

America

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Remembering El Salvador's Martyrs

WILLIAM REISER

Romeward Bound?

ANGLICAN RESPONSE TO
THE VATICAN'S INVITATION
AUSTEN IVEREIGH

OF MANY THINGS

This last week the stories of two women brought home to me the pains inflicted by the absence of an Israeli-Palestinian peace. One is Sharihan Hannoun, a young woman who has been living on the street in Jerusalem after her home was seized and occupied by Israeli settlers. The second, a student at Bethlehem University named Berlanty Azzam, was peremptorily deported by Israeli authorities to Gaza.

A third woman, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, demonstrated how, when unmoored from history and experience, American policy in the Middle East can cause pain to all those who had come to hope for change from the Obama administration. Secretary Clinton backed away from the administration's demand for an end to Israeli settlement activity with a proposal for both sides to take up peace negotiations without pre-conditions.

Pressed at a meeting of Arab foreign ministers, she shifted her position once again, but not without praising purported Israeli willingness "to restrain settlement activity" as "unprecedented," though it allows for the planned-for construction of 3,000 new homes. Agreeing to Israeli terms indicates a diplomatic innocence that is uncomprehending of the history of the Israel-Palestinian struggle and the relentless dispossession of Palestinians from the land.

Sheikh Jarrah is a neighborhood of East Jerusalem just inside the Green Line, the old 1949 armistice line between East and West Jerusalem. But in the late 1990s, Jewish settlers, with the support of authorities, began grabbing Palestinian land there. In a few years many once-Palestinian homes were flying the blue and white Israeli flag, and empty lots were sprouting new construction sponsored by overseas "investors."

In recent months, in contravention of the Oslo Accords, the Israeli govern-

ment has been conducting expulsions and home demolitions in East Jerusalem neighborhoods to consolidate Israeli control of the city.

Ms. Hannoun told me how the settlers awoke her last Aug. 2 at 5 in the morning and gave her 20 minutes to move out. Within two hours the settlers had moved in, and her family's furniture was on the street. According to Catholic News Service, she said police told her they were seizing the house "because you are Palestinian..." and added, "We can take any houses we want...without any papers...because we are Israeli."

If you think this expulsion is a recent phenomenon, I recommend reading Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oneworld); and Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall* (Norton).

On Oct. 28 Berlanty Azzam, a Christian fourth year business administration student at the Vatican-run Bethlehem University, was seized by the Israeli military, handcuffed, blindfolded and deported to Gaza against the advice of military lawyers. No charges were lodged against her. Her apparent offense: She was born in Gaza City.

Like the settlers' expulsion of Ms. Shanoun, the deportation of Ms. Azzam is an example of the arbitrary treatment inflicted on ordinary Palestinians at the hands of Israeli officials. Any expectation that "unprecedented" limitations on settlement construction, as Mrs. Clinton called them, will hold back Israeli expansion under the leadership of the wily Mr. Netanyahu is a pipe dream. Over many years he has used every available tactic to evade restrictions on Israeli expansion.

For now, hard pressure against settlements is a wiser, more realistic policy than Israeli-Palestinian negotiations without pre-conditions. Better a modicum of justice than a phony, one-sided peace.

DREW CHRISTIANSEN, S.J.

America

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Cover: Partial view of the spot where six Jesuit priests and two assistants were assassinated on Nov. 16, 1989, in San Salvador. Reuters/Mark Stillon.

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ON THE WEB

Kevin F. Burke, S.J., remembers Ignacio Ellacuría, right, and the other **martyrs of El Salvador** on our podcast, and an article from 1993 calls for **opening the papal door** to Anglicans. Plus, Leo J. O'Donovan, S.J., revisits the art of **John LaFarge Sr.** All at americamagazine.org.



Artful Dodgers

Every year the federal government loses some \$100 billion in tax revenue to international tax cheating. That is a staggering sum, enough to pay for 27 months of the war in Afghanistan at the current rate of \$3.6 billion per month. A recovery of eight years' worth of these losses could pay for the entire health care reform package proposed by the House. Instead, year after year U.S. citizens hide their earnings abroad, and foreign firms earning money in the United States underreport or refuse to report their earnings.

Plugging the leak is the goal of a new bill sponsored by two Democrats, Charles B. Rangel of the House Ways and Means Committee and Max Baucus of the Senate Finance Committee. The proposed legislation would stiffen reporting requirements for foreign institutions that conduct business in the United States and those who advise U.S. citizens on investing abroad. The penalty for businesses that fail to comply would be a 30 percent withholding tax on income from their American assets. The I.R.S. is also more diligently tracking overseas investments.

Collection will not be easy. International financial information is difficult to track; tax rates and laws differ among nations. So much of the money owed the U.S. government will never be recovered. Were the Rangel/Baucus bill to pass, the expected recovery is a paltry \$8.5 billion over the next 10 years—less than \$1 billion each year. Surely a better means of plugging this leak needs to be found, and quickly, for global commerce and investment will likely increase, as will the number of artful dodgers.

Resigned in Afghanistan

October proved a cruel month in our eighth year of war in Afghanistan. Fifty-eight Americans were killed, the worst monthly loss of life since the beginning of the war. It also could not have been welcome news to President Obama that a senior foreign-service officer, Matthew Hoh, a Marine veteran of two tours in Iraq, resigned on Oct. 26 in protest of the U.S. policy in Afghanistan, the first State Department official to do so.

"I fail to see the value or the worth," Mr. Hoh writes in his resignation letter, "in continued U.S. casualties or expenditures of resources in support of the Afghan government in what is, truly, a 35-year-old civil war." According to Mr. Hoh, the "Taliban resistance" the United States is purported to be suppressing actually breaks down into hundreds of small local groups, who perceive themselves as

fighters not for the Taliban or an even more distant Al Qaeda but against the current occupiers, the United States and Afghanistan's central government.

In a marvel of understatement, Mr. Hoh calls the Karzai administration an "unreliable partner" and writes that our Afghanistan strategy is destabilizing the entire region while making little progress toward its primary goal of protecting the West from the terrorist conspiracies of Islamic extremists. Mr. Hoh has thrown away what had been a promising diplomatic career in an effort to force his countrymen to ask some hard questions about Afghanistan: What are we achieving there? Do we have the ruthlessness and patience to stay in this fight? With our nation printing money to pay its bills, can we really afford to maintain this long war? President Obama's long-awaited decision on Afghanistan may not answer all of Mr. Hoh's brave but career-ending questions, but it should at least offer more than a general plan for muddling through in an ancient land that shows signs of developing into a Vietnam-style quagmire for the United States.

One Laptop Per Child

"A chicken in every pot and a car in every garage." Back in 1928 Herbert Hoover successfully used this adage in his presidential campaign. In this age of technology we have "One laptop per child." The retiring president of Uruguay, Tabaré Vázquez, recently fulfilled his promise to give laptop computers to the 360,000 primary school students and 18,000 primary school teachers in his nation.

Making this possible is Nicholas Negroponte and his One Laptop Per Child program. Over one million machines have been distributed worldwide and another million are planned. In Rwanda 100,000 laptops are going to schoolchildren. Peru, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa and Haiti are involved in supplying computers to their schoolchildren.

Challenges of cost, distribution, maintenance, training and content remain. But such challenges are part of any creative, far-sighted new program. As groups and nations argue the merits of One Laptop Per Child, the perennial debate about "guns versus butter" arises. Should swords be turned into plowshares or into food to feed the world's hungry children? Why not into laptops? Might some small percent of the billions spent in Afghanistan and Iraq go to the distribution of these inexpensive computers?

The movement continues to grow, not replacing concern for child and adult literacy but expanding it to include technological literacy, which seems indispensable for success in the world of tomorrow. The One Laptop Per Child program is a welcome step in the right direction.

The Iron Pipeline

Should residents of local communities have the right to keep handguns in their homes? This Second Amendment issue is a question that the Supreme Court will consider in 2010, perhaps as early as February. The specific case before the court is *McDonald v. Chicago*, in which a few of that city's residents, strongly backed by the National Rifle Association, are challenging Chicago's strict gun control laws.

Setting the stage for this case was last year's Supreme Court decision in *District of Columbia v. Heller*. To the dismay of gun control advocates, the court ruled then that the district's prohibition against the possession of handguns in the home for self-defense violated the Second Amendment. But because the district is a federally governed zone, that decision applied only there and to similar federal enclaves, like military bases. To widen the impact of the ruling to local and state regions, gun rights proponents want to obtain a similar ruling in the *Chicago* case and thus eviscerate the stricter gun laws there and elsewhere in the country. Such a ruling would be a troubling development indeed, particularly for Chicago, a city that has an especially high rate of gun violence. Between September 2007 and April 2008, two dozen teenage public school students were murdered there, most of them shot to death.

This year Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York, an ardent gun control advocate, who has enlisted the support of mayors nationwide to fight gun violence through the bipartisan group *Mayors Against Illegal Guns*, initiated a four-month investigation of gun shows in three states with weak gun control laws. The report, *Gun Show: Under Cover*, describes how undercover investigators traveled to gun shows in Nevada, Ohio and Tennessee last spring and summer. They used concealed video equipment to document gun show dealers selling weapons, contrary to federal law, to people who could not pass criminal background checks. They also proved that dealers frequently sold to straw purchasers, who had only to prove their residency in the state and a crime-free background in order to buy arms, which they then turned over to the real buyer, who would in turn transport them back to New York and other cities along the so-called "iron pipeline." Many of these weapons have been traced to shooting deaths.

The investigators found that of 30 private sellers in the three states, 19 sold weapons even when the undercover purchaser said that he himself would probably not pass a background check. One seller replied with a laugh, "I

wouldn't pass either, bud." Moreover, had the buyer later committed a crime, there would be no way to trace the weapon's provenance, because private sellers are not required to keep records of gun show sales. The investigators also tested federally licensed gun show dealers, who, unlike private sellers, must conduct background checks. Of 17 dealers videotaped, 16 sold guns to straw purchasers.



Kristen Rand, legislative director at the nonprofit Violence Policy Center in Washington, D.C., pointed out to **America** that such weapons all come from jurisdictions without strong laws like Chicago's. "You can't buy a handgun in Chicago or the District of Columbia legally, so traffickers go to states with weaker laws and then bring them to the cities that don't allow their purchase." For Ms. Rand and other gun control advocates, one of the worst aspects of a victory by those who mounted *McDonald v. Chicago* would be that it would remove what she called "the most effective measures to prevent handgun violence." She observed that the Supreme Court in both *Heller* and now in *McDonald* is examining the issue solely as a question of constitutional law "and not in terms of the deadly effect on citizens of gun violence." The court should know better than most that, as former U.S. Justice Robert H. Jackson said, "the Constitution is not a suicide pact."

Although most observers fear that the outcome of the *Chicago* case will be similar to that of the *Heller* case, one ground for hope is a bill introduced by Senator Frank R. Lautenberg, Democrat of New Jersey. It would mandate background checks for all private sales at gun shows. In the meantime, states with bad records of gun violence continue to allow gun show loopholes to remain open. The implications of the killing of 33 people at Virginia Tech in 2007 by a mentally deranged man who had no difficulty obtaining his weapons has faded too quickly from public memory. Virginia legislators who are once more resisting plugging the gun show loophole for private sales seem also to have forgotten. Closing this loophole could slow the deadly flow along the iron pipeline.

Rights have correlative duties. When individuals and localities do not meet those responsibilities, it falls to government to do so. Thus, if there is a fundamental Second Amendment right to bear arms, there is also, as there must be, a fundamental responsibility to regulate their sale and use.

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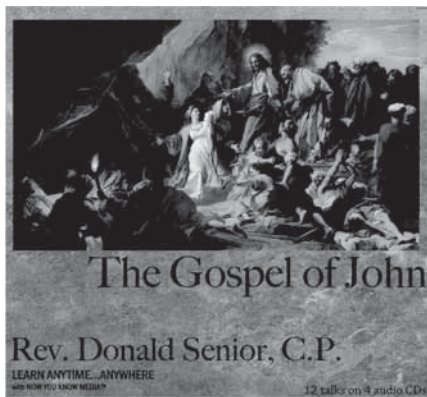
About Your Speaker

Donald Senior, C.P., is President of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, where he has taught the New Testament since 1972.

A Roman Catholic priest of the Passionist order, Fr. Senior has served on the Pontifical Biblical Commission since Pope John Paul II named him to it in 2001. Fr. Senior is general editor of *The Bible Today* and *The Catholic Study Bible*, as well as coeditor of the 22-volume commentary *New Testament Message*.

He is also the presenter of *Now You Know Media's* program on the *Gospel of Matthew*.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

LATIN AMERICA REPORT

Honduran Standoff Near an End?

A shaky political truce emerged late last month in Honduras, promising an end to more than four months of political turmoil that followed the early summer ouster of President Manuel Zelaya. The Central American nation is almost certainly set for more short-term tension: Some form of unity government must take shape; the issue of Zelaya's reinstatement for the brief remainder of his term must be resolved; and national elections are to be held on Nov. 29. It is still unclear if the upcoming election will be as widely embraced internationally as Zelaya's ouster was widely condemned.

The roots of the conflict in Honduras go back long before the military's guns were pointed at the democratically elected president as he was forced to leave his country—still wearing his pajamas—on June 28. The manner of his removal began a debate throughout the region over its constitutional legitimacy. The U.S. State Department, for its part, quickly condemned the events of June 28 as an unlawful coup and joined other members of the Organization of American States in demanding Zelaya's restoration to office.

"But Zelaya is no saint," said Christopher Sabatini, senior director of policy for the New York-based Council of the Americas. "He had already overstepped the bounds of the constitution, calling for what was clearly an unconstitutional plebiscite, one that had been refused by the [Honduran] Congress and the Supreme Court."

Zelaya's populist push and explicit appeals to the poor laid bare deep class divisions, and even deeper divisions between the president and the congress and the courts. "There was already an institutional train wreck in motion," Sabatini said.

According to Luis Cosenza, a former minister in the center-right government of the former Honduran president, Ricardo Maduro, the agreement between Zelaya and the interim president, Roberto Micheletti, marks a new beginning for Honduras. "I'm optimistic," he said. "From a purely pragmatic political point of view, I think it's a reasonable agreement. I think it preserves democracy." Cosenza emphasized that the agreement stipulates there will be no constitutional congress assembled to draft a new constitution, nor any amnesty for the restored president's alleged crimes.

The upheaval caused by Zelaya's ouster has been at times acute. Mass pro-Zelaya protests on the streets of Tegucigalpa were met with counter-demonstrations. Eventually the Micheletti government banned protests and shut down pro-Zelaya media outlets. Zelaya managed to re-enter the country on Sept. 21 and found refuge at the Brazilian embassy. From there, he continued to agitate for his return to power, and more street confrontations followed.

The recent agreement, brokered in part by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Shannon, allows for Zelaya to serve out the remaining two months of his term, subject to congressional approval. "The Congress did originally approve Zelaya's removal," said Sabatini, "but the agreement gives them an opportunity to unwind that decision." He cautioned, "I'm worried that things could still fall apart."



A supporter of ousted President Zelaya

Throughout the crisis, most elite groups in Honduran society strongly opposed Zelaya's restoration. The archbishop of Tegucigalpa, Cardinal Andrés Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga, signaled his support for Zelaya's removal in a letter dated July 3 signed by all Honduran bishops. But almost immediately a split emerged in the Catholic leadership as Bishop Luis Santos Villeda of the Diocese of Santa Rosa de Copán began expressing his displeasure with the de facto government. On Sept. 24 he issued a statement denouncing coup leaders, urging a return to "constitutional order" and singling out "the unjust distribution of wealth, which creates deep inequalities in Honduras."

Robert Pelton, C.S.C., an expert on the Catholic Church in Latin America at the University of Notre Dame, said he was "extremely surprised" by the split and particularly by Rodríguez's



decision to support Zelaya's removal. "[The bishops] ordinarily stand together," he said. He thinks that division prevented the local church from serving as a mediator in the crisis.

"The divided nature of the church added to this confusion and disorientation of the populace that there's no clear, moral center on this issue," said Sabatini. In the future, he argued, the international community needs to address interruptions of democratic order before they reach a crisis state. For now: "We need to close the chapter on both Zelaya and Micheletti," he said. "What needs to be established is a new government of national unity that can restore Hondurans' faith in government."

The next several weeks are sure to test that faith.

DAVID ALIRE GARCIA is a journalist based in Detroit, Mich.

BALTIMORE

Bishops to Consider Life Issues, New Roman Missal and Marriage

Life issues from the test tube to the deathbed are on the agenda for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' fall general assembly. The meeting in Baltimore from Nov. 16 to 19 will also include what the bishops hope will be their final consideration of action items related to the Roman Missal. They will also debate and vote on a lengthy document on marriage.

Health care. Up for debate by the bishops is a proposed revision to the directives that guide Catholic health care facilities. "As a general rule, there is an obligation to provide patients with food and water, including medically assisted nutrition and hydration for those who cannot take food orally," says the revised text of the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* proposed by the U.S. bishops' Committee on Doctrine. "This obligation extends to patients in chronic conditions (e.g., the 'persistent vegetative state') who can reasonably be expected to live indefinitely if given such care," the new text adds.

Missal. With five votes on the English translation and U.S. adaptations of the Roman Missal, the bishops hope to conclude nearly six years of intense and sometimes contentious consultations. Each section of the missal must be approved by two-thirds of the U.S.C.C.B.'s Latin-rite membership and will then be sent to the Vatican for *recognitio*, or confirmation.

While awaiting Vatican approval of all sections of the Missal, the U.S. church will begin "a process of catechesis," said Msgr. Anthony Sherman, executive director of the bishops'

Office of Divine Worship, "so that everyone is ready to move along when we get the final text from the Vatican."

Marriage. The 57-page proposed pastoral letter on marriage is to be issued in the hope of reversing what the bishops call "a disturbing trend" toward viewing marriage as "a mostly private matter," with personal satisfaction as its only goal. The letter, called *Marriage: Life and Love in the Divine Plan*, cites four "fundamental challenges to the nature and purpose of



U.S. bishops hope to conclude their work on the Roman Missal this month.

marriage": contraception, same-sex unions, divorce and cohabitation. Calling both contraception and cohabitation "intrinsicly evil," the bishops say that although couples who use contraception "may think that they are doing nothing harmful to their marriages," they are in reality causing many negative consequences, both personal and societal.

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., who chairs the bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage, also will report on efforts to promote and protect marriage as the exclusive and permanent union between a man and a woman.

Respect Life: Welcome Migrants, Says Vatican

Catholics' respect for human life and dignity must be clear in the way they welcome the world's estimated 200 million migrants and 11 million refugees, offer them pastoral care and lobby their governments for fairer treatment of people on the move, a Vatican official said. Archbishop Antonio Maria Veglio, president of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers, said globalization is not just an economic phenomenon. It also has an impact on the movement of people, and people must be the focus of Christian attention, he said.

Archbishop Veglio spoke on Nov. 3 at a Vatican press conference before the Sixth World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees, which is to meet at the Vatican from Nov. 9 to 12. With globalization the church not only has had to reach out to assist people on the move, it has also had to address situations that force them to seek a new life away from their homeland as well as attitudes and policies that make it difficult or impossible for them to live with dignity in a new land, Archbishop Veglio said.

Bishops Issue Health Care Alert

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops distributed bulletin inserts to almost 19,000 parishes across the country on Nov. 1 in an effort to urge Catholics to prevent health care reform from being derailed by support for abortion funding. "Health care reform should be about saving lives, not destroying them," the insert stated. It urged readers to press Senate leaders to support efforts to "incorporate long-standing policies against abortion funding and in favor of conscience

NEWS BRIEFS

On Oct. 30 Miami's Archbishop John C. Favalora barred the **Legionaries of Christ** from exercising any ministry in the archdiocese • Archbishop **Allen H. Vigneron** of Detroit descended 1,200 feet into the salt of the earth to bless a newly made statue and shrine to St. Barbara, the patroness of miners, at the site of Michigan's lone rock-salt mine. • Representative Patrick Kennedy, Democrat of Rhode Island, has accepted an invitation from Bishop Thomas J. Tobin of Providence to engage in a discussion about the issue of **health care reform**. • A new Vatican exhibit marking the 400th anniversary of the death of **Matteo Ricci**, an Italian Jesuit who spent 28 years in missionary work in China, opened Oct. 30. • Welcoming **Iran's new ambassador** to the Vatican on Oct. 29, Pope Benedict XVI praised the "deep religious sensibility" of the Iranian people and called on Iran to strengthen guarantees of religious freedom for the country's tiny and ancient Catholic community. • Authorities were awaiting results of an autopsy on Nov. 3 to determine the exact cause of death of **Marguerite Bartz** of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, who was found dead in her Navajo, N.M., convent two days earlier.



Allen H. Vigneron (r)

rights" in health reform legislation. "If these serious concerns are not addressed, the final bill should be opposed," it read. The insert highlighted an amendment sponsored by Representative Bart Stupak, Democrat of Michigan, which "addresses essential pro-life concerns on abortion funding and conscience rights." It stated: "Help ensure that the rule for the bill allows a vote on the amendment.... If these serious concerns are not addressed, the final bill should be opposed."

Supreme Court Declines Appeal

The Diocese of Bridgeport said it was disappointed that the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear its final petition asking the court to overturn a

ruling by the Connecticut Supreme Court requiring the diocese to release documents from long-settled abuse cases. "We continue to believe that the constitutional issues presented, including the First Amendment rights of religious organizations and the privacy rights of all citizens, are significant and important for the court to consider," the diocese said in a statement on Nov. 2. The diocese is now working with the Connecticut courts to assure the materials are "appropriately unsealed." The decision means the diocese must release 12,000 pages of depositions, exhibits and legal arguments in 23 lawsuits involving six priests. Four newspapers had sued for access to the documents.

From CNS and other sources.



A Surge in Clarity

As President Obama and the Congress consider what policy options to pursue in Afghanistan, we must understand that Afghanistan is not Iraq, and that Afghanistan is not a failed state.

In the current policy debate, Afghanistan is repeatedly and erroneously compared to Iraq. People who ought to know better argue that an additional surge in U.S. troops in Afghanistan will quell the rising violence there and allow the Afghan government to take over, as supposedly happened in Iraq. U.S. military forces invaded both Iraq and Afghanistan; the comparison between the two should end there.

Prior to the U.S. invasion, Iraq had an industrial and prosperous oil economy and an urban, literate population; life expectancy was 70 years. Iraq has been a player in global trade from the Mesopotamian era until today. Iraq now has the fourth largest proven oil reserves in the world.

Iraq was run for decades after colonialism by a brutal centralized government. The Bush administration invaded to impose “democratic” regime change. But Iraq had functioning central governance and a modern economy before the U.S. invasion; afterward the United States “merely” tried to reconstitute and recreate these. The United States did not disarm or demobilize insurgents in Iraq but bought them off; it paid the Sons of Iraq and the Awakening movements not to fight. With U.S. forces pulling out,

these programs are ending, but the Iraqi government is not eager to hire these former fighters, who number over 110,000. This is why many, like Ryan Crocker, former U.S. ambassador to Iraq, believe the worst violence in Iraq may lie ahead.

The Afghan case is quite different. Afghanistan is not a failed state, but a fictional state. As in many regions of the world, there has never been a sovereign state here in practice, but only in unexamined Western default assumptions. Afghanistan never had a strong central government or economy. Afghanistan is the world’s sixth poorest state, with one of the worst infant mortality rates. Afghanistan is not industrialized and lacks infrastructure.

The people are largely illiterate, rural and poor, with a life expectancy of 44 years. Afghanistan is an assemblage of often fiercely autonomous tribal areas. Insurgency and violence are quite local, as are the rural economies whose products are largely cut off from global trade, with the exception of a minority of the country, the southern seven (of 34) provinces, which grow most of the world’s opium.

Afghanistan supplies over 93 percent of the lucrative global market in opiates. Heroin is one of the world’s most valuable commodities, more valuable than oil or gold by many orders of magnitude. The opium trade accounts for an estimated 97 percent of Afghanistan’s gross domestic product.

These illegal narco-profits fund local and regional warlords, the

Taliban, and Al Qaeda terrorists based across the border in Pakistan, and they challenge attempts at legal governance. Fighting the opium trade is dangerous; deaths of poppy-eradication workers in Afghanistan increased sixfold in 2008. If the United States wanted to pay these fighters not to fight or grow opium, the drug-money inflated price tag could be beyond the reach of the recession-depleted U.S. budget. The

United States does not have a good record in fighting wars on drugs.

There are success stories in Afghanistan, from Catholic Relief Services’ agriculture projects in the northwest to increased access to health care and education for women and children in areas where Taliban influence has

waned. The costs are large. The United States has spent over \$228 billion in combat operations alone in Afghanistan, with billions more to be spent on aid and veterans’ payments for decades to come.

U.S. troop levels have increased from over 5,000 in 2002 to more than 68,000 today. Over 38,000 NATO troops also serve. More than 1,500 military service members have died in Afghanistan since 2001 (over 900 of them Americans). Afghan civilian casualties are estimated at over 5,000 since 2006; totals since the war began may be double that.

To assess any of this accurately, we must remove our “Iraq-colored glasses” to see Afghanistan as it is and more effectively calibrate U.S. foreign policy.

**Afghanistan
is not
a failed
state, but
a fictional
state.**

MARYANN CUSIMANO LOVE, during her sabbatical from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., is a fellow at the Commission on International Religious Freedom.

A procession at the Central American University in San Salvador on the 10th anniversary of the 1989 massacre there.



TWENTY YEARS LATER:
REMEMBERING THE MARTYRS OF EL SALVADOR

The Road From Aguilares

BY WILLIAM REISER

A group of highly trained Salvadoran soldiers entered the campus of the University of Central America in San Salvador shortly past midnight on Nov. 16, 1989. While their primary target was the president of the university, Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J., they murdered and mutilated nearly the entire Jesuit community—Ignacio and five others. A seventh member of the community, Jon Sobrino, S.J., was in Thailand teaching a course on Christology. The soldiers also murdered Elba and Celina Ramos, the Jesuits' housekeeper and her daughter, who slept on campus that night to escape the anxiety caused by the bullets and artillery around the neighborhood where they lived.

What happened that night brought home grimly yet powerfully the prophetic dimension of teaching and research, when these activities are informed by an option for the poor. The 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, which met in 1974-75, put the entire order on record: "The mission of the Society of Jesus today is the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement." The 33rd General Congregation (1983) reaffirmed that direction and insisted that "we wish to make our own the church's preferential option for the poor."

A Weak-Willed Congress

The civil war in El Salvador lasted 12 years, from 1980 to 1992, and claimed 75,000 lives. The incompetence of American foreign policy with respect to the conditions that led to the conflict and in understanding who benefitted from the U.S. support of the Salvadoran military was appalling. As a result of the assassinations at the university, a weak-willed U.S. Congress finally began to face the problem of U.S. complicity in the Salvadoran situation.

PHOTO: REUTERS/STR. NEW

WILLIAM REISER, S.J., is a professor of religious studies at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass.

Representative Joe Moakley, Democrat of Massachusetts, was appointed to lead an investigation that turned out to be as courageous as it was eye-opening. El Salvador was not the only place in Latin America where the poor were being abused. Nine years earlier, four North American women who were returning to El Salvador—two Maryknoll sisters, an Ursuline nun and a co-worker—were raped and murdered on their way from the airport. And two days before Archbishop Oscar Romero was gunned down at the altar on March 24, 1980, another Jesuit, Luis Espinal, was ambushed in La Paz, Bolivia, and silenced for his defense of the rights and dignity of the poor.

The stories of such “martyrs for justice,” as Father Jon Sobrino calls the slain Jesuits and many others, do not begin with the martyrs themselves but with the people on the bottom—the victims of poverty, miscarriages of justice and class prejudice; the throwaways and the “disappeared.” The story of the Salvadoran Jesuits, for example, takes us to the political, social and economic oppression endured by peasants so poor that they needed to be catechized before they could imagine that the world could be different. What would El Salvador look like if God’s will were done on earth, just as it is in heaven?

Father Ellacuría and his companions understood that the mission of a Christian university as an apostolic instrument is not disconnected from the economic and political conditions of the society in which it is located. On the contrary, the university’s mission derives directly from its awareness of the everyday reality that poor people endure. But as Father Sobrino explains in his essay “The University’s Christian Inspiration,” because a university needs resources it is almost by necessity implicated in a world of economic and political power, and “this incarnation amid power tends to distance the university from social reality as lived by the poorest and most marginalized.” Indeed, even the church has to be careful never to lose sight of the world of the poor, and contact with it. Preachers and teachers whose hearts and intelligence are immersed in that world are more attuned to the deeper rhythms of Scripture. Distance from the poor leads to distance from God.

Aguilares and Rutilio Grande

Aguilares was the village where Rutilio Grande, S.J., had been working and the place to which his close friend, Oscar Romero, rushed when he heard the news of Grande’s assassination on March 12, 1977. It was also where Romero later, as archbishop, experienced a profound spiritual awakening. The bishop’s “place,” he came to understand, is with his people; he is never more bishop than when walking alongside the poorest and most vulnerable of his diocese. Aguilares was also where the Jesuits, so suspect in the eyes

of El Salvador’s elite and of Archbishop Romero himself earlier, came to be of one heart and mind. The poor were powerless. Christ became poor, which means that he also became powerless. And the reason for the impoverishment both of Jesus and the people? Because, in El Salvador, others had become rich and privileged at their expense. Poverty is visible, but the oppressive forces that create structural violence are usually hidden. One needs the lens of solidarity to perceive those forces, and Aguilares gave the archbishop the lens that enabled him to identify what he saw as crucifixion.

Father Ellacuría and the other Jesuits in his community had already undergone their “Aguilares moment,” the flash that shatters the familiarity hiding the underside of everyday life. What immediately grabs attention is that they were murdered, not the conversion process that led to the radicalization of their vision. In the case of the archbishop, however, it is less his murder that fascinates us than the story of how a conservative churchman became prophetic.

By contrast, Ignacio Ellacuría’s conversion, his embrace of the central categories that came to be associated with the theology of liberation, unfolded gradually, largely through reading, study and discussion. His theological orientation was rooted in the Second Vatican Council. He had fully digested Paul VI’s encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and the documents from the Second Conference of the Latin American bishops in Medellín, Colombia, in 1968. His doctoral work in philosophy sharpened his ability to decipher the historical reality that was El Salvador. Apostolic activity without a vision of the kingdom of God tends to validate itself in terms of helping people into the next life but at the risk of meekly acquiescing to the way things are now. Apostolic activity with a vision of the horizon wants to transform the world. It is a faith that does justice, which means that the church—especially its pastors and teachers—tries to make its voice heard in the political arena. As a result, Romero encountered severe opposition among the Salvadoran elites and their military, and in some corridors of the Vatican.

Because the demands of social justice often require stepping into a country’s political life, Father Ellacuría found himself immersed in negotiations between the government and the revolutionary resistance during the course of the country’s civil war. What is intriguing is how he came to his view of justice and liberation by reading and studying and through the clarification of thought and expression that results from conversation and argument. As they fulfill their mission, Christian universities facilitate such a shift in perspective. Some people actually do read their way into conversion. St. Ignatius did so while recuperating after the battle in Pamplona, although even

in his case some spiritual lessons were learned only from experience and not from books.

Ellacuría's Aguilares Moment

I suspect, then, that Ellacuría's Aguilares moment was in fact extended over some time. While he read, studied and talked, the world in front of him never lost its political and social immediacy. His ability to imagine was not insensitive to "the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted," as the opening line of *Gaudium et Spes* put it, by class loyalties or ecclesiastical privilege or doctrinal mindset. Since fear keeps truth at bay, it closes our eyes to hard realities we need to face. The Jesuits' Central American Province newsletter noted: "When people would ask Ellacu if he were not afraid he would say no, but, he added, he no more took credit for that than for lacking a sense of smell. He just didn't have one." The world of the poor and of victims was not outside, awaiting full access to his mind and heart. It was already within him.

Jesuit colleges and universities become effective instruments insofar as they have a critical mass of faculty members and staff who share the same Christian inspiration that Ellacuría and his companions brought to the Catholic university in San Salvador and by which they transformed it. The hard part is not assembling the critical mass, however; it is discovering that inspiration and keeping it alive. Here I draw on personal experience. By 1988 I had been teaching theology for 10 years. The theology was in line with Vatican II. I drew widely and appreciatively on liberation theology and Catholic social teaching; the forceful words of the Society's 32nd General Congregation about justice and faith struck a deep chord. To this point, I could follow Ellacuría. But then, over the course of a weekend, I came face to face with poverty among families no more than a mile from the campus in Massachusetts where I was living and working.

A Late Personal Discovery

Within weeks I was looking at the underside of life in run-down apartments, where shadows and shouts awakened long-buried fears about violence, about different lifestyles, about brokenness and isolation. The memory of Romero—not his martyrdom but his enlightenment—enabled me to make sense of what was happening. I myself was passing through an Aguilares moment, and the people I met were Latino. It was a moment of feeling terribly disoriented and unmoored, yet at the same time untied and excited. Even now, more than 20 years later, I cannot figure out why the discovery took so long in coming. Its delay was not for lack of better training or critical reflection, nor was it for want of

forceful church documents and living models. More likely it had to do with fear and insecurity: not a fear of death so much as a fear of hostility, violence and failure, of not knowing how to respond to circumstances and backgrounds so different from my own and so greatly beyond my control.

The next step is obvious. We develop friendships with the very ones who have made us unsettled and afraid. While we might not be as free as Jesus when it comes to seeking the company of those at the margins, at least as a start these friendships enable us to move beyond fear and

insecurity, defensiveness and hostility. These relationships reshape how we observe, interpret and respond to the world. The lesson of the martyrs is that whether we think of the world in local or global terms, there is no way to escape the route toward the mortal conflict that tears society in two, except by what Paul called "this ministry of reconciliation." Working for justice is absolutely essential. But if suspicion and estrangement are not overcome, the kingdom of God remains only partially realized. We may be able to read ourselves into the horizon of justice, but we cannot read ourselves into freedom from fear. The way to that liberation passes through the villages and homes of the poor—the road that leads from Aguilares. **A**

ON THE WEB

Kevin F. Burke, S.J., remembers the martyrs of El Salvador.
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Bridge Over The River Tiber

What will come of the Vatican's invitation to Anglicans?

BY AUSTEN IVEREIGH

Papal Gambit Stuns Church" was how The Times of London headlined its front page Oct. 21. Inside, an editorial thundered that Rome's newly announced legal structure allowing Anglicans to join the Catholic Church without giving up their rites and traditions had "dangerously weakened" Anglicanism. The editors said that Pope Benedict XVI stands accused of damaging church unity and ecumenical cooperation.

It was gloriously retro, as if out of an 1850 Punch cartoon showing a sinister pope and cardinal trying to force their way through a door over the caption: "Daring attempt to break into a church." The Times's metaphors—Rome was "annexing" parts of the Church of England, parking its tanks on Lambeth's lawns, fishing in troubled Anglican water—glossed over important facts. The move was announced by the archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster together; the pope was responding to insistent requests from disaffected Anglicans who had decided in conscience they could no longer remain in the Church of England; he had not done so before out of fear of undermining Anglican unity; and he was doing so now with an imaginative piece of canonical engineering that could do more to thaw relations between the Catholic and Anglican churches than anything since their official unity talks began in the 1970s.

Still, the sense of violation was real—not least because the papal bombshell had dropped out of a clear blue sky with little warning. The former archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, was outraged that his successor, Rowan Williams, learned of the move only two weeks previously and had been notified formally only when the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal William Levada, visited London the weekend before. But even Lord Carey admitted that the proposal had vast potential. "Straightforward ecumenism at the theological level is going nowhere," he said. "This fresh initiative could have surprising consequences."

AUSTEN IVEREIGH, a journalist, was an adviser to Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, the former archbishop of Westminster.

For his part, Archbishop Williams appeared noble but uncomfortable at the joint press conference he held in London with Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster, timed to coincide with the announcement in Rome. Few believed them when they sought to reassure the world that it was "business as usual" in relations between their churches. Although it is normal for conversion and dialogue to be kept separate, commentators pointed to the absence of Cardinal Walter Kasper, head of the Vatican's Council for Christian Unity, from the press conference. This move outside typical Catholic-Anglican channels, made by the pope and his canonists in the C.D.F., was some time in preparation—certainly since 2008, possibly since 2006—and kept under wraps.

What Is a Personal Ordinariate?

By announcing a forthcoming apostolic constitution that would allow the creation of quasi-separate canonical jurisdictions, known as personal ordinariates, for defecting Anglicans, the pope appeared to remove at a stroke the fences holding back Anglo-Catholics. He was doing so at a time when they faced being made homeless. The General Synod of the Church of England voted in July 2008 to consecrate women bishops without providing statutory protection for traditionalists. Some Anglo-Catholic bishops were seen leaving the synod hall in tears. At least two of them went to Rome to plead for a means of corporate reception.

The delighted response to the pope's offer by dozens of traditionalist bishops, clergy and faithful seemed to demonstrate the wisdom of the move. Yet as the excitement recedes—one should not overstate the story, which played seventh on the main BBC television evening news that day—the incoming tide swirls with difficult questions. What exactly is being proposed? Will it really lead to an exodus across the Tiber? If so, is it desirable for either church? If not, will the damage to Anglican-Catholic dialogue be worth it? And what does it tell us about Pope Benedict's priorities?

A personal ordinariate, according to Cardinal Levada, "will allow former Anglicans to enter full communion with the Catholic Church while preserving elements of the dis-

tinctive Anglican spiritual and liturgical patrimony.” It would allow for their “pastoral oversight and guidance” under an ordinary to be appointed from among former Anglican clergy—either an unmarried bishop or a married or celibate priest. Within this structure, with boundaries like that of a bishops’ conference, Anglicans seeking Petrine authority without renouncing their traditions can do so corporately, continuing to use the High Anglican liturgy, subject to Rome’s approval of specific texts. The ordinariate would have its own formation houses for seminarians, and if these seminarians will be able to marry, the proposal would guarantee in perpetuity the continuation of a distinct Anglican-Catholic structure.

It falls short of a uniate church, which has its own canon law, rite and authority structure, but is a “cumulative jurisdiction” within the Latin Rite, much like a military ordinariate, Archbishop Nichols told journalists. The constitution would be an attempt to achieve a “balance between a corporate identity and the need to be embedded locally,” he went on, adding that the details could only be worked out once an ordinariate were established following an application to the relevant bishops’ conference. Whole dioceses or parishes could transfer, but not with their buildings, which in the British case would remain property of the church “by law established” in England.

Divisions and Dialogue

Cardinal Basil Hume, archbishop of Westminster at the time of the Church of England’s decision to ordain women as priests in the early 1990s, would not countenance corporate reception at that time. He was happy to reordain Anglican married clergy but not to sanction a distinct Anglican structure under a separate bishop. The four English and Welsh bishops who went to negotiate with the C.D.F. at the time agreed that such a move would be divisive and would undermine the efforts of the official Catholic-Anglican dialogue process toward unification. In the end, some 480 Anglican priests crossed over. Many became parish priests and bishops in the Catholic Church. About 80 later crossed back. The married former Anglican priests were generally parked in chaplaincies, away from mainstream parish life. The path of conversion was individual, not corporate, leaving the Church in England and Wales enriched but unaltered.

The current proposal, by contrast, establishes a universal juridical structure that could see ordinariates in Papua New Guinea and Australia as well as England and Wales. It is a response as much to the 400,000-strong Traditional Anglican Communion—which does not recognize Canterbury—as it is to the Anglo-Catholics in the Church



Cardinal William Levada speaking at the Vatican on Oct. 20

of England (although no one doubts that the latter are the true prize). It appears to remove the difficulties that have held back hundreds of Anglo-Catholic priests from crossing the Tiber; 600 recently gathered at a conference of the main clerical group Forward in Faith, which claims more than 1,000 members.

And what of the validity of Anglican orders? There was a time when this question could have been revisited by Rome, but the ordination of women made that impossible. The Anglo-Catholics have been careful to establish validity of orders by being ordained by certain bishops; but that does not mean every Catholic-minded Anglican is included in that effort. Rome remains skeptical. The Bishop of Fulham, John Broadhurst, chairman of Forward in Faith, says he thinks Rome is wrong not to recognize the validity of their orders, but he understands the need to be re-

PHOTO: REUTERS/TONY GENTILE

ordained “for the avoidance of doubt.”

For most, papal authority is not the issue, nor is it the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The difficulty is with abandoning the robed choir, the elaborate liturgy and the cadence of the Book of Common Prayer; it is leaving behind traditional English Catholicism and making the leap into the liturgical and cultural world of postconciliar Roman Catholicism. When the C.D.F. quotes Pope Paul VI’s reference to “the legitimate patrimony of the Anglican inheritance” and the need to safeguard it, Rome is speaking directly to Anglo-Catholic concerns.

Because of the possibility that whole congregations, even dioceses, may find a home in the ordinariate, Anglo-Catholic priests need not abandon their flocks when they enter into communion with Rome. Corporate reception meets the Anglo-Catholic need to be recognized as a body, an *ecclesia*, that over the centuries has established valid orders and authentic communion. Their dream is unity of the Church of England with Rome, and they have watched it shrivel. They want to be united, not absorbed.

Will the forthcoming apostolic constitution meet these needs? It is not yet clear. The two traditionalist Anglican bishops who in July last year asked the pope for such a scheme say they are delighted by its scope and generosity. But they know that accepting the invitation is a journey, and

not all will want to uproot themselves. “Some Anglicans in the Catholic tradition understandably will want to stay within the Anglican Communion,” they said in a statement. “Others will wish to make individual arrangements as their conscience directs. A further group of Anglicans, we think, will begin to form a caravan, rather like the People of Israel crossing the desert in search of the Promised Land.”

Amid the gratitude and praise for Pope Benedict’s offer are notes of caution. Bishop John Hind of Chichester told the Forward in Faith conference that the announcement begged the question of whether it was “an ecclesial proposal” or

“rather an opportunity for individual Anglicans organised in groups.” Was the offer of “pastoral provision” an “honoring of Anglican ecclesial experience”? He said he wanted “to be assured that they will provide a real opportunity for a continued ecclesial existence as distinct from a museum of nostalgic items.” One Anglo-Catholic priest who has long considered his position was unsure about who the ordinary would be. “For us, being a Christian means being under a bishop,” he told me. “A semidiocese not headed by a bishop would be incomprehensible to us.”

Future Effects

Years of negotiation lie ahead. Although Cardinal Levada has spoken of 20 to 30 Anglican bishops seeking such a home, most will wait to see what an ordinariate looks like before they leap. But if dozens do, followed by many hundreds of priests and thousands of laypeople, what effect will it have on Catholic life and on the future prospects of Anglican-Catholic unification?

Cardinal John Henry Newman was skeptical about an idea for an Anglican uniate church in his own time. In 1876 he warned that “it would be very difficult to avoid perpetual collisions between the two bodies.... The Roman priests would be complaining that the rich splendid Anglican Church in their mission was drawing away at least the young generation.” Imagine a visitor to London on a future Sunday choosing among Roman Catholic liturgies—one “Vatican II,” another “Tridentine,” another “Anglican”—and ponder the effect of such market competition on our sense of church.

It is hard not to wonder, too, whether the existence of a large number of married priests celebrating at the altar, with their wives and children in the pews, will hasten the ordination of married men in the Latin Catholic church, especially if the separate houses of formation envisaged in the ordinariate scheme allow future priests, as well as current ones, to be married. And what happens when a large group of very conservative clergymen enters the life of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, a group defined by an

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From April 1993, a proposal to open the papal door to Anglicans.
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embattled struggle against gay and female ordinations in their own church? What happens when we solve our priest shortage with such men?

There are no easy answers to these questions. But one thing is clear. The process of negotiating the terms of the ordinariate—finding the balance between the local and the universal—will be crucial for future Catholic and Anglican understanding. As the ordinariates come into being, Roman Catholics and Catholic Anglicans will begin to know and understand each other better: Anglican fears of Rome will subside, and Roman ignorance of Anglican riches will be overcome. (One could loosely define those riches as the music, rites and liturgical practices of the English Catholic tradition, many of them dating from before the Reformation.) Such cross-fertilization can only affect for the better the long-term possibility of unification of Catholics and Anglicans.

Progress in the dialogue between the two churches can continue. The current logjam is less over women priests or gay bishops than over the disintegration of Anglican ecclesiology. Rome has long complained that the official Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission agreements are worth little when the Church of England's general synod later repudiates them. Rome wants a church it can deal with. That means backing Archbishop Williams's attempts to introduce a tighter ecclesiology into the Anglican

Communion while accepting that this necessarily means that the communion can no longer walk a tightrope between incompatible theologies and ecclesiologies. Archbishop Williams currently shows signs of succeeding in his efforts to persuade the fragmented members of his communion to adopt common structures, laws and agreed doctrines, which many have likened to an attempt to introduce a more "Catholic ecclesiology" but without a papal magisterium. The result of this "covenant" process, which is being resisted by liberals in North America and evangelicals in the developing world, could be a smaller but more coherent communion in which authority is more clearly defined—and with which Rome can do business. The departure of the Anglican Catholics would not adversely affect this process and could make it simpler.

Cardinal John Henry Newman disliked corporate unity schemes. In the end, all conversion is individual. But he also foresaw that the advance of secularization would cause the Christian bodies to converge over time and that part of that process would necessarily be the integration of Christians corporately into the life of the Catholic Church. Perhaps the pope had recently read Newman. At the London press conference Archbishop Nichols noted that the pope thinks Christians urgently need to unite in a rapidly secularizing Western culture—hence this extraordinary move. The paths of the Reformation have never been stranger. **A**



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His Holiness Benedict XVI
Address to the 35th General Congregation
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Jesuit scholastic Travis Stoops celebrates Vow Day with his parents.



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A photograph of a red basketball with black lines resting on a polished wooden gymnasium floor. The floor has dark blue lines marking the court boundaries. The lighting is bright, creating a reflection of the ball on the floor.

Basketball Diary

A Catholic coach, an evangelical court

BY B. G. KELLEY

I am looking over a student's transcript in the offices of International Christian High School, where I have labored for the last 10 years as a basketball coach, writing teacher and counselor, when a new colleague asks a question someone here asks me every year, "What church do you go to?" I pause, then look at her with a wry grin, knowing the answer is not going to be what she expects.

"I go to a Catholic church." A momentary, awkward silence seizes her before she replies, "Oh." I could hear her inner voice: *He's one of those.*

Yes, I am. I'm the only Catholic at an evangelical Christian, mostly minority school. I had never imagined working here, but then God has his ways.

One September day 10 years ago, my wife, Ellie, a Protestant who has been teaching French at International Christian for 37 years, came home from school and said to me, "The principal wants to know if you would want to

coach the varsity basketball team." The current coach had just quit—three weeks before practice was to begin. The principal knew I had a basketball background, having been an all-Catholic player at Roman Catholic High School in Philadelphia, the first free Catholic high school in the United States (founded in 1890) and a two-year starter and honorable mention all-East selection as point guard for Temple University.

"Do you?" my wife persisted. No, I didn't. My life was good, so why would I want to risk my physical health (my pit bull drive to win would surely send my blood pressure soaring) or my psychological health (a Catholic in an evangelical school!). Then, too, I had been away from the game for some 15 years. Coaching is an insane proposition in any case; and, as my wife warned me, I would be coaching kids who were "undisciplined."

"Just for this year," I said.

Teaching, Serving, Caring

I admit I felt uncomfortable, perhaps even anxious, being the only Catholic, and because of the way I grew up in a white middle-class Catholic neighborhood in Philadelphia.

B. G. KELLEY has written for *The New York Times*, *Sports Illustrated* and other publications. He was a writer for the television movie *Final Shot: The Hank Gathers Story* and has written a book of poetry, *The World I Feel*.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/B. LEWIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Not only were there no African-Americans or Hispanics in my neighborhood, there were no Protestants. My whole culture was carved in Catholicism. Not that I was sorry. I wasn't. Indeed, my Catholicism was my rock, my initiation into a man's world—Communion breakfasts with your father, hardscrabble C.Y.O. competition, high school discussions with priests, Catholic buddies who always had your back. Yet there were those times I had a feeling that church rulers reigned like an absolute monarchy, empty of the human touch.

I had felt a shift with Pope John Paul II, sensing that the church was moving away from its austere, distant personality. With Pope John Paul, who laughed and sang and wrote poetry and did not fear physical contact, I began to see the church more in terms of teaching, serving and caring: a minister to the poor, a healer to the down and out, a fighter for the essential rights and dignity of everyone, no matter what religion or race. It instilled in me a profound hope that I could swing this only-Catholic thing at this evangelical school, even though I knew hope was not a policy. Hope is more like a prayer over a loved one's sickbed; it would take savvy and a spine to keep hope alive for me at International Christian High School.

Even if I could swing it, I knew my Catholicism would set me apart. The differences between my colleagues and me would lie not so much in a set of religious beliefs, although there would be differences, but more in a social and cultural way of life. The same experiences did not tie them inextricably to their faith as my experiences tied me to Catholicism—things like the profound meaning of transubstantiation, or death as ritualized in the funerals of loved ones, or the birth and baptism of a child; things like the fidelity of school chums, the lighting of a candle, the honest zeal of a high school priest who teaches children to accept both challenges and suffering as part of the search for fulfillment, a novena, the saints, the church beef-and-beer socials, bingo, C.Y.O. These connections to my consciousness sustain me, even save me.

One evangelical practice caused me much discomfiture. I have never been one to pray aloud and was reared to pray silently, more introspectively. At International Christian—in faculty meetings, in luncheon get-togethers, in the classroom, in chapel—long, extemporaneous prayers are always offered out loud. I hid behind silence. Then at the annual faculty Christmas party this past December, as the affair was ending the principal said, "Let's pray. Mr. Kelley, would

you pray?" Gulp.

I was paralyzed by silence for a long moment and then said, "Would someone else please pray?" Let them fire me. They didn't.

A Man of Influence

The school had put together an awards night in the small lunchroom to honor the basketball team, which in my first year as coach had ripped off a 17-to-4 record, good enough to be ranked 17th in the city—a surprise to everyone at the school, including me. We did not recruit players like most of the private schools that we played, but drew only from a pool of 70 boys who walked through the door. My evangelical colleagues and students at the school played a big part in bringing the awards night off. The business teacher decorated the lunchroom with balloons and signs and set the tables in blue and white, the school colors. The principal and the athletic director and their

wives cooked the meal. About 10 students volunteered to wait tables.

I was ready to resign after the awards dinner. I had coached for gas money and knew that I was not going to be compensated at the rate other high school coaches were being paid. Our school worked on a bare-bones budget; it was basically hand-to-mouth, what came in went right out. I reminded myself what Christ had said to his Apostles about accumulating money, "It cannot be that way with you."

At the banquet the mother of one of my junior players, Jake, approached me and said, "Coach, please don't forget about my boy. You've had such an influence on him." It was indeed a moment in my life that seemed not only luminous but also transformative. I loved Jake. He was our 6'7" center who was pivotal to our success. Jake's mom's plea had caught me off guard, even rattled me somewhat.

I left the banquet that night haunted, *Don't forget about my boy*. I hesitated to hand in my resignation, then never did. Instead I went to the principal three weeks later and said, "I need to make more money to stay on." I had sacrificed about \$18,000 in what I would have earned from writing during my four months of coaching. I could not afford to do that for another year. After all, I had a sizeable mortgage.

The principal proffered, "O.K., how about teaching a writing course and helping the kids navigate their way into college?"

**This little evangelical school has
given me a sense of place and
purpose, even though
this is more Billy Graham turf
than pope turf.**

“Deal,” I said. More than many other professions, teaching (and coaching) demands, respects and celebrates the virtues of hard work, tenacity and sacrifice, and lifts these qualities to the level of God’s will. It is absolutely a commitment to get God’s children to care about the conduct of life itself: pointing out the differences between right and wrong, understanding that growth can feed from mistakes made, having a go at the mystery of ourselves, exploring the complex crossroads between what is and what ought to be, pushing to look inside the soul as well as the mind. While trying to instill these virtues into the kids, I discovered I was also re-enforcing them in myself.

Vaughn brought that home to me. It is late one afternoon, and the streets outside of International Christian High School are mean, scowling with anger. Drugs, crime and gangs are a way of life in the neighborhood. There is a reason for every war, a war for every reason. Here at International Christian High School, life seems a war of survival.

Vaughn lives around the corner from the school. He comes from a family that struggles financially and healthwise. His brother needs a kidney transplant; his mother works long hours to afford Vaughn’s tuition at our school and to put food on the family table.

“Coach, thanks for helping me out,” he says. Vaughn is one of my former basketball players. I had just spent a couple of hours in our tiny gym putting him through agility drills, defensive drills and shooting drills. He had been accepted at Valley Forge Christian College, a school just outside of Philadelphia, and would be trying out for the team come fall. But he was out of shape, too pudgy on a 5’9” frame. He had played four years for me and was a major contributor to five championships we had won.

I feared Vaughn would not stay in school if he didn’t have basketball. He loved the game, and would be willing to put time in on the books if there was basketball. I had always preached to him—and all my players—that education is their lifeline, not basketball; basketball is for a short time and education is for a lifetime. I figured if I could help him stay in school, get his degree, get a good job to help out his mother, then I would be doing what God wanted me to do.

Indeed, I would be fulfilling a part of my Catholic training: to carry out Jesus’ teachings about the poor and be faithful to the tradition of Catholic social thought that views respect for life as encompassing a strong commitment to social justice.

Vaughn graduated from college this spring.

Soul Coach

There is good reason to have stayed all these years. I have no regrets. The little evangelical school has given me a sense of place and purpose, a sense of belonging, indeed a sense of the

humanity that Pope John Paul preached about, even though this is more Billy Graham turf than pope turf. Teaching and coaching at International Christian High School as the only Catholic has been, more than anything else, an experience of the soul. I willfully use the word “soul” and am not embarrassed to use it. Mind you, though, I have not left all of my soul during these 10 years, only pieces of it, because I know there will be another year to come back to and to give another piece. It is this experience of the soul that rejects leaving here and offers me a still point of infinity.

Even with our differences, my colleagues have accepted me more each year. I guess they realize we are on the same page in one respect: We want to reach out and steer the mostly underprivileged, minority kids we teach and minister to into a more productive secular and spiritual life. I have even brought some of my Catholic school teaching along on this journey and have given it to the kids: go on a rational search for life—*being before becoming*.

This passage in my life as the only Catholic in an evangelical Christian school has offered me a presence in a child’s life. Jake called me a year ago. “Coach, thanks for your help and guidance,” he said. “I’m going to France to play professional basketball.” *Don’t forget about my boy.*

Yes, I’ve grown accustomed to being the only Catholic at this school. Maybe I feel too good to notice. I kind of like it that way. **A**



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Birth Plan

Chronicle of a brief life foretold

BY JOHN J. HARDT

Pregnancies in which there is a diagnosis of fatal, congenital anomalies are rare but profoundly tragic. There exists within the Catholic tradition a developed moral debate about the appropriateness of inducing early labor in such pregnancies. The debate has largely focused upon whether, given the impending death of a baby upon or shortly after birth, labor may be induced when a pregnancy reaches viability but prior to full term in order to alleviate the potentially grave psychological burden to parents that can accompany these diagnoses and the inherent physical burdens of pregnancy that come to all expectant mothers.

In 1996 the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops contributed to the dialogue in a document by its Committee on Doctrine entitled *Moral Principles Concerning Infants With Anencephaly*. While acknowledging the “profound and personal suffering of the parents” and the “compassionate pastoral and medical care” these realities require of Catholic health care, the bishops, reasoning from the church’s teaching on abortion, concluded: “The fact that the life of a child suffering from anencephaly will probably be brief cannot excuse directly causing the death before ‘viability’ or gravely

endangering the child’s life after ‘viability’ as a result of the complications of prematurity.”



What follows is not meant as a contribution to the particulars of the debate concerning how best to handle pregnancies with fatal anomalies. Instead, it is a sketch of one such case in a particular family. My purpose is to bear witness to the depth of human anguish that accompanies such a diagnosis, the strength of a family that patiently bore it and the grace present therein. Some details have been altered to protect the identity of the participants.

A Fatal Absence

The diagnosis, at 21 weeks, was Potter syndrome. Its clinical description, bilateral renal agenesis, bespoke the

fatal, developmental absence. This baby had no kidneys, a genetic wrinkle that demarcates a deadly run of deficiencies: an insufficient amount of amniotic fluid, underdeveloped lungs and the inability of the baby to breathe on his own at birth. There was to be no “genesis” for this baby boy, at least no beginning as most of us think of beginnings for newborn babies.

“There is no treatment,” the doctor told her. “I’m so terribly sorry.” On hearing these words, the mother said, she became a living tomb. This doctor had delivered the two children who were waiting at home to hear about their new brother growing inside their mother. But now her baby was going to die, and there was nothing anyone could do about it. The diagnosis was taken in over the course of several days of grief and anguish.

A “fatal anomaly,” the doctor had said. Their baby had no hope of living. Excited discussion in the waiting room about when the pregnancy would reach “viability” was now rendered meaningless, the word made brittle and empty when set against the reality of this life sheered off at its root. There seemed no viable hope of anything.

The decision was made to seek an early induction, to end this pregnancy in which an infant was destined to die minutes or hours after birth no matter how long it remained in the womb. Everyone understood. But there was a problem.

The doctor sat down with the par-

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ART: JULIE LONNEMAN

ents. "As a Catholic hospital, our practice guidelines preclude an early induction in this instance. We cannot help you with an early induction. I'm so sorry to be adding to the burden of what you're going through."

The mother wept. Minutes passed before the doctor spoke again. "There is another option I can offer you. If you wanted to stay here with us—and you don't have to—but if you did, we would be privileged to bring this little baby boy into the world. We will monitor you and the baby closely for the rest of your pregnancy. I promise that I won't let anything happen to you."

They discussed this possibility at length. They painstakingly returned to the diagnosis. How did this happen? What could they expect for the remainder of the pregnancy? What will he look like when he is born? What if he is not breathing?

The mother concluded, "We need to think about this." A week passed before she called the office and an appointment was made.

A Viable Plan

The day of the appointment came. "We would like you to deliver our baby. We've put together a birth plan. We need to know that you and the hospital will agree to it."

She held out a single piece of white paper, 12 typed bullet points running down its left margin with two inked signatures at the bottom of the page:

- If I don't deliver prior to term, we would like to induce delivery when the baby reaches full term at a date set with our physician.

- Please notify the chaplain in advance of our arrival at the hospital.

- We would like our baby to be given hospice care at birth. We are especially concerned that he not be in pain.

- If the baby is not breathing upon birth, we are requesting no medical interventions, no attempts at resuscitation.

- We reserve the right to change our



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mind about any intervention requests upon delivery.

• We are requesting a private room after delivery.

• We would like to have the baby baptized.

• We have arranged for a photographer to take pictures of us as a family.

• We would like to have footprints and handprints made of him.

• I would like to hold him.

• I would like to try to feed him.

• I would like to give him his first bath.

This baby boy was born in the dark of early morning. He died that same day, shortly after his first sunrise, within three hours. He was photographed and foot-printed, held and fed, bathed and baptized. He was judged to be beautiful and a blessing, and he died in his parents' embrace, the blessed fruit of his mother's womb.

If confronted with identical circumstances, some of us would think the choice these parents made would not be best for our families. But this story is in many ways paradigmatic of the values present in Catholic teaching on this issue. In particular, in this case we see the processes of illness, birth and death move according to their own determined time. The family seems to have moved along a similar continuum: an unfolding of grief, acceptance and meaning over the course of the nine months. The patience they exhibited is in stark contrast to our cultural instinct to take control of a situation and facilitate a rapid, almost immediate resolution. The life they baptized and loved is also in stark contrast to our expectations of what a new life "should be"—whatever that might be.

While we cannot deduce a universal conclusion from a narrative, such a story illustrates the beauty of the values of our Catholic tradition. And, to some extent, beauty is always a witness to truth. A

BOOKS & CULTURE

THEATER | ROB WEINERT-KENDT

THE UNDECIDERS

'Hamlet,' 'A Steady Rain' and 'Superior Donuts'

There is truth in the axiom that movies move, while plays talk. Although there are ruminative and discursive films (like "My Dinner With Andre") and inordinately action-packed plays (like the door-slaming farce "Noises Off"), the gulf between moving pictures and dialogic theater was probably best formulated by the English actor/writer Stephen Fry, who wrote: "The perfect stage hero is Hamlet. The perfect film hero is Lassie."

"Hamlet" doesn't just epitomize the

privileging of talk over action; this is, in fact, the play's anguished subject. The famously wronged Danish prince, though he has ample cause for revenge and even a few ghostly reminders of it, spends the play considering and reconsidering "enterprises of great pith and moment." When he does finally dispatch his usurping uncle, Claudius, it is not the successful fruition of a plan but an act of desperate extremity, undertaken only after Hamlet knows he has doomed himself.

Three plays that recently opened on

Broadway, including Shakespeare's great tragedy, take up the same dilemma: not only whether 'tis nobler to suffer or to take up arms, but also whether dithering over the best course of action constitutes a moral peril in itself—passive evasion at best, grave irresponsibility at worst. Conscience threatens to make cowards of weak protagonists in the dramas "A Steady Rain" and "Superior Donuts," a pair of gritty plays from Chicago. And Jude Law's star-vehicle "Hamlet," an import from London's Donmar Warehouse, reintroduces us to the original un-decider, though the director Michael Grandage's production has weaknesses unrelated to its hero's lack of resolution.

Set in a sleek, towering gray castle and draped in no-frills modern dress,

Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Jude Law in "Hamlet"



PHOTO: JOHAN PERSSON

Donmar's respectable but plodding **Hamlet** must be counted a great, lost opportunity. For in Jude Law, an impossibly handsome Englishman with a restless, dancierlike physicality and a disarming lack of native British starch,

Body Language

The birds of the hands:
feathery fingers, arms
arched in parentheses.
Breathing in rhythm,
a forest of branches,
a pod of dolphins,
steel-spined camels:
“we can be anything.”

The body a playground:
swings, loops, slides
winged postures like stars
yoga dance as of language
freed from stodgy syntax.

Breath crests; wave
spills its liquid silver.
Toes sculpt commas,
punctuate the sentence's
coiled energy, verb-driven
to the quiet pool of rest,
curled in balls like children.
Stillness hushes
eloquence: sweet period.

KATHY COFFEY

KATHY COFFEY is the author of Women of Mercy (Orbis Books). Last summer she taught writing at Ring Lake Ranch, an ecumenical retreat center in Wyoming.

we could have had a great Hamlet for our time. We catch glimpses of what might have been amid the production's pallor, but we must fill in the blanks with our imagination. Law could have effortlessly embodied both sides, or two popular interpretations, of Hamlet: the brainy, irresolute, even effete cad who toys with madness and the seething, barely contained, ever-thwarted action-hero Hamlet (Mel Gibson's approach in his 1990 film).

Instead, Law gives an effortful, play-actor's performance that manages to strike few sparks off an indifferent, subdued supporting cast. Gertrude, Claudius, Polonius, Ophelia, even Horatio—these may not be marquee roles, but they deserve more than perfunctory attention. They are filled here, instead, by decent but anonymous performers who seem to have been directed mainly to stay out of the star's light. But this lack of context does the star no favors. Law seems hopelessly stranded in a showcase designed less to illuminate what he might bring to the role than to bask in his mere presence onstage. To be fair, this seems enough for many admiring Broadway theatergoers, particularly those only glancingly acquainted with Shakespeare; and no one will leave this “Hamlet” without a clear understanding of what happened and what was said. But clarity is no substitute for urgency. The course of action that seems most appropriate for this dissatisfied prince is not bloody murder but a Bloody Mary on some southerly beach.

A few well-spent vacation days would also benefit Joey and Denny, the co-dependent cops of **A Steady Rain**. As in “Hamlet,” the heroes' overthinking about how to respond to rampant corruption causes as much grief as it averts and only multiplies the heroes' complicity. In the playwright Keith Huff's self-consciously urban vision, these hapless flatfoots have much to be complicit in: brutality, planted evidence, graft, casual racism, insubordination

and dereliction of duty. At its best, the play evokes a sense of dread, despair and social determinism reminiscent of the novels of Dennis Lehane or the films of Sidney Lumet. But by the time Huff introduces a pedophile serial killer, he has lost hold of plausibility while holding on, barely, to dramatic watchability.

That last quality might be due in part to the star actors in director John Crowley's matter-of-factly intense production, both of them working hard at their Chicaahhgo accents: the affecting, walrus-mustached Daniel Craig (a k a James Bond) as Joey, a meek recovering drunk who feels compelled to betray his out-of-control partner, Denny, played by Hugh Jackman (yes, ladies and fanboys, Wolverine himself—and, like Jude Law, another overly attractive leading man sweating through an effortful performance). In Huff's somewhat formalistic construction, these two do not interact so much as perform interlocking monologues that freely mix omniscient and unreliable narration. As with “Hamlet,” the mere presence of such film royalty, miscast or not, strutting and fretting their hour on a Broadway stage seems to be the point of the exercise.

If **Superior Donuts** is a kind of star vehicle, then the star is the playwright Tracy Letts, whose last Broadway play, the shockingly entertaining dysfunctional-family epic “August: Osage County,” nabbed the Pulitzer and a cluster of Tonys. That the playwright is the driving force behind this exquisite ensemble piece from Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre may account for its considerable storytelling punch and its sense of homegrown authenticity. Michael McKean (of “Spinal Tap” fame) plays Arthur Przybyszewski, an aging hippie who barely keeps his inherited donut shop open in a crumbling North Side neighborhood. Haunted by a broken marriage, an estranged daughter and his Vietnam-era draft evasion—an approach dis-

tinct from draft resistance, as he painstakingly points out—kindly, passive Arthur is as checked out as a person can be and still be breathing.

He perks up, reluctantly, when a cocky young African-American named Franco Wicks (Jon Michael Hill, a real find) fast-talks himself into a job as his assistant, and the two settle into an amiable, bickering rapport that slowly edges into a kind of wary friendship under Tina Landau's sympathetic direction. Their connection grows thick enough that when it is threatened, the faultlessly nonconfrontational Arthur—whose disappointed father's last word to him was "coward"—feels compelled at last to take decisive action in a touchingly absurd but deadly serious second-act brawl.

While this scenario—aging white liberal spars and bonds with young black livewire—barely skirts cliché, and while the gangsters who arrive to sharpen the conflict seem to have entered through a door marked "stock 1970s villains," Letts is a sure-handed

entertainer who engages us directly on so many levels that we easily forgive the familiar and contrived in his work. Actually, we welcome them almost as ritual signifiers that prepare us for the true theatrical communion at work in his plays. Though the show's retro sitcom rhythms may lull us into thinking we're in TV Land, the play does not live there. Instead, Letts addresses the battle-worn but true-hearted hopefulness, in matters racial and otherwise, that characterizes the still-aborning age of Obama.

The play's final words offer a bracingly optimistic and timely answer to the most famous existential question in literature, Hamlet's "to be or not to be," as Arthur sits at a table in his greasy donut shop, bruised but unbowed, and begins Franco's ambitious novel by stating its title: "America Will Be."

ROB WEINERT-KENDT is an arts journalist who has written for *The New York Times* and *TimeOut New York*. He writes a blog called "The Wicked Stage."

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BOOKS | JOHN F. HAUGHT

RECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES

GALILEO GOES TO JAIL **And Other Myths About Science** **and Religion**

Edited by Ronald L. Numbers
Harvard Univ. Press. 320p \$27.95
ISBN 9780674033276

"The history of science," John William Draper wrote in 1874, "is a narrative of the conflict of two contending powers, the expansive force of the human intellect on one side, and the compression arising from traditionary faith and human interests on the other." That science and religion are locked in

a fight to the death, and that science will eventually be victorious, is the main message of Draper's influential book, *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*. In 1896 Andrew Dickson White, president of Cornell University, published a two-volume work whose title makes explicit the same thesis. He called it *A History of the Warfare of Science With Theology in Christendom*.

The "conflict" approach to science and religion fostered by these two 19th-century works has seeped into scientific journalism, newspaper

reporting, popular presentations of science and most recently the "new atheism" of Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett and Sam Harris. It is an idea that many academics and students still swallow whole.

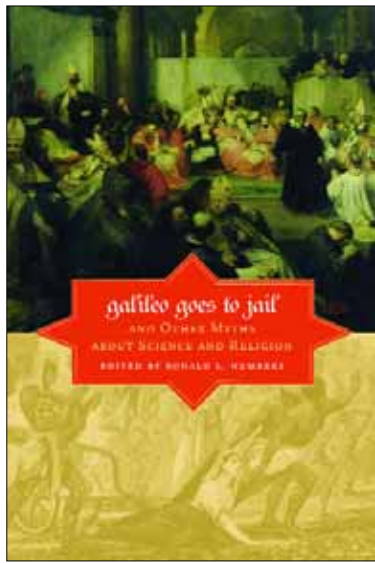
But Ronald Numbers, the eminent historian of science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and editor of this enjoyable and informative collection of essays, will have none of it. A self-styled agnostic himself, he states bluntly that "White's and Draper's accounts are more propaganda than history." The accomplished younger generation of historians of science and other experts Numbers has assembled here agree. *Galileo Goes to Jail* lays bare some of the many "myths" (in the sense of false claims) associated with the belief that science and religion are essentially irreconcilable ways of understanding the world.

One of these myths is that Galileo was physically tortured and thrown into a dark prison cell by the Inquisition. Not so. Although threatened with the typical instruments of torture, Galileo was not subjected to the rack, nor was he incarcerated in Rome (with the possible exception of three days in 1633). While awaiting his trial, he was put up in his prosecutor's six-room apartment, attended all the while by a servant. Later he moved to the Villa Medici, the grand duke of Tuscany's sumptuous Roman palace. On his way back to Tuscany after the trial he dallied for five months under house arrest at the comfortable residence of his good friend the archbishop of Siena. Thereafter he paid for his heliocentric heresy by becoming a permanent guest in his own villa in Arcetri overlooking Florence.

So writes the eminent Galileo scholar Maurice Finocchiaro, refuting Voltaire's claim that Galileo "groaned away his days in the dungeons of the Inquisition," and challenging Giuseppe Barretti's equally influential assertion

in 1757 that the great scientist “was put in the inquisition for six years, and put to torture, for saying that *the earth moved.*” Although the fragmentary records available to Voltaire and Barretti may have suggested torture and imprisonment, recent historical scholarship has put to rest the “myth” that Galileo suffered physical penalties and wasted away in prison.

This is only one of many false claims and rumors that still make religion seem inherently hostile to science in the minds of many scientists, scholars and students. Contrary to Draper and White, readers of this collection will learn from the historian David Livingstone that Christianity



was not responsible for the demise of ancient science. For example, unlike the interpretation of history popularized by Carl Sagan and many others, the murder of the Alexandrian mathematician and philosopher Hypatia, supposedly by a mob of Christian zealots, “had everything to do with local politics and virtually nothing to do with science.” Nor, as many previous historians have assumed, were Augustine, Basil and Tertullian opposed to classical science, since they borrowed heavily from current views of nature in setting forth their own theological positions.

Livingstone also rejects Charles

Freeman’s recent claim that Christianity is responsible for “the closing of the Western mind,” arguing that “no institution or cultural force of the classical period offered more encouragement for the investigation of nature than did the Christian church.”

The historian of science Michael Shank likewise disputes Draper’s claim that medieval Christianity’s theological worldview “became a stumbling block in the intellectual advancement of Europe for more than a thousand years.” Medieval universities were not fixated on theology anyway, and only a few students were deemed qualified to study it. Instead most formal education focused on law, logic, natural philosophy and mathematics, disciplines that could hardly have impeded the rise of modern science.

Again, Lawrence Principe of Johns Hopkins University rejects Draper’s blanket declaration that Roman Catholicism and science are “absolutely incompatible.” Questioning narrowly Anglocentric theories about the emergence of science, such as the “Merton thesis” that science is a product of Puritanism, Principe points out that the scientific revolution goes back to foundations laid long before the Reformation. Medieval theories of optics, kinematics and astronomy, along with the establishment of universities, the practice of intellectual disputation and the rigor of Scholastic thought in philosophy and theology—all of these contributed to a climate essential to the birth and shaping of modern science. Principe characterizes Draper’s book, therefore, as “little more than a thinly-disguised anti-Catholic rant.”

Noah Efron of Bar-Ilan University in Israel, on the other hand, disputes the equally one-sided myth that Christianity gave birth to modern science. Obviously Christianity was a contributor, but so also were ancient Greek philosophy, Islam and other historical,

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political, technological and economic influences.

Other myths fall hard at the hands of the highly qualified stable of authors Numbers has gathered here. A sampling of topics includes the beliefs that medieval Christians thought the earth was flat, that Islamic culture was inhospitable to science, that Giordano Bruno was a martyr for modern science, that Newton's mechanics left no room for God or final causes, that Darwin destroyed natural theology, that quantum physics demonstrates freedom of the will, that creationism is a uniquely American phenomenon, that modern science has secularized Western culture and that Einstein believed in a personal God. Although there may be a fragment of truth in several of these myths, careful research

is now making important corrections.

Galileo Goes to Jail is not a defense of theism, religion or Christianity. In fact, some of the authors are nonbelievers and have no stake in apologetics. The book is simply an honest attempt to set a distorted record straight. Its accessibility and frankness will make it a valuable text for students of intellectual history, religion, the history of science and those taking courses dealing with science and theology. It will also appeal to a wider range of readers. Let us hope these will include not only subscribers to *America* but also devotees of *Scientific American*.

JOHN F. HAUGHT is a senior fellow at the Woodstock Theological Center, Georgetown University. His most recent books are *God and the New Atheism* and *Christianity and Science*.

*The rust will remain in the trees,
and pine needles stretch their
necks,
Their tiny necks, and sunlight will
snore in the limp grass.*

We are of, say these poems, all that is—either made through our consciousness of ourselves with(in) the world or through the mere matter of matter. The grief at the prospect of parting is the recognition of ourselves in every thing. Wright's verse is haunted by the longing articulated in the lonesome sound of the Carter Family, and his particular sensibility toward "what has past/ Or is about to pass" (echoing Yeats) is the drone of A. P. Carter's baritone in such forward-looking sorrows as "Bury Me Under the Weeping Willow Tree." Death will come, the willow will remain, it will become me.

The titles of these poems often carry the quality of Chinese ideograms: "On the Night of the First Snow, Thinking About Tennessee." Or this: "Like the New Moon, My Mother Drifts Through the Night Sky." The titles serve as a seventh line, a bonus, or they function like the titles of abstract paintings (Jackson Pollock's "Lavender Mist"), which invite our minds to drift in a certain direction and set up tension between the language of image and the language of syntax. In Wright's case, the tension exists between the "call" that comes from the title and the "response" that comes from the sestet.

To talk effectively about what Wright is doing in any particular poem requires what Clifford Geertz labeled "thick description"; one must come at the poem alert to all the oblique instructions that Wright provides. This approach seems espe-

DAVID GARRISON

TAKE SIX

SESTETS

Poems

By Charles Wright
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 96p \$23
ISBN 9780374261153

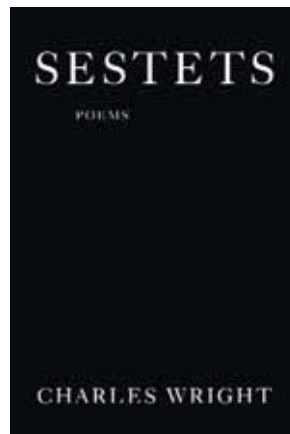
Here is a small book of images, artfully constructed and melancholy, with only one story to tell, but a story with two parts: the end is coming, life goes on.

As the title indicates, each poem in this, the 19th volume from Charles Wright, contains six lines, but six lines visually attenuated (always) by his characteristic use of the dropped line, or more precisely the dropped portion of a line. The effect is a more balanced page, a greater use of the right-hand side of things. The lines are metered out in syllables, usually an odd number, usually between 9 and 17 per line, but contracting or expanding to as few as 5, as many as 21. These strategies are not new; they are what readers of

Wright expect. This particular voice and style and look were achieved as early as 1981 in the lucidly musical and highly visual volume, *The Southern Cross*. The poems in *Sestets* are smaller moments of such vividness.

The theme is the end of what we know. The theme is the ache at recognizing *now* what will be taken from us *then*. Wright, who is 73, has always eagerly directed us to see the numinous light shining in the most ordinary of natural sights—clouds, water, snow, sunlight, starlight, maple leaf, grass-blade—but now he nudges us to recognize that after we are gone, such light will continue:

We won't meet again. So what?



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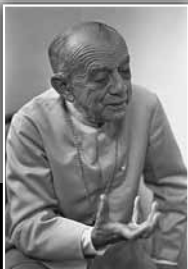


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cially necessary with these six-line stanzas, which seem more fragmentary than much of Wright's earlier work. In the 1980s and 90s he explored a "journal" form, long poems that mixed baroque finesse with Whitmanesque possibilities of expansion (as if Bach had composed with no sense of closed structure). But these new poems, while being quick breaths, are not exactly gnomic or puzzling. Instead, they seem more like slender brushstrokes, snatches of an overheard aria, prayers of imprecise and unspecified trust in the whatever-will-be, as in the final lines of the final poem, "Little Ending" (a slanted allusion to Eliot's "Little Gidding"?): "Someone will take our hand,/ someone will give us refuge,/ Circling left or circling right."

Many poems seem on a first reading to be no more (or less) than landscape poems with a familiar (though apparently inappropriate) title. "Return of the Prodigal," for example, begins, "Now comes summer, water clear, clouds heavy with weeping." The final lines refer to astrology: "Zodiac pinwheels across the heavens,/ batfeint under Gemini." There is no direct reference anywhere in the poem to prodigality or to return. But the "notes" about the poem at the close of the book suggest, cryptically, another sort of back-story: "Template of something vaguely remembered in Ezra Pound some forty years ago, a Chinese calendar. Actually about the return of my son from England, June 2006, after twelve years abroad. Second day of summer, June 22, also involved." What is it exactly that is vaguely remembered from Pound? Many readers will catch the echo from the first canto: "Bore sheep aboard her, and our bodies also/ Heavy with weeping...." But that phrase is neither template nor Chinese calendar (perhaps he has in mind Canto 85), so just what role Pound plays here is not clear.

That Wright's son has returned

from abroad might satisfy the notion of a prodigal *son*, and we recall that the 22nd of June would be at or near the summer solstice and so suggest the notion of a prodigal *sun*, and we recognize that the astrological signs remind us of the great wheeling circle of the year and of life and so on. The delicate attention to detail—"Tall grasses are silver-veined" or "Lupine and paintbrush stoic in ditch weed"—mixed with biblical and astrological and Poundian allusion—expand the simple poem into a melody about the largest wheel of all, the turning of life from this to that, from here to not here. Will the sun come back? Will the son? Will the Son? Will I? What do all

these signs tell us?

Wright has never ceased to sing about our mortality and the mysteries that attend it. As he has said many times in many places, his interest is in the "quotidian," the daily world mediated through consciousness. These sestets, the smaller, bottom half of the Petrarchan sonnet, continue that mediation. The poet keeps his eye focused on "beautiful, untalkbackable wise things." The verse returns us line by line by line to just such things.

DAVID GARRISON is professor of English and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Georgia Southwestern University, Americus, Ga.

PETER HEINEGG

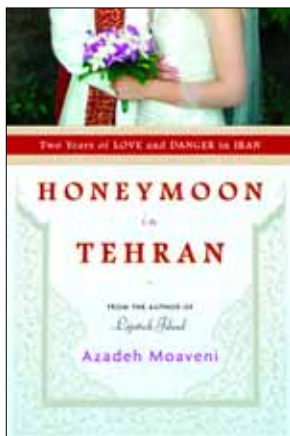
A LONG WAY FROM HOME

HONEYMOON IN TEHRAN

Two Years of Love and Danger in Iran

By Azadeh Moaveni
Random House. 352p \$26
ISBN 97814000664552

Perhaps Ms. Moaveni, a savvy young Iranian-American journalist, has spent too much time working for Time magazine—she has a penchant for snappy but misleading titles. Her previous book, *Lipstick Jihad* (2005), was not about seductive suicide-bombers but about her own quest for identity during an eventful stay (2000-1) in Iran. The title *Honeymoon in Tehran* is similarly unhelpful: Moaveni did fall in love, marry and have a baby during her second exploratory journey (2005-7); but she mostly continues her earlier theme of finding herself



within the vexing confines of the Islamic Republic and against the splendid backdrop of age-old Persian culture. (In any case, she went to Shiraz and Persepolis for her actual honeymoon, and, as it turned out, was never in any serious danger.)

Born in Palo Alto, Calif., and educated at the University of California Santa Cruz, Moaveni, who speaks Farsi, won a Fulbright to study Arabic in Egypt en route to becoming a widely published, Beirut-based reporter on the Middle East. The on-location job of explaining her ancestral home to readers of Time, The Washington Post, The New York Times Book Review, The L.A. Times and NPR—

as well as to herself—seemed ideal to Moaveni, until the pressures from the Khamenei-Ahmadinejad system overwhelmed her, and she wound up not

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just leaving but fleeing to London, where she now lives with her husband and son.

Coping with day-to-day life in Tehran presents major problems, starting with the horrific polluted air that sickens and kills untold thousands of the city's 14 million inhabitants. Housing and the basic necessities are now prohibitively expensive for everyone except crony capitalists. Despite Ahmadinejad's much-touted populism, corrupt and clueless government bureaucrats make ordinary civic activities—like getting married—infuriatingly complex. But above and beyond the hassles of paralyzed traffic, blacked-out Internet, seized and destroyed satellite TV dishes and a lunatic, randomly enforced female dress code that all Tehranis endure, Moaveni was under constant supervision by her minders, whose ploys ranged from phone-tapping to relentless grilling to threatening with arrest, trial and who-knows-what for even the

most harmless reportage. (Her American passport was no safeguard, not since Canadian-Iranian photo-journalist Zahra Kazemi was raped and bludgeoned to death in Tehran's notorious Evin prison in 2003.)

It is one thing for a single woman to engage in this sort of rigged duel; it is quite another for a mother with a newborn. And Moaveni admits she is not made of heroic stuff. In the late summer of 2007 she and her husband and son simply added three more names to the astounding list of about 150,000 mostly young Iranians who emigrate every year in what may be the biggest brain-drain in the world. Among her other worries, she was distressed by a public school system where parents have to sign regular affidavits that their children are reciting their daily prayers, and where children are asked whether their parents drink alcohol at home. Increasingly, for all the joy she takes in her friends and in the loving extended family of her husband,

Arash (a German-trained computer expert and businessman, whose true passion was studying ancient Zoroastrian texts), Iran strikes Moaveni as "an irretrievably failed society." As Arash points out to his pregnant wife after an ultrasound examination, "Do you realize the baby boy inside you will be considered legally more valuable than you?"

Though Moaveni does not engage in much detailed political analysis—and outsiders have next to no access to the country's real movers and shakers anyway—she clearly demonstrates the utter folly of the Bush-era demonization of Iran. Talking about the "axis of evil" and pumping \$75 million into regime-change propaganda only made life harder for enlightened Iranians like the human rights activist and Nobel laureate Shirin Ebadi (with whom Moaveni wrote *Iran Awakening*) and needlessly antagonized a population that was already fed up with Ahmadinejad &

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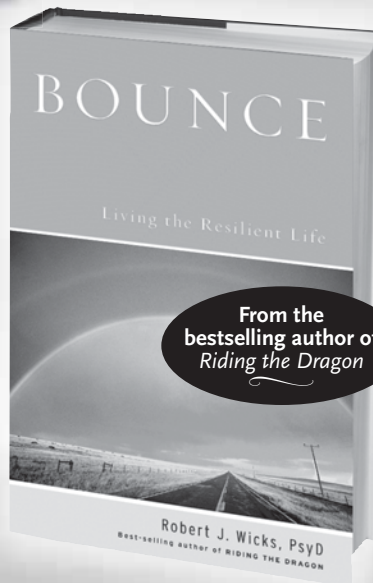
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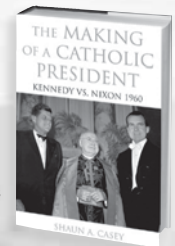
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Co. Whatever America's fears about Iran's nuclear program, a country so disgusted with the stupidity, venality and puritanical hypocrisy of its (often unelected) rulers does not need to be stirred up any more against them than it already is. The scores of ordinary Iranians, from cab drivers to fruit-sellers with whom Moaveni has talked, take a far different line than the government stooges who show up for officially sponsored rallies. They are furious, for example, over all the money shipped abroad to support Hezbollah.

Of course, notwithstanding her feelings of solidarity with such people, Moaveni opted out—and she quotes some powerful lines by Rumi in her epigraph by way of explaining her decision: “Why cling to one life/ till it is soiled and ragged?/ The sun dies and dies/ squandering a hundred lives/ every instant./ God has decreed life for you/ and He will give/ another and another and another.” God may well have given Moaveni and her family a new life in London; but that was not, in her jaundiced view, the God of Islam, or at least not the God of the Islamic Republic. Though she had been a vague sort of believer and semi-devout enthusiast for Sufi traditions, Moaveni becomes so revolted by Iran's clerical dictatorship and its apologists that she just gives up on religion.

Once relocated to “Londonistan,” Moaveni heaves a sigh of relief—and promptly gets caught between Muslim extremists, like the Pakistani grocer who refuses to touch her hand when being paid, and the odd British racist. Soon she is as busy as ever trying to define her place in a conflicted world, with a lot more freedom this time—and a lot less help. So long as she keeps writing about it, she'll have many grateful readers.

PETER HEINEGG is a professor of English at Union College, Schenectady, N.Y.

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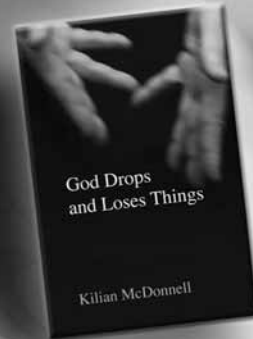
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Kilian McDonnell, OSB

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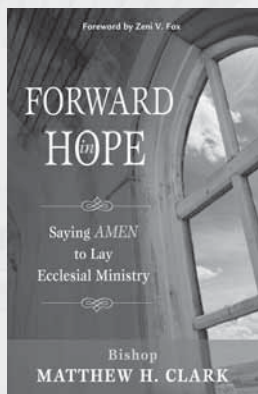
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LETTERS

Family Reunion

Re "Rome Open to Anglican Return" (Signs of the Times, 11/2): We are told that this promised apostolic constitution is a response to the many and frequent knocks that our separated brothers have made at the door of the Catholic Church. This easily brings to mind the parable of the prodigal son. How many times did he have to knock at his father's house, and what list of conditions did his father put on him before he opened his door to him? And it remains to be seen how his elder brothers would react to the cautious admission of their younger brothers!

GEORGE CALLEJA
Caloundra, Queensland, Australia

The Power of Forgiveness

"Art of Redemption," by David Paul Hammer (10/26), is a testament to the singularly transformative power of forgiveness. It is also a moving testament to the power of art to plumb the inestimable mysteries of the human heart. As a Christian, an artist and the family member of a murder victim, I am deeply appreciative of both.

MATT MALONE, S.J.
London, U.K.

Not So Free Speech

I was glad to see Drew Christiansen, S.J., (Of Many Things, 10/26) address the need for more inclusive and global news coverage. Where I live, most people rely on Fox News as their primary source of information and consequently the basis for their values and judgments.

The majority of Americans get

their news from television. The problem is, it is high on entertainment and low on analysis because it is all filtered through the sponsors and their corporate interests. Our so-called free speech is not so free. Two notable exceptions are Free Speech TV (www.democracynow.org) and Link TV (www.linktv.org), both nonprofit and commercial-free. They can be found among the Public Interest channels of your satellite TV and are alone worth the subscription price.

I hope your magazine continues to report periodically unbiased social analysis with a global perspective. The promotion of our national interests is not a universal norm. As Americans we need to see ourselves as others see us. You are not going to get this by tuning in to Fox News.

(REV.) CHARLES A. HAMMOND
*St. Joseph Church
Sandusky, Mich.*

Required Reading

Bravo to Drew Christiansen, S.J., for his Of Many Things column on Oct. 26, especially for noting the deterioration of coverage at CNN. I agree with

most of his views on what is good but would also applaud public radio not only for its coverage of the world but also for what it brings us about local events. This column, together with Father Thomas Massaro's "Democracy on the Line," should be required reading for anyone who cares about how the media inform us and our own responsibilities.

BOB NUNZ
Los Alamos, N.M.

No Danger: Laity Still at Work

Peter Schineller, S.J., raises the issue of having no provision in canon law to deal with the situation in which the pope becomes incapacitated ("Power Vacuum," 10/12). But he says that if the pope were comatose for months or years, "much of the work of the church would grind to a halt." In fact, the "work of the church" is largely carried on at the parish level by the laity, through their various ministries.

In any large organization, in times of crisis people may look to the top for leadership, direction and reassurance. But the day-to-day activities of most organizations will continue to take



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CARTOON BY HARLEY SCHWADRON

place without the presence (or interference) of the people at the top. With due deference to the leadership of the pope, let's give credit to the hundreds of millions of workers in the vineyard who make Christ alive in their communities.

RAY TURNER
San Jose, Calif.

A Question of Credibility

In "The Price of Death" (Editorial, 10/26), the editors write: "The Catholic Church in the United States has long been opposed to capital punishment. As early as 1980, the U.S. bishops voted to declare their opposition." Might one ask what the bishops' position was during the previous 200 years of American history? Indeed, the church's long, unfortunate history of executing religious dissenters (when it had its hands on the levers of secular power) and supporting wars of religion must be adequately addressed if its current anti-capital punishment stance is to have any credibility. After all, if the church erred then, how can one be sure that its new stance is correct?

MARK KOLAKOWSKI
Fair Haven, N.J.

A Consistent Ethic of Life

I thought the death penalty (Editorial, "The Price of Death," 10/26) in the United States might end shortly after the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* said it is no longer a moral alternative. Yet a privately conducted poll in California recently found that Catholics support the death penalty in higher numbers than any other religious group.

There is a lack of connection with our core belief in the unique value and dignity of every person. We will have arrived at consistency in our beliefs when Catholic pro-life groups fight as hard against the death penalty,

euthanasia and war as they do against abortion.

PAUL W. COMISKEY
Newcastle, Calif.

Don't Miss This Article

If *America* ever printed an important article, it is "Prudential Investment," by Doug Demeo (10/26). In his sizing-up of the present investment policies for institutions, Demeo has offered valid points that each of us, if we have holdings, can use to investigate environmental stewardship, labor conditions or executive compensation issues of the companies we invest in.

The examples he gives convince me that we all have a stake in persuading corporations to attain high standards. We need to make our individual voices heard so that we will be taking part in bringing about change for the common good.

JEANNE B. DILLON
Summit, N.J.

Parents at Fault

Re "Generation Text," by Mark Bauerlein (10/12): As a youth minister who works full time with high school adolescents, I think the author is right, but for the wrong reasons.

This generation can be described as the Dumbest Generation, to use Bauerlein's term. This, however, is not primarily because of new technology or the ever-broadening web that is youth culture. Those are secondary problems. The root is this: Adults, particularly the parents of this generation, have lost their authoritarian backbone and no longer set the rules that are necessary for healthy adolescent social and family life. Parents blame the culture or the technology, forgetting that the parent is the number one influence in the lives of teenagers today.

It is the parents and most other adult role models today who allow and

teach our young people to become too busy with school, work and extracurricular activities, connected to others 24/7 by technology and never leaving adequate time for family relationships. Hoping to assuage their own guilt, parents buy them the latest gadgets and forget their responsibility to take those away when the time comes, or forget that a 12-year-old does not really need a phone to begin with. Nor does every kid need a car, a laptop or a BlackBerry. And when those things become obstacles to life, family and real relationships, parents have the responsibility to take those things away. As a parent, I must recognize that I am the problem or the solution—the primary model for my kids. I must know for myself when it is time to shut off my laptop and cellphone and be present to my family.

MIKE BUCKLER
Ormond Beach, Fla.

A Questionable Hypothesis

While welcoming the prominence given to an important public health problem, I am surprised that your editorial "An Untreated Epidemic" (11/2) gives credence to the vaccine hypothesis. The evidence for a link has always been vague, of poor quality, inferential and tenuous; the evidence against a link is now devastatingly strong. In the United Kingdom we have seen an outbreak of measles as a result of reduced vaccinations from the scare, which has led to at least one death, a number of cases of permanent disability in children, many hospitalizations for a preventable illness, much unnecessary distress—and no drop in autism rates. Reducing vaccination rates not only puts a particular child at risk; it reduces the number of individuals in a community who are immune. This raises the risk for everyone.

VICTOR PACE, M.D.
London, U.K.

To send a letter to the editor we recommend using the link that appears below articles on *America's* Web site, www.americamagazine.org. Letters may also be sent to *America's* editorial office (address on page 2) or by e-mail to: letters@americamagazine.org.

Unmasking Kingly Power

THE SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING (B) NOV. 22, 2009

Readings: Dn 7:13-14; Ps 93:1, 1-2, 5; Rv 1:5-8; Jn 18:33b-37

“My kingdom does not belong to this world” (Jn 18:36)

There’s something about royalty that fascinates us. Princess Diana and Prince Charles repeatedly captured the world’s attention. In the United States we watch with interest the doings of Queen Elizabeth, even though our founding ethos is grounded in overthrowing monarchical rule. It may be that the lives of kings and queens represent a fairy-tale-like imagining of the good life that we just can’t help dreaming about. For peasants in biblical times, the notion of a benevolent, kindly king who has the good of the people at heart and who would hear their cries for justice and act upon them may have held just as much attraction. When one’s life is a constant struggle, believing in a powerful king—who could with a pen stroke or a wave of the hand make everything go well for the little ones—fuels hope and gives a reason to keep plodding on.

It is not surprising then that Christians would think of Jesus as such a king, or of God in royal terms. Today’s feast has a double edge to it, as is brought out in the readings. Jesus is king, but in a most anti-imperial way. In the Gospel we see Jesus on trial before Pontius Pilate, who is the extension of the imperial arm in Palestine.

Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, in

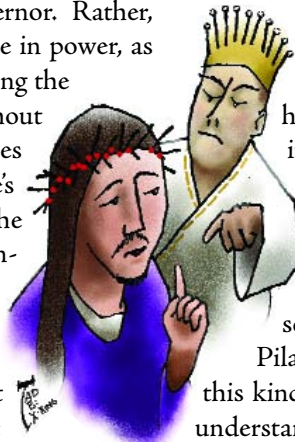
John Jesus does not remain silent before the Roman governor. Rather, Jesus seems to be the one in power, as though he were conducting the trial of Pilate. Throughout their exchanges, Jesus does not directly answer Pilate’s questions. Ironically, the latter ultimately condemns himself by his own responses to Jesus. Pilate takes on a mocking tone as he jibes at Jesus about being a king:

What kind of king is handed over by his own people and doesn’t have an army to defend himself? Pilate also ridicules any nationalistic hopes of the Jewish people for self-rule. This mockery continues in a subsequent scene as Pilate’s soldiers drape a purple cloak over Jesus, place a thorny crown on his head and imitate the greeting given the emperor, “Ave Caesar!”

When Pilate queries, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus shifts the discussion away from himself as king and speaks instead about his “kingdom.” By using imperial language to speak of God’s realm where love and fullness of life reign supreme, Jesus subverts kingly expressions of power that exploit and abuse others. By his actions and words he has undermined monarchical systems of authority and obedience. He calls his followers “friends” and invites them into a community of beloved disciples in which the leaders are the first to wash the feet of those least regarded.

Later in his interrogation of Jesus,

Pilate boasts of his power to release Jesus or to crucify him, but Jesus reminds the Roman ruler that he would have no power over him unless it was given to him from above (19:10-11). Moreover, Jesus already has declared to his disciples that no one has power over his life, he himself lays it down freely (10:18). Pilate has no desire to hear about this kind of “kingdom,” and does not understand the anti-kingdom message



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- How does the image of Christ the King comfort you?
- How does the image of Christ the King challenge you?
- How do you emulate Jesus’ power in your treatment of others?

of Jesus. Pilate is fixated on forcing Jesus to admit his claims to being a king so that he has ground on which to eliminate this supposed rival with pretensions to his own throne. Jesus will not give him that satisfaction and simply points out that it is Pilate who is using that kind of language, not Jesus. Jesus speaks of his mission not in terms of a conquering king, but as one who testifies to the truth. All it takes to belong to this kingdom where truth reigns is to listen to his voice.

BARBARA E. REID

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