

# America

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## 9/11 Perspectives:

DAVID O'BRIEN • JOHN BORELLI

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# OF MANY THINGS

**O**n the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, I was working at my desk at *America*. Around 9 a.m., my mother called from Philadelphia to say that she had heard about a plane crashing into the World Trade Center. I found it odd that she would call; she knew our offices were uptown, not downtown. A few minutes later, I turned on the TV. It was only then that I saw the unfolding tragedy.

That morning I had a doctor's appointment and so, still unsure about what was happening, I walked a few blocks to his office. But as I peered down Sixth Avenue (a few feet from our office) I was horrified to see inky black smoke pouring from the tops of the twin towers. Panicked people were streaming uptown, desperately trying to use their cellphones (many of which had ceased to work because of damaged cell towers at the Trade Center).

An hour later, after the doctor's appointment, the scene was radically different. Everyone's eyes faced downtown, people were weeping in the streets, worriedly scanning the skies for another plane, racing toward subway entrances and desperately hailing cabs.

When I returned to our office, our receptionist said that one of the buildings had collapsed. "That's ridiculous," I said. "What radio station is saying that? That's impossible." But turning on the television confirmed the worst.

That evening, I put on my Roman collar and made my way to a local hospital a few blocks away, where victims were to be brought. But the police officers in the lobby suggested that I walk farther downtown. So through the empty streets I walked to Chelsea Piers, a large sporting arena, to wait for victims who never came. The next day was spent at a counseling center, helping family members pore through local hospital records of patients. In the end, there would be few survivors.

On Sept. 13, I returned to Chelsea Piers and asked a police officer if they

needed help downtown. He nodded smartly, waved for a police cruiser, and I jumped in and was taken down to "the site." It was an appalling sight, of which you've surely seen photographs. Ten years later, I can still remember the acrid smell that pervaded everything.

After emerging from the police car, stunned, I wondered what to do. I thought: I cannot bear to look at bodies or to be in the morgue; but I can help the rescue workers. So I spent the next few days and weeks, in between work at the magazine, ministering to firefighters, police officers, EMTs, nurses, construction workers, military personnel and government workers. In time I was joined by my Jesuit brothers, many of them still in training.

In this hell I found grace. Working at the World Trade Center was one of the most profound experiences of the Holy Spirit I've ever had. For there I encountered an overwhelming sense of charity, unity and concord. Every person working at ground zero was other-directed. Every person was utterly unconcerned for himself or herself. There I found great kindness.

Everyone's work, of course, was informed by the sacrifices that had been made days before by the firefighters and rescue workers who gave their lives as they raced into the burning buildings on Sept. 11. For me, it seemed as if God was offering us a new parable, the way Jesus had done for people of his time. I thought: "What is God like?" God is like the firefighter who rushes into a burning building to save someone. That's how much God loves us. And I saw this love expressed in the charity of the rescue workers who gathered at the American Golgotha.

My primary experience of 9/11, then, was not simply one of tragedy but also of resurrection. For me, it embodied the Christian mystery of the cross: the place of unimaginable tragedy can also be the place of new life, which comes in unexpected ways. **JAMES MARTIN, S.J.**

# America

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## ON THE WEB

**James Martin, S.J.**, returns to the site of the Sept. 11 attacks to offer a video report. Plus, the Rev. Robert Robbins and David O'Brien talk about their memories of **Sept. 11** and its aftermath on our podcast. All at [americamagazine.org](http://americamagazine.org).



### Commitment on Conscience

The Department of Health and Human Services has issued guidelines that will require private health insurers to offer, without co-pay, contraception, sterilization and reproductive counseling as part of a package of preventive care for women. The Catholic Health Association and the U.S. bishops agree that the religious exemption built into those guidelines is too narrow. It may force Catholic health, education and other institutions either to pay for health plans that violate their beliefs or to cease operations to avoid a clash of conscience. Before selecting that drastic option, however, there appears to be time to make reasonable adjustments. H.H.S. specifically invited comment on the definitions it is using in its “interim” religious exemption during a 60-day public comment period.

At some personal cost, Carol Keehan, D.C., the C.H.A. president and chief executive officer, played a pivotal role in the passage of the Obama administration’s health reform package in March 2010. It would be a significant betrayal of Sister Keehan’s effort if a continuing dialogue does not produce revisions of the guidelines more amenable to Catholic moral concerns.

The Obama administration is already in something of a no-win situation. If it commits itself to rewriting the exemption language to the satisfaction of Catholic leaders, it can anticipate a scorching from Planned Parenthood and women’s organizations. And since it is unlikely to reverse the F.D.A. classification of Plan B and ella as contraceptives, pro-life groups will remain skeptical of the administration’s intentions on health care reform going forward, whatever it decides. But the administration should stand by its previous commitments on conscience protection. Liberty of conscience in the American tradition has survived historical lapses and proved its worth as a cultural underwriter of social harmony.

### The Famine This Time

On Monday Aug. 4, morning news commentators spoke glumly about two big stories that had hit over the weekend. First, in the ongoing financial crisis, Standard and Poor’s downgraded the U.S. credit rating. Second, in the unending slaughter in Afghanistan, Taliban fighters shot down a U.S. helicopter, resulting in the loss of 38 lives, 30 of them U.S. military personnel. These big issues cost Americans blood and treasure. They rightly demand air time.

Almost lost in the day’s news was an item that crawled across the screen while the commentators talked of other

things. A U.S. official in Kenya reported that 29,000 Somali children under the age of 5 had died of famine in the last 90 days. This was only the latest statistic in a land already devastated by a lack of food and water. It is estimated that 3.2 million Somalis, almost half of the country’s population, are in need of emergency aid. Almost half of them live in areas controlled by militants associated with Al Qaeda, who have hampered international efforts to help.

The crisis in Somalia dates back at least 20 years, when an earlier famine destabilized the government; the country has never recovered. For 20 years the people have been hungry, and children have starved to death. Food that now reaches Somalia as aid often does not go to those who need it most. Much is stolen and then sold in markets. Still, despite setbacks, assistance agencies are doing what they can to bring relief to those most in need. Perhaps the leaders of the world’s prosperous nations, even while suffering economic setbacks, could likewise give some creative thought and energy to saving the people of Somalia.

### Without Vision

In recent weeks President Obama has taken some left hooks from former supporters. Some say he is intellectually shallow. Others object that he naïvely imagines he can bargain with enemies whose main goal is to destroy him in 2012. Still others complain that he populated his staff with the same money people who caused the 2008 financial crisis. But the loudest complaint warns that his opponents, who represent the tiny group who controls the wealth, are determined to undo the New Deal, the reforms from the 1930s that prevented the crisis from worsening.

These sometime supporters advise that the president should borrow a page from Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s leadership style: focus on one key issue—jobs—and fight back. Indeed, it might help, too, at a cabinet meeting, to play a recording of Roosevelt’s first inaugural address, in which he challenged the climate of fear, as well as his Arsenal of Democracy speech, in which he woke up a sleeping public to the threat of Nazism.

How did Roosevelt motivate Americans and mobilize the country? He stressed the seriousness of the crisis. He attacked by name the false leaders opposing hard decisions. He reminded the people that they had elected him to lead them through this time of struggle. Then he enumerated exactly what he proposed to do and called upon them to make sacrifices so those goals could be accomplished.

After reflecting on the tapes, Mr. Obama should frame one line from Roosevelt’s inaugural address and hang it above his desk: “Without vision, the people perish” (Prv 29:18).

# Big Business's Turn

When Standard and Poor's lowered its rating on U.S. sovereign debt to AA+, a period of frightening volatility seized stock markets. Confusion in the euro zone, rioting in Britain and a weak recovery in the United States sent stock prices plunging worldwide. As the incapacity of governments and international institutions to meet the current crisis is openly debated, few have looked to business leaders for the contributions they might make to economic stability and recovery. But they have the resources to play a significant role in reviving the U.S. economy. American banks and corporations hold between \$4 trillion and \$5 trillion in reserves. With government options limited, the time has come for corporate and financial leaders to take some responsibility for the common good in a way they did not during the 2008 crash.

In past financial panics, financiers like J. P. Morgan persuaded their peers to take steps to avoid catastrophe and create a structure of regulation to smooth out economic cycles in the future. Henry Ford understood that workers needed decent wages to be able to buy his Model T's; and David Packard and William Hewlett made their company a model of equity where management and labor alike shared in the profits and losses of the business cycle. For decades profit-sharing made millionaires of workers at Proctor & Gamble. And who did not take heart from Aaron Feuerstein, the Polartec manufacturer, who paid his Malden Mills employees while their plant was rebuilt following a fire? The recovery of General Motors and Chrysler, moreover, demonstrates that in collaboration with government and labor American enterprise can revive in ways that not only save but create jobs. Enlightened business leadership is part of the American story.

America still has wealthy businesspeople with a sense of justice and the public good, people like Warren Buffet, Bill Gates and Patriotic Millionaires for Fiscal Strength, who lobby for higher taxes for people like themselves. Unfortunately, the icons of the zeitgeist have been the extravagant and imperious Donald Trump ("You're fired!"); and "Neutron" Jack Welch (General Electric) and "Chainsaw" Al Dunlap (Sunbeam), who were infamous for raising profits by cutting jobs. Then there are the no-show titans of Wall Street who failed even to attend President Barack Obama's post-crisis speech on financial reform.

Conventional wisdom, however, is an obstacle to responsible business involvement in economic recovery. The

public is told that banks do not make loans and businesses do not invest because there is no demand. But there is little or no demand because there is no liquidity. We are told the housing market will not bounce back because of weakness in demand, but government funds to prevent foreclosure go unspent, and lenders insist on foreclosing on householders who are making full payments after the value of their homes has fallen. We are told businesses will not invest because of economic uncertainty, but uncertainty is a vague rationale; and the financial sector tends to bless as certainty only rules that are most advantageous to itself. Furthermore, certainty has also become a code word for lax regulation, the kind of careless oversight that led to the 2008 financial crisis.

Conventional wisdom is a defeatist oracle. It prevents Americans from seizing the opportunities to rebuild the economy. What is lacking in many quarters of corporate America today is goodwill and courage: the goodwill to spend and negotiate for win-win solutions, the courage to invest, despite uncertainty, and be job-creators. The American story suggests that business can work for the common good.

The current economic impasse is due in no small part to business models with little or no sense of social responsibility as integral to the business enterprise. Pope Benedict XVI was right in identifying a deficit of trust as the root cause of the 2008 financial crisis; and he was correct in arguing that the remedy lies in an economy where capital is utilized for the common good as well as for private profit. Bankers and business executives should heed his plea for investment in projects in which not just executives and shareholders but all the stakeholders profit.

Avenues are open for cooperation between private enterprise and government. With some corrections, unspent federal funds to prevent home foreclosures could be made into a workable program. A joint government-business infrastructure bank to rebuild the country's failing roads, bridges, airports and power and water systems could spur an economic upturn. Banking and business can make other moves on their own. Loans to small businesses, which have been starved for cash, for example, could help revive the sinking job market.

It is past time that business and capital play a responsible role in the new American story.



# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

## IMMIGRATION REFORM

### Advocates: ‘Secure Communities’ Brings Fear, Not Trust

**T**he U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency reports that its Secure Communities program has resulted in the deportation of thousands of migrants because of serious criminal offenses. But critics of the program, including local government and police officials and immigrant advocates, say the reality on the street is that the effort has instead thrown a wide net over the undocumented community with little selectivity. The Secure Communities program uses fingerprints collected by local and state police—after arrest but prior to conviction—to assist immigration officials in identifying, detaining and potentially deporting undocumented immigrants.

More than 126,000 people have been deported through the program since it began in 2008. Because of continuing confusion over the status of the program, on Aug. 6 the Obama administration’s Department of Homeland Security issued a clarification that local cooperation was mandatory and that I.C.E. planned to institute the program nationwide by 2013.

That prospect troubles Maria Odom, executive director of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc. (Clinic). “This is a short-sighted, bad faith approach, aimed at securing the highest numbers of deportations regardless of the desires of the communities themselves or the human cost,” she said. “Clinic’s affiliates across the country are going to see their waiting rooms overwhelmed with mothers and fathers, sons and daughters fighting for family members in deportation proceedings.” Immigration advocates allege, for example, that undocumented migrants pulled over for traffic violations or other noncriminal offenses are finding themselves referred to I.C.E. for deportation.

Clinic’s director of advocacy, Alison Posner, is concerned that witnesses to crimes, crime victims or victims of domestic violence may be unwilling to come forward because they are worried that any engagement with police could end in deportation.

“We are hopeful that the administration’s policies will reflect the true prioritizing for deportation that they laid out in I.C.E.’s memo of June 2011,” said Odom. That memo indicated that the Secure Communities program would seek to remove only

the most dangerous undocumented offenders and repeat immigration offenders from U.S. streets.

An I.C.E. spokesperson, Nicole Navas, says that is exactly what I.C.E. has achieved. Secure Communities has removed 86,616 criminal aliens. Of that number, Navas reports, 31,395 were level one offenders “convicted of aggravated felonies like murder, rape and the sexual abuse of children.” Thousands of the other migrants deported under the program had been “immigration fugitives,” charged but not convicted of immigration-related offenses, including cases of multiple illegal entries. Navas also strongly denied that the program deters crime victims from coming forward. “I.C.E. continues to search its records and has not found a case where a crime victim or witness has been removed from the country as a result of the Secure Communities program,” she said.



Despite such assurances, the program remains controversial among immigration advocates. Clinic charges that according to the Department of Homeland Security’s own data, 79 percent of individuals deported through Secure Communities were either noncriminal or were picked up for low-level offenses. Kevin Appleby, of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office of Migration and Refugee Services, notes the potential emotional and social damage to families in immigrant communities and asks, “Should the nation be deporting immigrants who are invested in the country long term, or should we consider keeping them here, making them pay their debt and contribute to society?”

“Certainly the bishops acknowledge that the government has the right to pursue this program,” said Appleby. “We just wonder if it is the most



**Danny Franco-Torres Jr. cares for his baby brother while his mother, Raquel, makes dinner at their home in Tulsa, Okla. When Danny Sr. was deported to El Salvador in 2008, he left behind his wife and the couple's five children.**

humane approach.” Appleby said that the bishops’ overall position remains unchanged: that a comprehensive immigration reform would best serve the national interest. “The enforcement-only approach, which we’ve tried over the last 25 years, has not solved the problem of illegal immigration,” said Appleby.

## SOMALIA FAMINE

### Death Toll Rises Among Children

**D**eath rates among Somali refugees escaping a devastating famine has reached alarming levels, the United Nations refugee agency reported on Aug. 16. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said that while malnutrition remained the greatest concern among camps of internally displaced people in Kenya,

Ethiopia and within Somalia, outbreaks of measles were also responsible for many deaths. An assessment of the mortality rate in one of the four refugee camps in southern Ethiopia found that since June, an average of 10 children under the age of 5 have died every day.

“The combination of disease and malnutrition was what caused similar death rates in previous famine crises in the region,” said Adrian Edwards, a U.N. spokesperson in Geneva, adding that a measles vaccination campaign targeting children between the ages of 6 months and 15 years is ongoing. The majority of refugees arriving in Ethiopia from Somalia are from rural areas, and the camps may be the first time they have had access to health facilities.

The U.N. reports that the latest refugees into Ethiopia are in very poor condition and that 95 percent of them are women and children. A lack of shelter and health care, poor sanitation and overcrowding in the camps could lead to more outbreaks of disease.

As food aid landed in Somalia, U.N. workers distributed some 500 emergency assistance packages at a camp sheltering approximately 13,000 people, more than 2,000 families, close to the Mogadishu airport. The U.N.H.C.R. team described the conditions at the airport site as “grim and dire.” Voices of crying children were punctuated by heavy coughing. Small makeshift shelters with no sleeping mats or bedding are characteristic of the congested settlement. A number of children lying helplessly on the

ground were suffering from measles, which refugees say are affecting many in the airport camp.

U.N. relief workers reported that the streets leading to the camp were calm, but that there was clear presence of armed men in the area. Before the current crisis, the Somali capital hosted some 370,000 internally displaced people, who have now been joined by an additional 100,000 who fled into the capital in search of food, water, shelter and medical assistance. Many said they were forced to leave elderly or disabled relatives behind, fearing that they would not survive the arduous journey to Mogadishu, which entailed walking for days without food or water. Some said they had been confronted by Shabab militants at roadblocks and discouraged from travelling to Mogadishu.



**A mother cares for her severely malnourished 7-month-old son at a refugee camp in northeastern Kenya.**

## South Kordofan New Sudan Hot Spot

A report released on Aug. 15 by the U.N. human rights office said that violations of international law that are alleged to have taken place in Sudan's Southern Kordofan State in June "could amount to crimes against humanity or war crimes." The 12-page report describes a wide range of alleged violations in the town of Kadugli as well as in the surrounding Nuba mountains, including "extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and illegal detention, enforced disappearances, attacks against civilians, looting of civilian homes and destruction of property."



Fighting broke out in Kadugli in June between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-North (SPLA-N). South Kordofan is emerging as the latest flashpoint in Sudan between the Khartoum government in the north and the newly independent Republic of South Sudan. Thousands have been dislocated by the renewed violence, and there is evidence of a campaign of ethnic cleansing being undertaken by the Khartoum government, driving out the native Nuba people and replacing them with Arab tribes that support the

## NEWS BRIEFS

Bishop Álvaro Ramazzini Imeri of San Marcos, Guatemala, will receive the Pacem in Terris **Peace and Freedom Award** on Oct. 2 at St. Ambrose University from Bishop Martin J. Amos of Davenport. • Hundreds of Catholics gathered at the oldest cathedral in the Americas in Columbus Plaza, in Santo Domingo's colonial zone, on Aug. 8 to mark the 500th anniversary of the **first Catholic dioceses** in the Western Hemisphere. • The diocese of Da Nang in central Vietnam has pledged to continue giving material and spiritual **support to people with AIDS** despite the loss of funding from several foreign charities. • Nine former soldiers in El Salvador's army surrendered on Aug. 8 to authorities, three months after their **indictment in Spain** for the killings in 1989 of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter. • Sister Florence Deacon, a Franciscan, is the **new president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious**, elected at the closing of the organization's annual assembly on Aug. 9-12. • The Princeton Review's list of colleges with the **most and least religious students** scored Brigham Young University at the top; the title of "least religious school" went to Bennington College in Vermont.



**Álvaro Ramazzini Imeri**

north. Rebels in South Kordofan, mostly ethnic Nuba people organized into the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, were once part of the rebel movement that is now in power in South Sudan. On Aug. 7, the SPLM-N joined with three rebel groups in western Darfur to form the Revolutionary Front Alliance. The front's objective is to overthrow the National Congress Party, the ruling party in Khartoum, and create a new liberal and secular state.

## Zimbabwe Pilgrims Arrive in Madrid

Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from across the globe descended on the Spanish capital on Aug. 15 with an array of colorful T-shirts, blood-shot eyes and a unified spirit of excitement about World Youth Day. Sona

Mpofu of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, and 21 other pilgrims from southern Africa were exhausted by their journey but thrilled about being at World Youth Day. "When you come here, you feel at home," said Mpofu, 27. "You don't need to explain yourself. You are who you are. We understand each other." Said Fungai Mawada, 20: "It's been an overwhelming experience when you see that everyone shares the same faith, despite color, race and upbringing and culture. We all have that one thing in common. To get here, it's like coming home to a bigger family." For most of the group from Zimbabwe, it was not only their first World Youth Day, but their first time coming to Europe and even their first time boarding an airplane or leaving their country.

From CNS and other sources.





# Car Talk

We hardly need another predictable indictment of the automobile or America's car culture. Plenty of social commentators have already weighed in with "feet good, wheels bad" assessments of current U.S. transport patterns. But the time does seem right to stir up our creative juices and reconsider continued reliance on autos as our default mode of transportation.

Deep down, I am ambivalent about cars. On the one hand, like most Americans, I frequently drive about and actually derive considerable pleasure from the experience. There is nothing like whizzing down an open highway (if you can find one anymore) with some up-tempo music (I recommend early Bruce Springsteen or Tom Petty) blasting from the speakers. Full disclosure: I am lucky enough to be able to walk to work each day and, as a Jesuit, have never actually owned a car. But, typical of folks my age, I fondly recall the satisfaction of stepping out the door of the Department of Motor Vehicles on my 17th birthday with my first unrestricted driver license in hand, thus completing the final stage of that great American rite of passage into adulthood.

On the other hand, for all the satisfaction and practical advantages associated with driving an automobile regularly, I find it hard to deny the downside of excessive car use. Owning and operating a vehicle is expensive, ecologically harmful and has a pernicious way of insulating us from our social and natural environments. Burning

endless gallons of imported gasoline to propel our self-contained private vehicles on nonessential trips near and far is the very embodiment of self-indulgence and unsustainability.

We are coming off a summer that afforded automobiles a rather high profile. The rollercoaster of gasoline prices had us buzzing. The media covered the rollout of an impressive new generation of hybrid and electric cars. The Disney Pixar animation feature "Cars 2" received plenty of attention. Depending upon your perspective, the movie either delighted and entertained millions or contributed to the brainwashing of yet another generation into a decadent car culture (see, my ambivalence persists).

One particularly revealing spectacle was the Los Angeles Freeway saga widely dubbed Carmageddon. For an extended period over a July weekend, north-south traffic in our nation's second-largest city was all but halted when road construction shut down the 405 freeway. Ironically, the major purpose of this roadwork is to widen and strengthen the Sepulveda Pass in order to increase the volume of traffic the road can carry in the future. Recall the "if you build it, they will come" principle from the movie "Field of Dreams." Once again, an American public works project will serve to perpetuate gridlock, at a time when many European cities are actively discouraging the use of cars in congested areas through traffic-calming measures, parking restrictions and hefty tolls on those who spurn public transportation.

Besides employing disincentives for auto traffic, especially single-passenger use, urban planners and transportation officials should continue to enact positive measures to enhance reliable public transportation and encourage pedestrian-friendly zones rather than allow cars to dominate public spaces. Recent budget cuts in many regions have reduced bus and rail service precisely when we should be making public transit more attractive and affordable, not more of a hassle. We should seize opportunities to create truly walkable and bikeable neighborhoods.

Of course, even forward-thinking public officials will need to accommodate our existing car culture. Our preferences will not change overnight; piling into the family car remains the most convenient option for most commuting, shopping and vacationing. Indeed, some destinations are unreachable by other means. But does our need for mobility always justify maneuvering several thousand pounds of metal through town? Can we muster up the collective imagination to consider some practical alternatives to unrelenting car use?

I hesitate to recommend breaking entirely with the automobile. But to avoid the folly of getting stuck in unsustainable patterns of living, we must face up to the imperative to renegotiate the relationship. Since our reliance on gas-guzzling vehicles is not serving us well, it is time to challenge our overly car-centric culture.

We should  
make  
public  
transit  
attractive  
and  
affordable.

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STORIES OF LOVE, HEROISM AND COURAGE

# Learning From 9/11

BY DAVID O'BRIEN

**H**istorians know that there is History and history, that is, what actually happened and our stories about what happened. In a reference to photographs that caught the experiences of Sept. 11, 2001, Garrison Keillor wrote: "The mainstream media seized upon inspirational and patriotic images, such as the picture of three firemen [placing the flag on the mound of rubble]; thus began a sort of mythification of the day into which George W. Bush and Rudolph Giuliani entered, bearing spears and shields."

But these were not the only stories. While national leaders prepared for war, many Americans paused in wonder amid the pain. We met people who lost loved ones, each with a story; we attended remarkable ceremonies and heard about others; there was a lot of silence. I recall a reflection session at the College of the Holy Cross where some expressed strong political reactions, but William E. Reiser, S.J., then a professor of religious studies, said quietly that he found it too overwhelming to offer a thoughtful response quite yet. Later I read of ministers at the site, who simply listened to the anguish of stricken families and exhausted rescuers. Mychal Judge, O.F.M., a chaplain with the New York City Fire Department, who has been called "the saint of 9/11," asked his Lord to take him where he was supposed to go, then "keep me out of your way." He died that day.

Although distressed by the quick, public talk of war, I was also absorbed by stories of the people of 9/11—people into whose lives history as actuality exploded that September day. I could not get enough of those stories, captured in the reporting of superb journalists like Jim Dwyer and in the profiles of victims published day after day, week after week, in *The New York Times*. And I could not stop looking at those powerful iconic photographs—images of sacrifice, death and heroic generosity. In one image a young fireman, Michael Kehoe, a 9/11 survivor, is ascending the stairs as office workers quickly descend. Later one of those office workers, John Labriola, an employee of the Port Authority of New York

OPPOSITE "SAD REPLAY," OIL PAINTING BY DAN GHENO

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**DAVID O'BRIEN** is the University Professor of Faith and Culture at the University of Dayton in Ohio, and emeritus professor at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass. **DAN GHENO**, whose art accompanies this article, is a teacher of painting and drawing at the National Academy School of Fine Arts and the Art Students League in New York City.

and New Jersey, reportedly said: “The one conclusion I came to on 9/11 is that people in the stairwell...really were in ‘a state of grace.’ They helped each other. They didn’t panic. Most people are basically good. I know this, with certainty, because I had gone through the crucible. What a great example people left: be selfless, help the person around you and get through it.”

From life stories of victims, unending stories of helping and remarkable reports of mourning, I learned, maybe relearned, lessons of love. How many stories told of airline



passengers and workers at the twin towers, knowing they would die, who called others to say “I love you.” I learned that American individualism is real and, for the most part, good; we Americans, at least among our own, value persons as persons, thank God. Selfish individualism is another myth, for when the chips of life were down, many endangered Americans thought not of themselves but of others. I have always cherished the line from “Lumen Gentium” (No. 31) that describes the many relationships we have in family, workplace and neighborhood as a complex fabric from which “the very web of our existence is woven.” As fascinating stories of such webs were told, it became clear to me (Why had it been so dim?) how much love really does matter.

It is easy to dismiss these accounts as sentimental. But I found in people like Labriola, Dwyer and Judge a populist realism, an awareness that we are all limited, that evil and sin are real, but that hope, faith and love happen right here in the middle of life.

The experience of 9/11 reminded me that I am an Americanist. Growing up in a Catholic, cold war subculture, I never understood that I might have to choose between being Catholic and American. I thus became an American historian, not a church historian, interested in, worried about, taking responsibility for, as best I could, the past, present and future of American Catholics, who were Americans as much as Catholics.

The events of 9/11 left me determined to contest the countercultural, sectarian Catholicism increasingly dominant in our church. This Catholicism thinks we Catholics can define ourselves by our difference and distance from other Americans. Such views are sometimes challenging; more often they are hypocritical, irresponsible, blaming of others while exempting ourselves, standing apart. In contrast, Father Judge stood with his people.

On 9/11 this country was tested and, for a shining moment, found worthy.

That experience led me to a recommitment to the United States and Americans, and to the American—and Christian—vision of a single human family. That vision was grounded in memories of family and anti-communist Catholicism. It was challenged and revised by encounters

with a diverse group of people, like John XXIII, Norman Thomas, Martin Luther King Jr. and members of the Catholic Worker Movement. After 9/11, I found myself drawn to shared responsibility by history itself.

History is not made by somebody else in some other time and place. No, we ourselves make history by our choices. The meaning of 9/11, an example of history as story, will be constructed from the choices we continue to make in its wake.

So far too many public choices have promoted civic idolatry and empire, or even death. But the story is not over. Look at all the love that day.

Love can write another chapter and keep hope alive for a better future. The meaning of 9/11 lies ahead. It is in our hands and in our hearts. **A**

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Father John F. Baldovin, S.J. is a professor of Historical and Liturgical Theology at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. He's a leading expert on the Mass and has been teaching for 28 years. Father Baldovin is past president of the North American Academy of Liturgy and the international ecumenical Societas Liturgica. He's currently president of the International Jungmann Society for Jesuits and the Liturgy. His previous Now You Know Media series is entitled, *The Catholic Mass Today*.

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# America's Muslims

Mainstream and middle class

BY JOHN BORELLI AND DREW CHRISTIANSEN

**T**en years after the triple attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. Muslim population is thriving. Their presence and success are vastly underreported. Instead, headlines draw attention to homegrown ter-

rorists, protests against mosque construction, the controversial hearings of Representative Peter King and disputes over Homeland Security's ratings of domestic terrorism threats. But in the aftermath of 9/11, American Muslims are well integrated into American society and prospering. Two-thirds of Muslim households earn over \$50,000 a year and a quarter of those over \$100,000. Two-thirds of Muslims hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with just 44 percent of Americans overall.

Today the American Muslim population numbers perhaps 4.5 million. (The exact total is hard to determine because the U.S. Census does not inquire about religious affiliation.)

Of these, half identify themselves as Sunni; 16 percent as Shiite. Sixty-five percent of American Muslims are foreign-born, and 39 percent have come since 1990.

Like Christian immigrants before them, Muslims organize to build community centers and mosques to educate

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their children, maintain their faith and foster community adhesion. These institutions also draw non-practicing Muslims. Islamic centers do form loose affiliations with groups like the Islamic Society of North America, Islamic Circle of North America, American Muslim Alliance,



Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., is sworn in, using an English translation of the Koran, as the first Muslim member of Congress by Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi.

CNS PHOTO/JIM YOUNG, REUTERS

Muslim Public Affairs Council or Council on American-Islamic Relations, though according to a poll released in August by the Abu Dhabi Gallup Center no more than 10 percent of American Muslims regarded any of these groups as representative. While they prize their local autonomy in American society, American Muslims also typically maintain spiritual connections with religious leadership abroad and in traditionally Islamic lands.

Muslims are integrated into the American mainstream. According to the Gallup poll "Muslim Americans: Faith,

Freedom and the Future,” Muslims more than other U.S. religious groups regard themselves as “thriving.” In earlier studies they expressed as much satisfaction with the state of the nation as did other Americans. With the exception of recent immigrants, Muslims identify non-Muslims as their closest friends. Like other Americans, they reject extremism; but a little more than a third worry about the growth of Islamic extremism in America. Muslims support adaptation to American society over religious separatism. Two-thirds find no conflict between being a Muslim and a participant in modern society. Furthermore, 62 percent regard the condition of women in the United States favorably.

### Religious Practice and Politics

American Muslims are more likely to regard religion as “very important” to their identity than are other Americans (72 percent versus 60 percent), but their practice of daily prayer and weekly worship is somewhat weaker than that of Christians (daily prayer—61 percent versus 70 percent; communal worship—40 percent versus 45 percent). More Christians than Muslims, however, are of the opinion that their religious institutions should express views about political and social issues.

The growing number of native-born American Muslims are the offspring of Muslim immigrants, African-Americans and converts from a variety of backgrounds. Nearly 60 percent of converts are African-American; 34 percent are white. Converts are typically young, with almost half converting before age 21 and another third before age 35. The first- and second-generation children of Muslim-Americans assimilate into American culture, attitudes and interests, as the tens of millions of other immigrant children in the history of the American republic have done.

In the Gallup poll, American Muslims are more likely than any other religious group to say that violent attacks on civilians are never justified. Support for extremism is much weaker among American Muslims than among their continental European counterparts. More than half of U.S. Muslims express concern about Islamic extremism as compared with just 35 percent in France and 29 percent in Germany and Spain. Although younger American Muslims are more likely than others to regard suicide bombing as justifiable, the survey reports that 78 percent of Muslim Americans say attacks against civilians are “never justified,” in contrast to a majority of American Catholics, Jews, Protestants and Mormons who hold such attacks as “sometimes justifiable.”

Following 9/11 American Muslims were critical of American foreign policy, as they were of American Middle East policy for decades before. Only 26 percent see the war on terror as “a sincere effort to reduce terrorism,” and 75 percent oppose the war in Iraq compared with 47 percent of

the general U.S. population. Only 48 percent regard the war in Afghanistan as “the wrong decision,” however, with as many as 35 percent believing it was “the right decision.” Nearly 70 percent hold an unfavorable attitude toward Al Qaeda, and only 5 percent report favorable attitudes toward it.

### Prejudice and Discrimination

Despite the assimilation of the vast majority of Muslims in the United States, attitudes toward Muslims and Islam on the part of the general American population are not positive. A slight majority of Americans (53 percent) hold negative attitudes toward Muslims, with some 31 percent reporting attitudes “not favorable at all.” Yet nearly two-thirds of Americans say they have little or no knowledge of Islam. Those admittedly ignorant of Islam are more than twice as likely to have negative attitudes toward Muslims as toward adherents of other religions. Repugnance toward Islam, however, is greater than aversion to Muslims themselves; 43 percent of Americans report feeling prejudice against Muslims. Ironically, most Americans regard Muslims as unaccepting of people of other faiths. Even so, a large majority (70 percent) believe Muslims want peace.

The August Gallup poll indicates that 48 percent of Muslim Americans report experiencing either “racial or religious” discrimination in the last year. Earlier reports indi-



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cated that a much smaller number experienced “religious” discrimination. Among those reporting recent discrimination, native-born Muslims, particularly African Americans, outnumber the foreign-born by more than 2 to 1. The impact of 9/11 and the war on terror on perceptions of discrimination, however, are noticeable. A small majority declare it is more difficult being a Muslim in the United States since 9/11 and believe they have been singled out as Muslims for scrutiny by government security programs. Among those with advanced degrees and of higher income levels, two-thirds say it has been harder to be a Muslim since 9/11.

### Muslim-Catholic Relations

In the United States a large percentage of the population attends religious services regularly and an even larger percentage self-identifies as religious. Because the nation’s founders did not want the history of strife among Protestant groups to repeat itself in their new republic, they wrote into the Bill of Rights two expressions that formed the basis for religious pluralism: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Over time a variety of religions flourished because of the equality of religious groups before the law.

Two other key conditions favorable to the growth of

Christian-Muslim relations date from 1965. First, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 opened U.S. borders to new immigrants from South Asia and the Middle East, which provided opportunities for dialogue between American Christians and Muslim immigrants. Contact with foreign-born Muslims also persuaded many African-American Muslims to conform to religious belief and practice more like that of Muslims abroad.

Second, on Oct. 28 that year, Pope Paul VI and the bishops of the Second Vatican Council promulgated “Nostra Aetate,” a declaration on interreligious relations. Begun as an effort to reverse negative church teaching about Jews, “Nostra Aetate” affirmed the church’s respect for the other world religions as well. It offered reasons for the church’s “esteem” for Muslims and urged all “to make sincere efforts” for mutual understanding and cooperation.

In 1965 most people in the United States had never met a Muslim, though from the media they knew about “Black Muslims,” members of the Nation of Islam, an African-American organization working for civil rights. In sharp contrast to the nonviolent character of the civil rights movement, the Nation of Islam took a confrontational, anti-white approach to its mission. That winter, Malcolm X, one of the best-known black Muslims, was assassinated because he came to believe that the Nation of Islam’s teachings on hate and violence were contrary to authentic Islam. Interestingly, the latest Gallup poll shows American Jews least suspicious of American Muslims, with 80 percent believing American Muslims are loyal to the United States and 66 percent believing they face prejudice.

World events after 1965—the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the Yom Kippur War of 1970 and the Arab oil embargo, the terrorism linked to Muammar el-Qaddafi and the 1979 Iranian Revolution—complicated American attitudes toward Muslims. Still, by the mid-1980s successful Catholic-Muslim dialogues had been taking place in Los Angeles for 10 years, and similar efforts occurred regularly in Detroit, Houston, Chicago, St. Louis, Boston, Buffalo and New York. In 1986 the U.S. Catholic bishops finally voted to fund staff and interreligious programming to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue, and a national dialogue of Catholics and Muslims took place in 1991 and 1992.

### Interfaith Relations after 9/11

The U.S. Catholic bishops inaugurated annual dialogues in several regions, beginning in 1996 in the Midwest with the Islamic Society of North America, in 1998 on the East Coast with the Islamic Circle of North America and in 2000 on the West Coast. Participants met in a retreat environment for two days. The purpose was to connect with both national and local Islamic leadership and thereby engage the diversity of the Muslim population. In a separate

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initiative, African-American Muslims under the leadership of Warith Deen Muhammad began meeting with Catholic leadership. These meetings led to a visit to Rome by Imam Muhammad in 1996 and many informal relationships. These dialogues and relationships continue today.

On Sept. 11, 2001, Catholic leadership already enjoyed a degree of trust and mutuality with Muslim leadership in the United States. That very week the bishops' national inter-religious moderator, Bishop Tod Brown of Orange, Calif., signed a statement with five Muslim leaders involved in these relationships. The signers declared their commitment to one another as friends, believers and citizens; their abhorrence of all terrorist acts and hate crimes; and the immorality of the crimes of 9/11. At its next meeting each U.S.C.C.B. regional dialogue discussed the nexus of religion and violence.

No doubt complex layers of relationship, joint decision-making, trust and goodwill served many religious communities in the United States, especially Muslims, in the weeks after 9/11. The next year, the bishops' conference sponsored an institute on Islam and Catholic-Muslim relations, and the bishops' Subcommittee on Interreligious Dialogue received a grant from the Catholic Near East Welfare Association to offer three short institutes for bishops on Islam and Catholic-Muslim relations. Nowadays, there are numerous summer institutes and special workshops on Christian-Muslim relations geared for teachers, church staff, reporters and others. Georgetown University, the site of the third bishops' institute in 2005, has offered a week-long institute for Christian and Muslim leaders every summer since that year.

When 138 Muslim religious leaders and scholars released "A Common Word Between Us and You" in October 2007 to Christian leaders everywhere, a degree of reciprocity was reached in the promotion of relations. This short reflection, drawing from biblical and Koranic sources on love of God and neighbor as a basis for dialogue, represented the first broadly based theological response by Muslims to the Second Vatican Council's "Nostra Aetate."

Setbacks came in the summer of 2010. A proposed Islamic center for lower Manhattan gave rise to angry protests and drew in national political leaders. Similarly, when a pastor on Staten Island agreed to sell a former convent to a Muslim group for a mosque, there were outcries. For New Yorkers, these incidents demonstrated the insufficient attention by civic and religious leaders to public and private healing after 9/11, particularly among the families of first responders, many of whom lived on Staten Island. For all Americans, lower Manhattan and ground zero had become a stage on which to vent suspicions and stereotypes

of Muslims and their religion. Controversies over the construction of a mosque and an Islamic center erupted in Tennessee and Iowa.

Then the pastor of a tiny congregation-cum-business in Gainesville, Fla., drew stern comments from some of the highest political and military offices in the land, and from fellow evangelicals, over his plan to burn copies of the Koran on the ninth anniversary of 9/11. This year more than two dozen states have considered "anti-Shariah" legislation, whereby Islamic law can never have standing in state courts; three states have passed such a ban. A recent exposé in The New York Times found that a Hasidic lawyer from Brooklyn, N.Y., has orchestrated this movement with conservative public policy institutes.

Meanwhile, Christians continue to engage in local initiatives with Muslims to promote social justice, community-building, dialogue and faith-sharing. Muslims have begun to teach Islam and religious studies even at Catholic colleges and universities. Muslim social commentators have moved well beyond political analysis of the West and

Islam. With a stake in American social, economic, religious and political institutions, Muslims are moving into positions of civic leadership.

The economic downturn and costly settlements in cases of abuse have caused the U.S. Catholic bishops to cut back their programs of social cooperation and inter-religious dialogue. As a result, local communities and interfaith councils receive less expert assistance. Ten years ago, help from national offices provided guidance and expertise in shaping initiatives for mutual understanding and cooperation. Ten years after 9/11, with interfaith engagement so widespread, no single national dialogue, relationship or program sets the tone for Christian-Muslim relations in American life. **A**

### ON THE WEB

Rev. Robert J. Robbins on  
interreligious relations after 9/11.  
[americamagazine.org/podcast](http://americamagazine.org/podcast)

### SOURCES

Public opinion data is taken from the Pew Research Center's (Muslim West Facts Project) "**Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream**" (2007) and the Gallup/Co-exist Foundation survey "**Religious Perspectives in America: With an In-Depth Analysis of U.S. Attitudes toward Muslims and Islam**" (2009) and other sources. The latest findings come from Gallup's 2011 survey, "**Muslim Americans: Faith, Freedom and the Future**," which was released as this article went to press.



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# A Matter of Faith

A physicist reflects on his work at ground zero

BY THOMAS A. CAHILL

**H**ad I not followed the unconventional career path to which my Catholic faith led me, I never would have been standing next to the stinking wreckage of the World Trade Center in winter 2002. I had gone to New York City to testify before a Congressional committee that the air surrounding the site was not “safe to breathe,” as the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency had stated, but instead contained materials that would inevitably and seriously degrade the health of workers at the site, most of whom lacked respirators.

Decades before the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, I had gradually abandoned the fascinating field of nuclear astrophysics to apply my physical techniques to air pollution, partially driven by the injustice of environmental assaults on people unable to protect themselves. Catholic moral and ethical teachings were far removed from my research and teaching then—a separation of faith and life I had learned at an early age.

Growing up in the 1940s in rural New England, I lived in a town with six Catholics (our family and one old couple). There was still a strain of Puritan anti-Catholicism there, so we kept religion to ourselves. Later, when I began doctoral studies in physics at the University of California, Los Angeles, immersed in a university and a discipline that rejected God, I almost felt at home. My Catholicism, practiced on (most) Sundays, held little relevance for my work.

This was, however, a time of massive development of lethal hardware, nuclear and otherwise, the military-industrial complex driven by fear of Soviet capabilities and inten-

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**THOMAS A. CAHILL** is an emeritus professor of physics and atmospheric sciences and former director of both the Institute of Ecology and the Crocker Nuclear Laboratory at the Univ. of California, Davis. He is currently head of the U.C. Davis DELTA Group, which focuses on global climate problems.



Thomas Cahill at the World Trade Center, February 2002

PHOTO: SYLVIA WRIGHT

tions. Moral issues abounded for physicists, but these went unaddressed by the physics department, the university and academia at large. The topics were being addressed, however, by Elwood Kieser, C.S.P., and a small group of helpers in a television series produced by Paulist Productions in Los Angeles. I volunteered to help them get the science right in a few screenplays and scrounged up hardware from U.C.L.A.’s surplus bins to make their sets look more scientifically credible. Yet that involvement, minor as it was, put my Catholic faith in a new and relevant light. A further benefit from my revived faith came during a rare visit to the local Newman Center: I met my future wife.

As a professor at the University of California, Davis, in 1967, I saw a faith problem emerge, not with my peers but with my students. Some came from strict evangelical backgrounds and held values that conflicted with what I was teaching. This led to many conversations, during which I tried to show that there was no conflict between my being a

Christian and a physicist and that truth is unitary, be it in science or religion. The acceptance of modern science by the Second Vatican Council and the church's embrace of evolution further weakened the artificial barrier between my faith and my physics.

My students and I began applying physical methods to test air quality along roadways and in residential areas, helping form legislation in California to eliminate lead emissions from cars that is now copied around the world. While continuing our work in environmental justice, we expanded the scope of our work into the natural ecosystem. A veteran of scores of environmental battles, I also proposed, designed

and for 20 years ran air quality programs to protect visibility at national parks and monuments, including a bitterly contested victory protecting the Grand Canyon from a coal-fired power plant.

A decade later, when a colleague in New York asked me to send our unique air samplers to his laboratory after 9/11, I was willing and, luckily, able to help. Our World Trade Center study angered both the New York City mayor's office and the Bush administration, because our air samplers proved that workers on and near the site were affected by air that was unsafe to breathe in the months following 9/11, in spite of assertions to the contrary. My federal contacts were suddenly cut, and I still receive nasty calls and letters for this study. Yet I contributed to a recent victory—a \$750 million settlement to cover those workers' health care costs.

Physics itself has come full circle. Stunned by the discovery of the Big Bang and a one-way universe, physics has outgrown its "sophomore-engineering atheism" phase. Many of the 20th-century's greatest physicists came to accept the need for a creative power, since the origin of the Big Bang cannot be explained by the laws of our universe (see *Einstein's God*, by Krista Tippett and Andrew Solomon). One successful contemporary English astrophysicist, John Polkinghorne, became an Anglican priest. And since 1985 physicists have come to realize that the laws of physics strongly support the hypothesis that life itself is the reason for the universe, that it is not just an accidental, organic smear on this rocky planet. The implications of this hypothesis are still being argued and developed, for both physics and theology.

As my work in physics evolved into global-climate protection, I have experienced another benefit of Catholicism. Traveling to distant spots, some very primitive, I have nevertheless been able to find a Mass being celebrated. The experience of these treasured Masses has profoundly changed me, humbled me and made me grateful for the sacrifices and faith of those who made them possible. I have reached a concordance: I believe, and my belief helps direct how I use physics, while physics itself lays a rational foundation for my belief. **A**

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## TEMPORARY AND TIMELESS

*The 9/11 memorials, then and now*

In the days following Sept. 11, 2001, Michael Diaz constructed an impromptu memorial in Manhattan for his missing brother Matthew, which I saw online. It consisted of a Payless shoebox holding a

pair of worn black shoes, neatly tied. The top of the box, propped up, served as a kind of headstone. A verse from the Gospel of Mark (9:3) was scrawled on it in magic marker: “His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.” This spontaneous outpouring tugs at the heart, yet its message is hard to decode. Why that particular verse? Why those shoes? We may never know.

Paradoxically, temporary commemorations like the one made for Matthew Diaz sometimes achieve universality by their specificity. They express raw emotion that typically is lost by the time a permanent memorial is erected. Ripped open by tragedy, we give ourselves creative and spiritual permission to explore life’s big questions—Why I am here? Where am I going? How will I be remembered?—that do not often come to mind on ordinary Tuesday mornings. These sharp but evanescent insights illuminate our deepest yearnings to know ourselves and to know God.

**9/11’s Immediate Memorials**  
Beginning on the afternoon of the attacks, posters of missing persons blanketed New York City; they were made in response to the initial belief, soon dispelled, that victims were walking around in an amnesiac state or lying unidentified in hospital beds. The photocopied posters were remarkably consistent in design—an 8.5 inch by 11 inch sheet, with a family photo, minimal identification and some contact information—yet they represented an invention of mourning and remembrance at its most compelling. It was easy to identify with the missing, poised over barbecues, at weddings, on vacation, because variations of those same pictures are glued in our own photo albums. They were us.

A second wave of posters gave additional data about birthmarks, scars, earrings, shoes and tattoos to aid



PHOTO: DAVID FINN/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

**A memorial for Matthew Diaz made by his brother Michael Diaz**

forensic identification, intimate details that increased their familiarity further still. The images evolved a third time, now marked “Remember me,” “Pray for me,” or other words of release, into posthumous Everyman memorials that were both germ and zenith of the vast photographic collage that would emerge from that day.

In a gesture that proved to be a cathartic gift to the nation, The New York Times published “Portraits of Grief,” more than 2,200 thumbnail profiles of 9/11 victims that ran daily from Sept. 15 to Dec. 31, 2001, and continued sporadically into 2003. Taking their inspiration from the posters of the missing, the profiles featured stamp-size photographs and impressionistic biographies that revealed those lost—traders, firefighters, new parents, gourmet chefs, literary escapists and fanatical golfers—sometimes in all their lovable idiosyncrasy. The “Portraits” section evolved into a national shrine of sorts. Reading them became a daily ritual for many. As my brother said at the time, “I *have* to read them. Every day, I meet more great people.”

### Michael Arad’s Memories

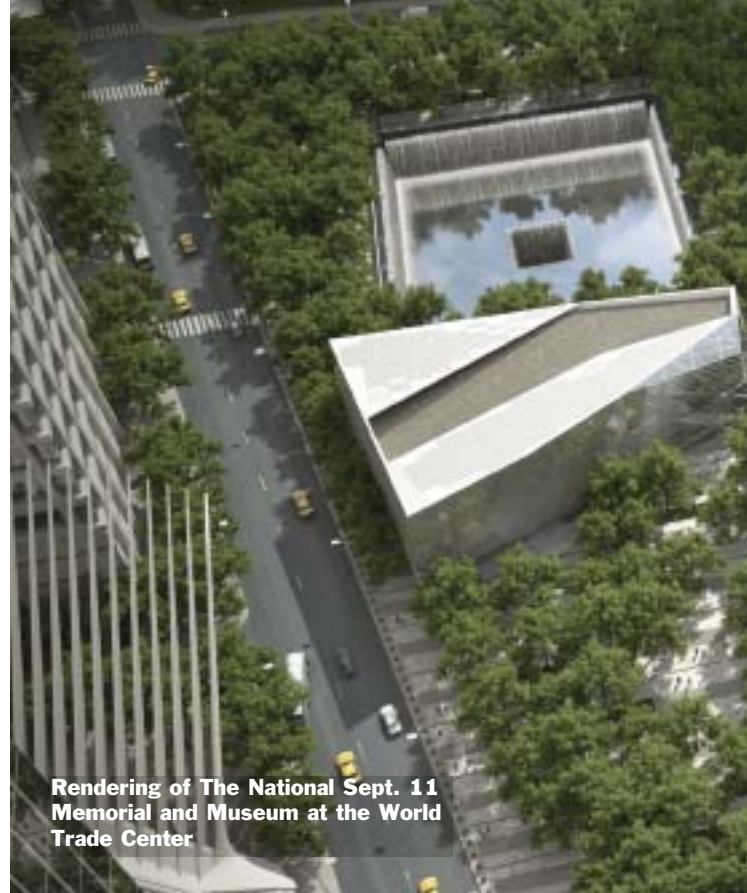
Shortly after the attacks, the architect Michael Arad created a temporary installation on the rooftop of his East Village apartment to express the emptiness he felt. The work consisted of water that flowed into two square-shaped cavities, giving the effect of two black voids floating on top of a ghostly pool. Those rooftop seeds of grief and hope, transmuted in Arad’s winning memorial design of 2004, became the double inverted fountains of the National September 11 Memorial and Museum. Arad’s essential idea was that the most fitting response to the loss of so many souls and the skyline itself would be absence, not presence, a void, not a solid. Although the design team eventually included ideas from the landscape architect Peter Walker

and others, the fundamental memorial concept was in place within weeks of the tragedy.

Not all temporary memorials have equal weight—teddy bears and key chains are not the stuff of high art—but they all point to what is to come. Unlike permanent monuments that are built to outlast the people who built them, temporary commemorations show vulnerability. They express a deep need to mark an event, like Jacob planting the Bethel stone. Such memorials shout, “They mattered! And I matter too!” Even permanent memorials are not a final step, but rather one more stage in the process of reconciliation.

Names are also important, as is the way they are presented. The artist Maya Lin taught us this when she insisted this the names of fallen Vietnam veterans be listed on the Washington, D.C., memorial in the order of their date of death, instead of alphabetically, which would have had the heartless anonymity of a phone book. Given past commemorative debates, the task of arranging the 2,982 names of those who died was a challenge for the designer of the national memorial at the World Trade Center. (This number includes the six people killed in the truck bomb explosion in the parking garage of the north tower on Feb. 26, 1993.)

As Arad explained it, the aim was to “place the names of those who died that day [Sept. 11] next to each other in a meaningful way, marking the names of family and friends together,



Rendering of The National Sept. 11 Memorial and Museum at the World Trade Center

as they had lived and died.” The names at ground zero are organized by “meaningful adjacencies” that reflect where victims died, their work affiliations and their personal relationships.

A name-finder on the memorial’s Web site combines aspects of the “Portraits of Grief” and the posters of the missing, providing a photo, life dates, birthplace and professional affiliation. Like an inscription on a headstone, these brief bios tell us something, but not nearly enough to convey the fullness of a life. Taken together, however, these snippets form a democracy that emphasizes what we all share: namely, a creaturely destiny to become part, sooner or later, of an eternal continuum. Here, in the midst of names and portraits, I find Matthew Diaz, who is smiling broadly. He is far from those black shoes, having gone up the high mountain.

### Finished and Unfinished

Unlike their ephemeral cousins, permanent memorials generate controversy because what is being argued is his-



footprints. Water cascades down their sides and disappears into a still lower pool. The names of those who died are inscribed in bronze panels that surround the pools and stretch

#### ON THE WEB

Michael V. Tueth, S.J., reviews "The Help." [americamagazine.org](http://americamagazine.org)

in either direction as far as one can see. The names are stencil-cut, allowing visitors to look through them to the water below, or to run their fingers over each name, one of the most ancient forms of homage. At night, light will shine up through the letters, transforming each name. Matthew Diaz and all of those who died that day will become exceedingly white and shining, like snow, provoking reflection on what is

spiritual selves. By placing temporal concerns in a larger, timeless context, memorials remind us that our true nature is not of this world. But it is also not apart from the world.

As we approach the dedication of the permanent memorial in Lower Manhattan,

a milestone event that will mark the closing of one chapter and the opening of a new one, it is important to remember those promises we made to ourselves in the autumnal days of 2001: to meet more great people every day, simply by deciding to see their greatness; to treat ourselves and others with kindness and compassion; to stop and consider the beauty of the world; to do those things that frighten us most, whether offering an apology or moving away from habits or habitual situations that keep us stuck; to give thanks, often. The new 9/11 memorial, a massive double baptismal font of sorts, beckons us to immerse ourselves and emerge into a new life.

tory itself. The finished monument does not tell us what happened but instead represents how the majority thought an event should be remembered.

The commemorative process is strikingly similar, no matter what the event or site: the overwhelming consensus that an event should be memorialized is followed by debate, sometimes acrimonious, from which the memorial design emerges. On the dedication day, sometimes only a few weeks later, the controversy is forgotten, the design extolled; most accept the monument narrative as "the way things were." One might say that what is finally built is mostly a marker of the soul-searching process that brought it into being. Inevitably, the monument will fade into the fabric of the landscape and attain the peculiar invisibility of the familiar.

#### The New Memorial

The 9/11 memorial consists of two massive pools, each an acre in size, which are placed in the twin towers'

to come.

While the horizontal name panels locate the victims and those who mourn them within the human collective, the vertical axis—the one stretched between the seemingly bottomless depths of the pools and heaven above—engages our individual,

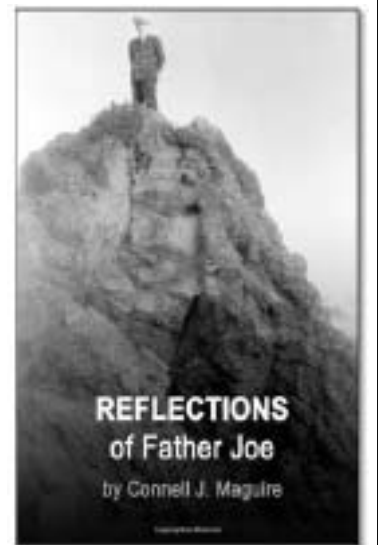
JUDITH DUPRÉ is the author of *Monuments: America's History in Art and Memory* (Random House).

#### Reflections of Father Joe

By Connell J. Maguire

Connell J. Maguire, author of *Follies of a Navy Chaplain* and *Foibles of Father Joe*, was born in Glenties, County Donegal, Ireland and came to the United States with his family at age 11, settling with his family in Philadelphia. He was drawn to the priesthood and became a chaplain in the Navy, including a stint in Vietnam. Now 92 and living in Florida, where he still ministers part time to a community of Guatemalan immigrants in Indiantown, Father Joe tackles many of the issues facing the Catholic church today in this, his third book. Print: \$13.95 +\$3 s&h

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# TRAGEDY AND GRACE

## MRS. MATTINGLY'S MIRACLE The Prince, the Widow, And the Cure that Shocked Washington City

By Nancy Lusignan Schultz  
Yale Univ. Press. 288p \$30

This is the true story of Ann Mattingly (1784-1855), a Washington, D.C., socialite who allegedly received a long-distance cure, and a charismatic Austrian priest, Prince Alexander Hohenlohe (1777-1849), an acclaimed miracle worker.

Mrs. Mattingly, in fact, received two miracles. The first—and more dramatic—was a cure for seemingly end-stage breast cancer, which was attributed to the prince's prayer formula and intercession. Skeptics point out, however, that the prescribed Hohenlohe protocol called for him to celebrate Mass simultaneously with the priests in Mrs. Mattingly's sickroom. This may not have actually been the case, since the prince was traveling at the time. Nancy Lusignan Schultz opines, "It is likely that the miracle occurred without the prince's knowledge or participation."

The second miracle, the healing of a gangrenous foot six years later, was attributed to her personal devotion to the Virgin Mary. Both events are well-documented and verified by ecclesiastical and civil authorities. As to the validity of the miracles, Schultz writes:

Having spent a decade examining the evidence, I believe that something extraordinary did happen in Washington city nearly two centuries ago.... How this happened, though, and whether the explanation is natural or supernatural, pushes deep into the realm of faith. This book

does not try to guide you there.

Schultz is chairperson of the English department at Salem State University, Mass. In the course of the book Schultz presents the major players involved in Mrs. Mattingly's life and deftly weaves the story within the context of the social and religious issues confronting the early 19th-century American Catholic Church.

Ann Mattingly was a woman of deep faith. Her family was one of the oldest Catholic families in Maryland.

At the time of her first cure, March 12, 1824, she was living with her brother, Captain Thomas Carbery, mayor of Washington, D.C. The healing made Ann a celebrity. The publicity that her cure garnered, however, was not welcomed by all. As Schultz tells it, the incident unveiled a deep tension that existed in American Catholicism between rationalists, who were more solicitous to "the humanistic tradition of the French," and continental romantics, who emphasized a more sacramental view of reality.

The former group was represented by some Anglo-Jesuits and the more Gallicanized Sulpicians. They believed their Enlightenment approach would make Catholicism more acceptable in the largely Protestant nation. The latter group was composed of continental Jesuits, who eventually gained hegemony in the American church. In the minds of some, the ascendancy of sentimentalism marginalized the church from the American religious mainstream for the next 150 years. Schultz,

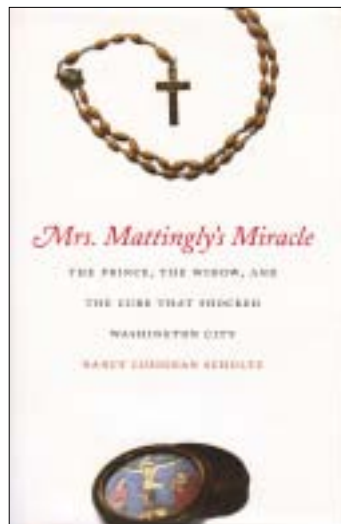
however, points out that "for the Catholic clergy involved in debates over the miracle, very few of their differences had to do with faith and belief. They were far more concerned with how reception of the miracle would affect the developing American Church." Schultz also cites Rome's concerns both for the authenticity of the miracle and for the pope's sensitivity to American political culture.

Prince Hohenlohe is an enigmatic figure, credited with hundreds of miracles throughout Europe. Yet there was always a taint of suspicion regarding his character. Accusations of being a dandy, reported incidents of dis-

obedience to his superiors and rumors of womanizing were leveled against him. Schultz quotes one of Hohenlohe's early biographers, "To his enemies, the prince was 'an itinerant Thaumaturgist, of blasted character.' To admirers, he seemed to lead a sound life, though some negative accusations may have rung true."

Some of the details of Mrs. Mattingly's life—for example, the reasons for her separation from her husband and alienation from her son—are speculative on Schultz's part but probable based on the available data. She presents the possibility that both suffered from a form of Lou Gehrig's disease (Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS) and chronic alcoholism. She also ventures that Mrs. Mattingly's son was estranged from the family because of a miscegenous marriage presided over by a Methodist minister. Both would have been taboo in Mrs. Mattingly's world.

From Schultz's research Mrs. Mattingly seems to have led an exem-





plary life. She placed herself under spiritual direction, maintained penitential disciplines and spent a good deal of time in prayer at Georgetown's Visitation Monastery, where the second miracle occurred. She also had a great desire to enter the monastery as a nun, but this ran counter to the advice of her spiritual director. Schultz posits the possibility that she may have achieved the unitive stage of the spiritual life. This assertion is bolstered by this extract from one of Mrs. Mattingly's letters to her spiritual director:

Yet I feel a longing desire to be united to him, & who can express his infinite goodness mercy & love when on receiving him he is pleased as it was to overpower me with a sweetness inexpressible, it appears & really leaves in my mouth a licquor of sweetness which I swallow as if poured in my mouth by large droughts. My hands face & vail is [sic] sometimes perfumed with the smell which to my heart and soul is inexpressible.

CECILIO MORALES

## A CRACKED FOUNDATION

### FAILURE BY DESIGN The Story Behind America's Broken Economy

By Josh Bivens  
Cornell Univ. Press. 120p \$18.95

Think of the Great Recession as a Hurricane Katrina brought on not by the weather but by the hand of humankind. It was not inevitable that unemployment would hit a 25-year peak—and stay high for the foreseeable future. The suffering inflicted had to do with the way policymakers managed the economy before it happened.

That's more or less the message of

Schultz's feminist critique of Catholicism during the era is based on, as she puts it, "the graphic descriptions of the gruesome illness [that] mark Mrs. Mattingly's suffering as extraordinary; ...[in] her lack of complaint and offering up of her suffering, she becomes the ideal symbol of Catholic womanhood, a 'victim soul.'" The author's analysis of this, however, fails to note Catholicism's balanced view of reason and sentimentality or the feminine and masculine contributions encapsulated in the events portrayed. A question not broached by Schultz is why Ann Mattingly has never been proposed for sainthood.

*Mrs. Mattingly's Miracle* provides the reader an invaluable insight into early American Catholicism. More important, Schultz succeeds in exposing the roots of an internecine battle between advocates for a publicly engaged church and those who prefer a more separatist mystical model.

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REV. MICHAEL P. ORSI is a research fellow in law at the Ave Maria School of Law in Naples, Fla.

the economist Josh Bivens of the Washington, D.C.-based Economic Policy Institute. He draws parallels between the stark picture of poor residents of New Orleans stuck in a stadium for lack of a car, money for a motel room or a place to go, and the millions of unemployed without health insurance, kids going hungry, facing eviction and bankruptcy.

Of course, a careful observer might

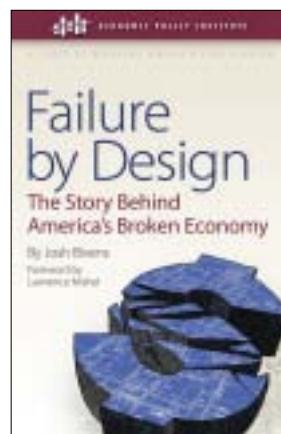
note that planning for Katrina was next to nil. In contrast, repeal of the 1933 Glass-Steagall Act's firewall between the insurance, banking and investment businesses was proposed in the era of Reagan and was sneaked through Congress behind the smoke screen of the Lewinsky scandal years later.

Similarly, the responses to the Great Recession were deliberate. A Republican president threw \$700 billion virtually without strings at Wall Street. His Democratic successor offered \$800 billion recovery legislation that was roughly a third tax cuts and a third business aid.

What about the rest of us? That is Bivens's focus. Since 2002 he has been involved in the development of the biennial *The State of Working America*, the Economic Policy Institute's flagship publication, now available online at [www.stateofworkingamerica.org](http://www.stateofworkingamerica.org). The labor market seems stuck in a net loss of jobs that will take years to make up; economists debate whether it will happen in 2016 or later.

Bivens argues that the employment and gross domestic product growth that has taken place, small as it is, can be attributed to the Recovery Act. Certainly, things would have been much, much worse without it. He does not quite invalidate criticisms such as those of Christina Romer, former Council of Economic Advisers chair and Paul Krugman: President Obama should have pressed for twice as large a recovery package and directed most of it to the households most likely to spend it fastest, such as those living on food stamps and public aid.

He succeeds, however, at exposing the "cracked foundation" of the economy that remains too weak to sustain a widely felt resurgence: falling wages, assaults on unionism,





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globalization for workers and insulation for elites, the rise of the nonproductive financial sector and the abandonment of full employment as a policy target. In graph after carefully and simply explained graph, Bivens walks the reader through the historical trajectory of these and other economic developments that have come to define the current situation.

Health insurance coverage remains stuck at 1971 levels. The value of the minimum wage has risen in the past couple of years to match its 1960 level. The number of union workers has dropped from 26 percent of the labor force in 1973 to 13 percent in 2009.

The historical sweep of those and many more trend lines are the key to the book, which is a light, convenient resource for anyone seeking to put the continuing crisis in context. Bivens illustrates again and again that this past recession and the trends of the past 30 to 40 years, when the postwar gains that created the broad American middle class began to fade away, were not mere happenstance.

"The economy that generated subpar outcomes before the Great Recession and that turned a housing bubble into an economic catastrophe," Bivens argues, "was designed, specifically, to guarantee that the powerful reaped a larger share of the rewards of overall economic growth. And in this purpose it succeeded."

The author urges the reader to think of the U.S. economy as "a patient suffering from chronic ailments driven largely by bad choices—smoking, eating unhealthy foods, and not exercising." To heal the immediate wounds is fine, but then the patient needs to change overall behavior. "Clear economic remedies exist," he writes, "but politics and ideology lie in the way."

**CECILIO MORALES** has covered federal policy as a journalist in Washington, D.C., since 1984 and is currently executive editor of the *Employment and Training Reporter*.

# CLASSIFIED

## Lecture

**LECTURE BY SANDRA SCHNEIDERS, I.H.M.**, at Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Ind., on Saturday, Sept. 24 at 11:30 a.m. Schneiders's lecture, titled "The Future of Religious Life," is sponsored by the Center for Spirituality and is free to the public. For more information, see [www.saintmarys.edu/spirituality](http://www.saintmarys.edu/spirituality) or call (574) 284-4636.

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**POSITION IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.** Yale Divinity School seeks to make a tenure-track appointment in the field of systematic theology, to begin July 1, 2012. In an ecumenical environment Yale Divinity School prepares students for ministry in diverse Christian churches and for a wide range of professional involvements, including higher education, law, medicine, management and public service. A Ph.D. (or its equivalent) and strong potential as a teacher are required. The successful candidate will have expertise in systematic theology informed by the history of Christian thought (including but not limited to the modern period). An interdisciplinary perspective, utilizing contemporary academic approaches such as cultural studies, critical, feminist, social or political theory for theological study, is also a plus. A letter of application with curriculum vitae and a list of three references should be submitted by Oct. 15, 2011, to:

Dean Harold W. Attridge, Yale Divinity School, 409 Prospect Street, New Haven, CT 06511-2167. Yale University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer. Yale values diversity in its faculty, staff and students and especially encourages applications from women and underrepresented minorities. Applications begin to be considered Oct. 1, 2011.

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# LETTERS

## Vietnam and Afghanistan

I could not agree more with your editorial, "Out of Afghanistan" (8/15). A Vietnam veteran, I graduated from eight years of Jesuit high school and college and spent three years on active duty. While in Vietnam I had a clear conscience about our involvement in that war. But now with hindsight I wish we had never done it. The good that may have happened is that the United States inherited a wonderful population of Vietnamese refugees. We need to bring our men and women home, the sooner the better.

JEROME RIGGS  
Dana Point, Calif.

## How to End Wars

Kudos for "The New Americanism" (8/1), especially its mention of the expenses of the Pentagon and "war making." I have heard that the United States has over 750 bases worldwide. I wonder if the American people know anything of the cost of running those bases. Imagine what we could do with the savings if three quarters of them were closed. One partial solution to the military expenses would be a constitutional amendment requiring that in the event of war every son, daughter, niece and nephew of the president, congressmen and senators would be drafted and serve in the combat front lines until the war is over. "Necessary" wars would suddenly become unneces-

sary, even unthinkable. It will never happen, but we can hope a courageous reporter will raise that question during the coming campaign.

GEORGE SWILLEY  
Pearland, Tex.

## Where Were the Rest of Us?

"Ahead of the Story" (8/15) is a courageous editorial, for which we have waited too long. The editors write, "This will require resignations in cases of mendacity and negligence." And we must add: Where resignations are not forthcoming, there must be outright dismissals. There can be no true healing, no hope of true reform, until there is true accountability. The conspiracy of silence that has devastated victims of abuse and corroded our church from within can be stopped only when files are opened, abusers are revealed and leaders can be called to account. The German bishops have provided an exemplary model for a clean break with the past. But this accountability goes beyond bishops and abusers to touch everyone in the faith community. What did each of us do or fail to do to enable this culture to flourish? How must we act differently in the church we want to become? None are exempt from the examination of conscience.

FRANCIS PIDERIT  
New York, N.Y.

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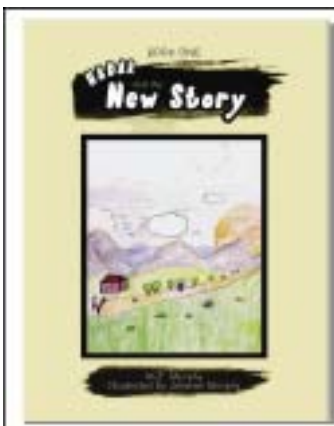
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## Austria Beats Germany

In response to "Ahead of the Story" (8/15), true reform must realign power in the church. Sexual abuse is always about abuse of power. The editorial looks in the wrong place for meaningful change. Do not look to Germany, where the "independent" investigation shared the weaknesses of

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the John Jay Report: the investigators were limited to examining only those documents the bishops had purged. Look rather to Austria, where over 300 of its 4,200 priests have pledged to take part in a "Call to Disobedience" in which they will: pray for reform at every liturgy; welcome to the Eucharist all believers of goodwill, including those remarried outside the church; allow lay preachers; speak openly about allowing married and women priests; oppose parish mergers. Rather than bring in visiting priests to offer multiple Masses on weekends and holy days, they will offer a Liturgy of the Word followed by distribution of Communion with a woman presiding. All these structures would make abuse harder to commit and cover up.

MARY WELLS  
Toronto, Ont., Canada

### Saving the Poor

In response to "The New Americanism" (8/1), I am a moderate conservative who has never read Ayn Rand and never will; but I believe that the size and scope of the federal government with its crushing debt is a threat to our communitarian ties. The federal government has encroached on housing, schools, health care and other areas and left them weakened. It has a role to play, but it cannot play that role if it tries to do everything. It is hard to believe the poor and vulnerable will be better off if we ignore the spending sprees of politicians in both parties. My critique of government spending is rooted, I believe, in my Catholic and Jesuit education and spirituality. What is your plan on how to save the poor from runaway spending?

JOSH DECUIR  
Baton Rouge, La.

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# A Recipe for Reconciliation

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A), SEPT. 4, 2011

Readings: Ez 33:7-9; Ps 95:1-9; Rom 13:8-10; Mt 18:15-20

*"If two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them" (Mt 18:19)*

Some years ago one of the sisters with whom I lived overheard a very hurtful comment made about her by one of her co-workers. For weeks, the rest of us heard her replay the remark again and again, and her hurt feelings grew exponentially. Finally, we urged her to go speak with the person who had offended her to try to smooth things out. After a pause, she confessed, "I think I'd rather have my grievance!"

In today's Gospel, Jesus provides advice to his disciples on how to move step by step toward reconciling grievances within the Christian community. This is not a recipe that can be applied to all situations, but it gives some specific advice on how to resolve differences when one is hurt by another member of the community.

First of all, the initiative almost always comes from the one who has been aggrieved. Hardly ever do reconciliation processes begin with those who have done the harm coming to their senses and asking forgiveness. The first step, says Jesus, is for the one who has suffered the hurt to confront the person who has inflicted it. This is not as easy as it may sound. As my sister found, we often relish retelling the story to others, while being reluctant to speak directly to the one who has hurt us. But there will never be peace as long as the one

harmed allows the hurt to fester and grow by holding on to it and recounting it to others. If, however, the one hurt musters the courage to speak to the other, and if the other has the courage to listen honestly and openly, reconciliation becomes a possibility.

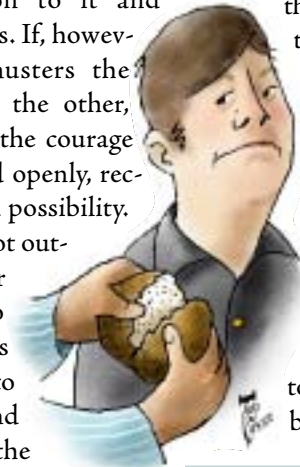
What Jesus does not outline here is that for true reconciliation to occur, the one who is hurt must be willing to offer forgiveness, and the perpetrator of the harm must be willing to acknowledge it truthfully, amend the behavior and make restitution, if possible. Then there is the possibility of a new future of peaceable interrelation between the two.

What if one-on-one confrontation does not work? Then, Jesus says, take one or two others along with you. This is not so that you can gang up on the one who hurt you but rather to establish the truth of what happened. In Jewish tradition, two witnesses are needed for verification. Or, to use today's language, an impartial mediator or two can help establish the truth and can help bring the parties to an agreement.

Jesus anticipates that the disciples will press him further: But what if that doesn't work either? Then, Jesus says, involve the whole community, since any rupture in relationships within the Christian community affects all the members. Note that in verse 18 the whole community has a role in binding

and loosing offenses (see Mt 16:19). If this strategy fails as well, Jesus then says to treat the offender as "a Gentile or a tax collector."

At first this may seem to mean that the offender should be excluded from the community. But when we look at the way Jesus befriended and ate with such people (see Mt 8:5-13; 9:9-13; 11:19; 15:21-28), it may be that Jesus is asking us to be willing to sit and break bread together, even when we



## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Pray for the grace to start a process of reconciliation with someone who has offended you.
- Ask Jesus to give you a listening ear to be able to repent of ways you have offended others.
- Has your faith community made a commitment to pray intentionally for peace?

have irreconcilable differences. It is important to note that the Gospel text does not indicate the nature of the offense. The strategy outlined in today's Gospel would not work for every kind of offense.

Finally, Jesus urges the community to pray together for reconciliation. The animosity melts away when parties to a grievance can agree to pray for resolution. When they can genuinely pray for good for the other, their prayer is already granted.

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# Endless Forgiveness

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A), SEPT. 11, 2011

Readings: Sir 27:30–28:7; Ps 103:1-12; Rom 14:7-9; Mt 18:21-35

*“How often must I forgive?” (Mt 18:21)*

**A** survivor of domestic violence trusted me with her struggle with today’s Gospel. She felt she could not forgive her husband for his abuse toward her:

As a Catholic, I felt I had a moral responsibility and obligation to forgive [my husband] for his violence at the moment he was about to murder me. I believed I had to imitate Jesus’ final act of love during his crucifixion. I worried that rather than feeling forgiveness I might feel hatred in my heart and that my last words would be to condemn [my husband] to hell for all eternity. I feared that if I failed to forgive him completely before I died, then I might end up in hell myself.

There is a dangerous side to Jesus’ teaching to forgive endless numbers of times. What happens when we are not yet able to forgive? What happens when the offer of forgiveness is not met with repentance and restitution on the part of the offender? There are times, as in cases of domestic violence, when endless forgiveness fuels the cycle of abuse and does not bring peace and reconciliation. Processes of forgiveness and reconciliation are complex and cannot be reduced to simple formulas.

Today’s Gospel is a continuation of last week’s, where Jesus outlines a process for initiating reconciliation when there are ruptures within the

Christian community. He speaks about moving from one-on-one confrontation to mediation to involvement of the whole community. It is in response to this that Peter asks how often one must forgive. He rightly recognizes the difficulties and complications that accompany such processes. Jesus’ response is that there is no limit to the number of times one must try to forgive. There are endless hurts that require endless offers of forgiveness and endless acts of repentance. One must always be ready to do the difficult work of repairing and reconciling.

In the ensuing parable about the servant who is forgiven a great debt, Jesus shifts the emphasis away from the burden and the difficulty of the work of reconciliation, as he calls attention to the utter gratuity of the gift of forgiveness. The only way to respond adequately to such a gift is to pay it forward. The servant can never repay the king, but he can act in the same forgiving manner to those indebted to him. But as the second act of the parable unfolds, we find him doing the exact opposite. Then, in a disturbing turn of events, the king retracts his forgiveness. Most troubling is that this is likened to God’s reneging on forgiveness if we do not

forgive from the heart. This verse recalls the ending of the prayer that Jesus teaches his disciples—“Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Mt 6:12)—with the added admonition that our ability to offer forgiveness is intimately related to our ability to receive it (6:14-15).

The point is not that God is fickle about forgiveness, taking it back if we do not do likewise, nor that God is vindictive if we fail to follow the divine lead. Rather, the parable is a stark warning of the consequences of letting our hearts become solidified in unforgiveness. A heart hardened in revenge sets in motion endless cycles of violence. The parable exposes the way that our choice to forgive (or not) redounds upon us. If we try to forgive and pray for the ability to forgive even when we are not yet able to, we open

## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- On this anniversary of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, pray for the ability to forgive whatever seems unforgivable.
- Ask Jesus to open your heart even more fully to divine compassion.
- Pray to know when to leave an abusive situation when offers of forgiveness are not matched by repentance by the perpetrator.

ourselves all the more to the experience of God’s tender mercy toward us, enabling us to extend that mercy and compassion toward others. Nothing we can do can take divine forgiveness away from us, but we can do things that hinder its powerful effect on us.



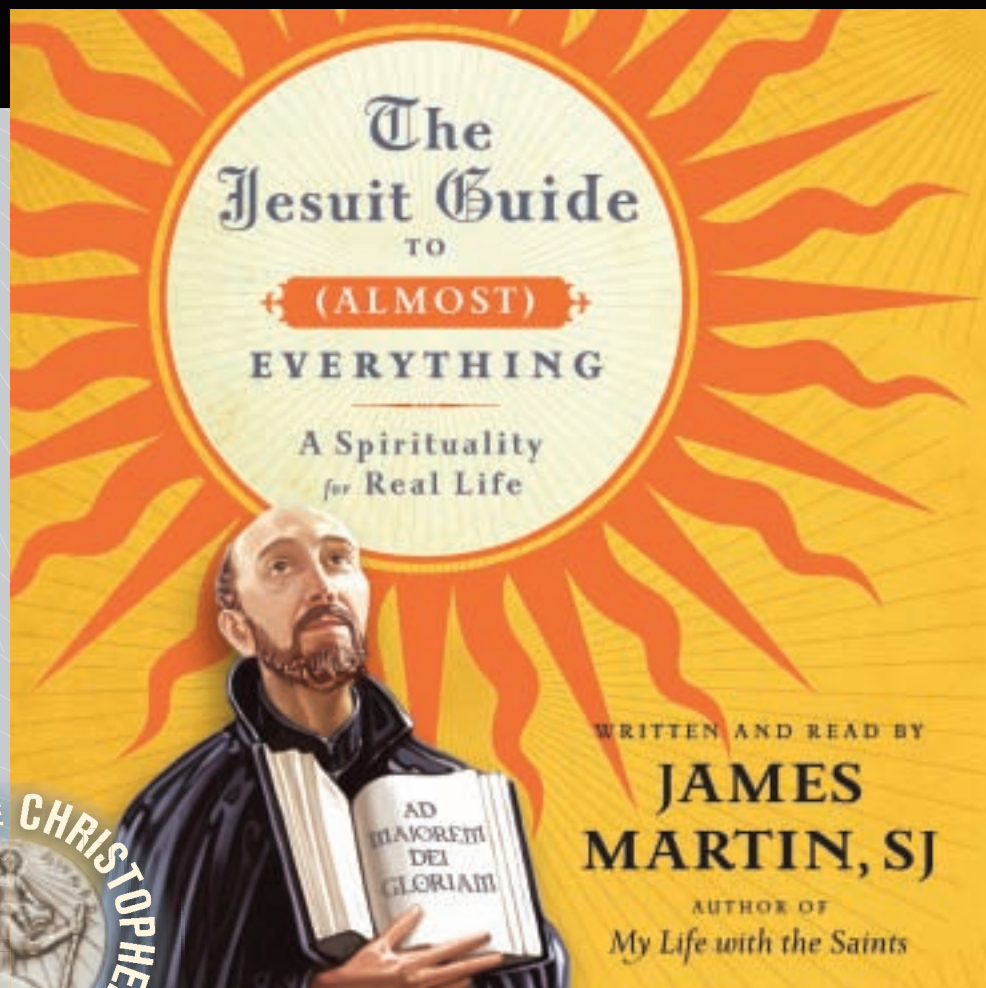
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