign, I don’t believe that there are “evil” government forces with grand antireligious motivations behind the decisions which serve as the basis for the protest. The Affordable Care

Act does have some provisions that I don’t favor. But in its totality, I believe it well serves the vast majority of religious citizens. It is extremely difficult to craft any legislation with such a widespread focus and not infringe on someone’s rights. And the bishops have not made the correction of the law an easy task, especially when they appear to provide additional fodder to those who already want to demonize this president.

MICHAEL F. VEZEAU  
*Bluffton, S.C.*

### Perilous Pounding

Thank you to Nicholas P. Cafardi for “Politics and the Pulpit” (7/30), a clear and informative argument on the separation of church and state that secures tax exemption and the now perilous blurring of that separation by

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[resumes@coc.org](mailto:resumes@coc.org). The position is available as early as Aug. 31, 2012, but no later than Oct. 1, 2012. Résumés and letters of application are due by Sept. 22, 2012.

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indiscreet pounding from the episcopal pulpit. In addition to calling the bishops to be more thoughtful in their messages to the faithful, however, we need to challenge our local pastors and parish priests.

Too often I have read comments in church bulletins referring to meetings being held on church property to “defeat the awful Obamacare program” and similar comments made to suggest that a Catholic must oppose any effort to discuss issues that are pressing on our civic and moral consciences. The church is mirroring the Congress: divided and uncaring.

MARY ANN FLANNERY, S.C.  
Cleveland, Ohio

### Whole Preaching

So when does a prophetic word about social issues constitute political action or speech? Should the church be muzzled in order to keep its tax exemption? And how does one distinguish between “spiritual” and “social” issues when churches are called to proclaim a “whole” Gospel for the whole world?

Perhaps the Catholic Church needs to bite the bullet and renounce its tax exemption so that it can have the freedom to proclaim the Gospel and put that Gospel into practice through prophetic ministry. Justice William O. Douglas thought that a good idea, and so do I.

GARY NICOLOSI  
London, Ontario

### Voter Fraud

In “Saving Subsidiarity” (7/30), Vincent J. Miller ends by noting that subsidiarity demands vigilance against both state and corporate power. But corporate power exists only with the permission of the state. It is the state that lavishes monetary, fiscal and regulatory advantages on ever-increasing capital concentration.

How can the state get away with this? It is directly legitimized at the voting booth by the passive recipients of trickle-down advantages like subsidized energy, housing, food and health care. More relevant may be that the legalization of the centralized

power of the state is simply beyond voter comprehension. That is why Miller’s call for positive action to serve the common good is more a question than an answer. What is the common good after a leviathan government has staked its claim on the commons while allaying our fears with runaway spending on national and social security?

ERNEST MARTINSON  
Hayward, Wis.

### Boundless Teaching

Thank you, Vincent J. Miller, for setting the record straight. I am a moderate independent and am forever arguing with both the right and the left, trying to get them to see the wisdom of the church. It is not either/or; it is both/and. Catholic social teaching principles are not meant for any specific age, and they are boundless.

We Americans are so self-centered. It is not all about us. Church teaching speaks to all the different situations people in need encounter in every society around the globe. To say that the church’s stand on unions is out of date implies that the church has nothing to say to workers in India, or Brazil or China.

ROBERT KILLOREN  
Winter Haven, Fla.

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### WITHOUT GUILF



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**Correction:** Because of an editing error, credit for authorship of the essay “How to Create Jobs,” in the forum “Voting Matters” (8/13), was incorrect. The correct identification follows. Teresa Ghilarducci holds the Bernard L. and Irene Schwartz Chair of Economic Policy Analysis at the New School for Social Research; Richard McGahey is a professor at the Milano School of Urban Policy, The New School, and a former economic policy advisor to Senator Edward Kennedy.

# It's About Holiness

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), SEPT. 2, 2012

Readings: Dt 4:1-8; Ps 15:2-5; Jas1:17-27; Mk 7:1-23

*"Why do your disciples not follow the traditions of the elders?" (Mk 7:5)*

Jesus' ongoing controversy with the Pharisees heats up in today's Gospel. Some of his disciples were eating their meals without washing their hands, and the Pharisees objected to this. The disciples violated the tradition of the elders, they maintained.

Jesus is sharp with them, quoting Isaiah: "In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines mere human precepts." The first reading, from the Book of Deuteronomy, would surely support the Lord. Moses proclaims, "In your observance of the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I enjoin upon you, you shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it."

Not included in today's Gospel reading is the example of *qorban* that Jesus gives. *Qorban* was a practice of dedicating something to the temple. Jesus points out that one could renege even on the support one owed one's parents by dedicating it to the temple, thereby disregarding God's command. This would be an instance of both adding to and subtracting from the law.

Jesus has a case. The law of Moses nowhere demands washing for ordinary meals, providing one was not compromised by an "unclean" object (Lv 15:11). We might ask ourselves: How could washing undermine a law of God? It certainly would not. Jesus is clearly using the controversy to discuss how we can lose ourselves in traditions and rules

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while ignoring what really matters.

The big question at hand is, what does it mean to live a holy life under the law of God? But answers are not so easy. The law tells us to keep holy the Sabbath day. Pretty vague stuff. The Talmud, a Jewish compendium that wrestled with how to interpret the law, needed two whole tractates (260 pages) to wrestle with how this command ought to be lived out.

The Pharisees in Jesus' day strove to live such a devout life that they imitated the ritual purity that priests themselves needed at the temple. In their religious imagination, all Jews could or should live as a priestly people: "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation" (Ex 19:6). The Pharisees might frame their posture as being particularly zealous in their faith and the law. What could be wrong with that?

It is clear in the Gospels that such a seemingly devout posture actually took a toll on the common people, whose ordinary lifestyle made it impossible for them to attain that level of observance. "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You lock the kingdom of heaven before human beings. You do not enter yourselves, nor do you allow entrance to those trying to enter" (Mt 23:13).

In both this passage and in our Gospel reading today, Jesus calls the Pharisees hypocrites. The term is revealing. It means "pretender," from

the verb used in Greek drama for "playing a part." It is simply the case that for some people intense devotion and commitment can, ironically, result in moral rigidity and an obtuse spirit. One looks devout, but without interior transformation one is really just a pretender playing a religious role.

We can think of Inspector Javert, the evil (or is he tragic?) inspector in Victor Hugo's classic novel, *Les Miserables*. His commitment to the law produced extraordinary inflexibility and cruelty. He was not interested in the common good, which is the very purpose of law. His life is contrasted with that of the hero, Jean Valjean, who had broken the law several times but devoted his life



## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Ask the Lord to give you one way to deepen your observance.
- Ask the Lord to reveal where you are being judgmental or a pretender.

to kindness and generosity.

In the Gospel, Jesus was not interested in canceling laws, whether ritual or otherwise. Nor is there any evidence that he dismissed his religious culture that practiced additional pious expressions of it. But he did regularly criticize misuse of laws, particularly when they were advanced on the backs of those least able to adhere to them.

We would do well to keep the premiere question always before us: What does it mean to live a holy life? And we would additionally do well to embrace the often-repeated dictum: In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things charity.

# The Messianic Secret

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), SEPT. 9, 2012

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

*He said to him, "Ephphata!"—that is, "Be opened!" (Mk 7:34)*

**D**id you ever wonder why Jesus would perform a miracle and then command the person healed and the bystanders not to tell anyone? Jesus seemed to do this regularly, and it never worked. In today's Gospel, he cures a mute and deaf man. "He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it."

We see this scenario repeated, especially in Mark's Gospel. Scholars have called this Mark's messianic secret. Numerous speculations are offered to explain this oddity. One explanation is that Jesus did not want to be confused with a political messiah, which was surely the expectation of some. In contrast, "the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many" (10:45).

Another explanation is that Jesus was intent on proclaiming the kingdom of God; it was about the kingdom, not about him.

Or perhaps the secret works like a narrative irony that shows the message simply could not be kept down. Mark, in fact, tells his Gospel with a style that suggests great urgency and power. The good news of Jesus and his kingdom was just exploding. A counter explanation is that this secret explains why many Jews did not end up believing in him.

I personally lean toward the first explanation, though two or even three of these could be true at the same time.

There is one more explanation: Jesus' full identity and mission was a secret to all, including his disciples. Framing the matter this way gives us some insight into the healing story in today's reading, as well as the next one in which a blind man is given sight (8:22-26). The afflictions healed mirror the disciples themselves, who are too often both deaf and blind. Among the four Gospels, the disciples in Mark are particularly clueless. They are found with little to no faith (4:40); they cannot follow Jesus' teachings (7:18; 9:32); and after the passion prediction, James and John ask for premier seats of glory in his kingdom, which only angered the others, who had not thought of this first (10:35-41). It ultimately takes a pagan centurion to declare at the crucifixion, "Truly, this man was the Son of God!" (15:39).

In both of these healing stories, Jesus takes time to heal, even applying his saliva on the tongue and eyes respectively. This reflects the time and patience Jesus must show to his disciples. In next week's Gospel reading we will hear Peter's confession of faith, "You are the Messiah," (8:29). This

happens only after the healings of the deaf and blind men. Still, this insight does not keep them from further blunders.

The messianic secret can be alive and well in our lives. While some religious people may be more generous and moral than nonreligious folk, most are not dramatically so. The sociologist Christian Smith argues that most religious people in effect live a faith he calls "moral therapeutic deism." It boils down to this: God wants them to be happy and modestly moral; God makes few demands on them; God promises heaven to anyone who is not egregiously evil; and God is not imagined to be actively part of a person's everyday life. Religious skeptics rightly ask: What real difference in your life does being a Christian make?

"He put his finger into the man's

## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Beg the Lord to deepen your faith.
- What is one way to more clearly witness your faith?

ears and, spitting, touched his tongue, and said to him, 'Ephphatha!'—that is, 'Be opened!'" We must receive Jesus' ministry for ourselves, when we are far too deaf and dumb to hear and speak Christ's authentic mission. "Then he laid hands on his eyes a second time and he saw clearly" (8:25). We must allow Jesus to open our own eyes that we may see his kingdom and discern the movements of the Spirit in our hearts. Discipleship is daunting; it is unnerving. But if we call ourselves disciples, we need to follow the Lord, proclaim the Lord, serve the Lord in one another and actively allow the Spirit of the Lord to transform our hearts. The Messiah should be no secret.

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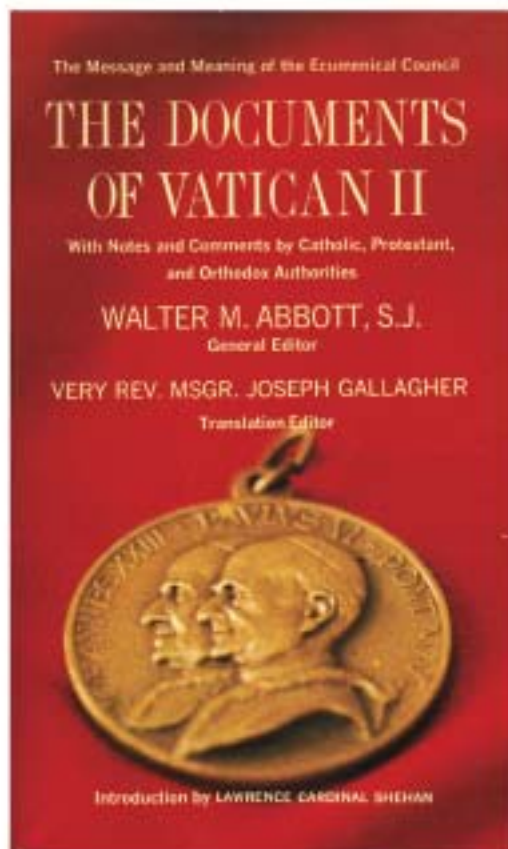
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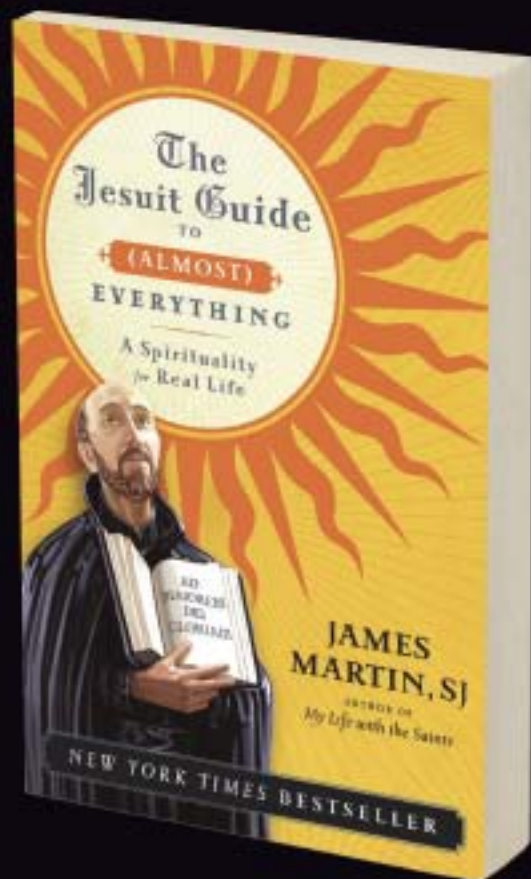
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