

America

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The New Evangelization

DONALD WUERL

Leaving Guantánamo
LUKE HANSEN

OF MANY THINGS

When I was 17, my friends and I spent countless Friday nights milling about the large wooden island in my parents' kitchen and debating the merits of going to Friendly's, a local ice cream shop, versus going bowling. More often than not, we'd get sidetracked—talking about English class, track practice or wondering about our future—and spend a not-altogether-unpleasant evening draped over the wooden kitchen chairs and drinking strawberry-chocolate milk. We felt so close to adulthood, a state of being we both yearned for and scorned.

As we talked, my younger sister, Elizabeth, then 11, would wander in and out of the room, listening and observing more than I knew, and occasionally piping up if the conversation turned to important matters like "The Brady Bunch." One day, she made a comment that was unusually insightful for someone her age, causing one of my friends to look at her with surprise. "Wait, aren't you, like, 6?" The ultimate insult to an 11-year-old.

And although I was more certain about Elizabeth's age, I continued to treat her like a little sister. This meant, of course, that I loved her dearly, admired her intelligence and work ethic and tried to set a good example through my own actions. Of course, this also meant some teasing and testing the limits of her gullibility. (Luckily, she no longer can be convinced that tie-dyed T-shirts turn one's skin different colors.) Once, when she was a toddler, someone asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up. She replied: "Kerry." I took that as a sign I was doing my job.

But in high school I sometimes forgot, as teenagers tend to do, that there was a world outside of high school. And as my family drove me to cross country practice or calculus projects or community service, it sometimes escaped me that at the same time, Elizabeth was building a life of her

own, despite being dragged along in the minivan through so much of mine.

As the youngest Weber sibling, Elizabeth has been dubbed the perennial baby of the family, no matter her age. So, even as I watched her grow and succeed, as a varsity softball pitcher and high-school valedictorian, then as a summa cum laude college graduate, I sometimes had to stop myself from thinking, "Wait, isn't she, like, 6?" Not because I was surprised by her abilities or intelligence but because time, it seemed, had passed so quickly.

As we grew up, we shared the Sunday comics and occasionally the backseat of a van on a family trip, but we also started to share more details of our lives. We comforted each other, laughed with each other, fought with each other. But as time passed, our age gap seemed to shrink, and my worldview widened. Somewhere along the line, I began learning from her, too. We became friends.

Years later, my high-school friends and I still gather in my parents' kitchen during holiday reunions. These days, however, we are actual adults, though the kind we like to think our 17-year-old selves would have approved of. Our discussions still speculate about our futures, which now include children, spouses and graduate school. My sister continues to come in and out of the room, but when she offers insight well beyond her age, no one is surprised.

She can still volunteer helpful bits of classic TV trivia, but she can also reflect on Immanuel Kant and Thomas Aquinas as she pursues an advanced degree in philosophy—or discuss invitations and china patterns as she prepares for her wedding next year. As she decides on a career path, she acknowledges that her original plan, to be me, might not pan out. But really, that's for the best, because as my mother can attest, one of me is certainly enough. Instead, Elizabeth succeeds every day in becoming beautifully, wonderfully herself.

KERRY WEBER

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Cover: Young adults from Colorado Springs, Colo., listen to a catechetical presentation during World Youth Day in Madrid in August. Photo: CNS/Paul Haring)

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ON THE WEB

Maryann Cusimano Love writes on the troubling aftermath of September 11. Plus, samples of **Christian rock** and a **roundtable podcast** with the editors. All at americamagazine.org.



‘You Visited Me’

On Judgment Day, according to the dramatic narrative in Matthew’s Gospel, the Son of Man will proclaim that every time a person visited someone in prison he or she actually visited Jesus Christ himself. This identification is at the heart of the Christian religion and, in some ways, its most radical teaching. The State of Arizona has made it harder to do the right thing. It now charges a one-time \$25 fee to visit a relative or friend in prison.

Although advertised as a “background-check fee” to finance background investigations of the visitors, its real purpose is to help meet the cost of maintaining the prison system, with its over 40,000 inmates spread out in 15 prison complexes throughout the state.

For some visitors, \$25 is not a lot of money. For others, many of whom are from poor families and travel long distances to prisons in remote areas, it is. In one instance, a woman spent two months and \$200 to arrange a visit of four to her brother.

The fee is a bad idea for three reasons. First, visitors are a vital part of any rehabilitation process and should be encouraged, especially when the prisoner has children. Charged extra, some will not come. Second, for the inmate and the families, it is still another humiliation. Third, prisons protect the whole society, so the whole society should support them with taxes; family members of prisoners should not be required to pay extra. The United States, with 2,292,133 adults behind bars, is already known for having the highest percentage of its population locked up (732 for every 100,000 people). Our society will be judged on how it treats them.

Cheating Lessons

Several U.S. school districts spent the summer embroiled in scandals over cheating on student tests—not by students but by teachers. In Pennsylvania, state authorities tagged 89 schools for suspiciously high numbers of erasures on tests. Erasure analysis is the typical way standardized tests are examined for possible tampering. In tampering, errors are erased and the correct answers inserted to raise students’ scores. In Washington, 41 schools had excessive erasures; in Atlanta, 44 schools were involved and 178 educators, of whom nearly half confessed to tampering.

These scandals raise hard questions that test the judgment and resolve of educators, parents and society at large. Does uncovering cheaters among educators serve the schools by identifying the very employees who buckle under the stress of the job, which includes preparing stu-

dents for statewide tests? Maybe. Stress does not excuse cheating, a serious act that undermines public trust. Just consider how the public would react to a university, law school or medical school that altered its students’ test results.

Yet the salaries of professors at colleges and professional schools are not determined by their students’ scores. The sheer number of educators involved in the school cheating scandals may be evidence not merely of the moral lapse of a few, but of a system-wide stress fracture. As they make decisions about teachers’ salaries, promotions and future contracts, school districts may be overemphasizing student scores. Given the strong influence of family, language and culture on a child’s ability to learn, it seems unrealistic to hold educators solely responsible. If that is the problem, then school districts ought to find better ways by which to measure teacher performance, adding to student test scores classroom teaching evaluations, peer reviews and more.

An Unnatural Disaster

When Hurricane Irene finished her devastating run along the eastern seaboard, recovery crews from utility companies did not fan out across the region. They focused their efforts on those communities that were hardest hit. Likewise, proportionate attention must be paid to those most damaged by the course of the nation’s ongoing foreclosure crisis and jobless recovery. For African-Americans this disaster has had all the economic and social symptoms of a major depression—without the emergency response such a crisis normally provokes.

The August jobs report of the U.S. Department of Labor indicated zero job growth, a shock even in this era of diminished expectations. But the news was worse for African-Americans. Unemployment hit a 27-year high, surging to 16.7 percent, more than twice the 8 percent unemployment endured by white Americans. The job creation efforts of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act have essentially bypassed African-Americans.

The economic devastation of the last few years has completed a reversal of the historic gains in income, home ownership and employment that African-Americans made during the Clinton administration. In Washington, how to appropriately respond to the nation’s economic crisis should be at the top of every agenda of every meeting. But presuming that this recession is affecting all communities the same way makes a poor beginning. Since African-American communities have been particularly hard hit, the federal and state response—specifically in job creation, mitigating services and nutrition aid—should reflect that reality.

A State of Their Own

Later this month the United Nations will vote on statehood for Palestine. It appears the vote will take place in stages. First, a draft resolution will be presented to the Security Council, where the United States is expected to veto the proposal. If the veto is cast, then a resolution will be made for the General Assembly to recognize Palestine as an observer state. With that status, though lacking full membership, Palestine will be able to participate in General Assembly debates and to belong to other U.N.-system organizations. The main rationale the administration offers for casting the veto is that Palestinian independence ought to be settled in negotiations with Israel. Tying Palestinian statehood to negotiations is bogus. The two parties may be able to negotiate lesser issues, but Palestinian sovereignty and independence should not be negotiable.

In 1948 Israel did not wait for U.N. recognition or negotiation with its Arab neighbors before declaring independence. The U.N. Partition Plan for Palestine had projected Jewish and Arab states with a separate international zone around Jerusalem. As the British Mandate was about to expire in May 1948, David Ben-Gurion, executive head of the World Zionist Organization, declared the establishment of the modern state of Israel. During the Mandate and the subsequent Israeli War of Independence against neighboring Arab states, irregular Israeli fighters using terror tactics seized the territory, driving more than 700,000 Palestinians out of more than 400 villages and urban neighborhoods. U.N. requirements for minority protections were flagrantly violated. After 63 years, Palestinians should not have to wait any longer to enjoy their natural right to self-governance and statehood. Above all, their independence should not be dependent on Israeli agreement.

Claims by the United States that statehood should wait on negotiation are especially offensive. Previous rounds of negotiation and hope of negotiation have led to further Israeli confiscation of Palestinian land and water. Settlements have pushed farther and farther into the West Bank. Israel has seized more Palestinian land for its security barrier, settler highways and military zones. Palestinian homes have been demolished as illegal, and settlers' forceful occupation of others has been upheld by the Israeli military. In previous negotiations, Israel always retained the upper hand. The piecemeal transfer of West Bank territory under the 1993 Oslo Accords left Israel in control of most of the West Bank. When it came to implementing Oslo, Israel repeatedly demanded that the Palestinians fulfill their part of

the bargain first and then set new conditions before it would implement its own responsibilities.

U.S. policy also assumes that this country can successfully mediate a final status agreement between the two sides. But the Obama administration has failed to make headway even on the smallest issue. The Netanyahu government, for example, has flagrantly rebuffed the president's repeated efforts to prevent further settlement construction and confiscations in East Jerusalem. Though Prime Minister Netanyahu has lately said he would take the 1967 ceasefire lines as a basis for negotiation, at an earlier televised White House meeting he contemptuously rejected President Obama's proposal along those lines as a starting-point for talks.

For those serious about finding a negotiated end to the conflict, U.N. recognition of Palestinian statehood makes very good sense as an incentive for productive talks. It will help create some leverage for Palestine in addressing issues that will have to be negotiated eventually, like final borders, Israeli security, Jerusalem, refugees and water. As a sovereign state, Palestine would be empowered under international law to demand an end to Israeli occupation and to place its claims before international courts. Its membership in international organizations would aid the further development of Palestinian state structures and help bring more pressure to bear on Israel to agree to a just and lasting settlement. The United States has failed to provide that kind of pressure. It is time to see whether, with broad international support for Palestinian statehood, the Palestinians may at least enter into negotiation on a more equal status with the Israelis.

The Palestinian Authority has gone far to make a peaceful transition to statehood possible. Most observers recognize the success of the Palestinian prime minister, Salam Fayyad, in creating effective government on the West Bank, reducing corruption and shaping an able security force that is well coordinated with Israeli forces. At the same time, private enterprise has prospered in the territory with economic growth (G.D.P.) at an annual rate of 8 percent. Palestinian leaders, including President Mahmoud Abbas, have pledged that popular demonstrations on the occasion of the U.N. vote will be nonviolent and security will be maintained. Palestinians have come of age. It is past time to welcome Palestine into the community of nations.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

U.S. POVERTY

No Sign of Recovery As Unemployment Persists

The U.S. Census Bureau reported on Sept. 13 the highest number of Americans living in poverty in the 52 years it has collected such estimates. More than 2.6 million additional Americans dropped below the poverty line in 2010. Children were particularly hard hit. The Census Bureau found that 22 percent of children were living in poverty last year, up from 20.7 percent the year before. The poverty threshold for a family of four was \$22,113 in 2010.

According to the Census report, median household income declined in 2010 while the poverty rate increased, indicating continuing stress on the nation's working poor and middle class. There were 46.2 million people in poverty in 2010, up from 43.6 million in 2009, the fourth consecutive annual increase. Real median household income in the United States in 2010 was \$49,445, a 2.3 percent decline from the 2009 median. The number of people without health insurance in the United States rose by almost one million to 49.9 million. Just under 31 percent of U.S. Hispanics were uninsured in 2010, compared with 20.8 percent of African-Americans, 18.1 percent of Asians and 11.7 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

In a year when unemployment remained persistently above 9 percent

and "real" unemployment—the comprehensive count of the unemployed, "discouraged workers" and part-time workers who would prefer to be full-time—remained almost double that level, the nation's official poverty rate



rose to 15.1 percent. That is up nearly a full percent from 2009's 14.3 percent and the third consecutive annual increase in the poverty rate. The number of people living in "deep poverty"—that is, with incomes below half

AFGHANISTAN

Nine Million Threatened by Hunger

While government corruption, NATO air strikes gone awry and brutal attacks by Taliban insurgents gather the most headlines, another crisis of major proportions is stalking Afghanistan. After a third year of drought and significant cutbacks in resources from the United Nations World Food Program, hunger may place as many as 1.5 to 2 million people in northern and western Afghanistan at risk of starvation this fall. That is in addition, reports the U.N., to 7.3 million around the coun-

try who already live under conditions of famine.

The most vulnerable households are rapidly using up food reserves. An estimated 73 percent of the population in affected areas say that they will have access to food for less than two months. The hunger crisis is expected to last until the end of next year's harvest in August 2012. And according to humanitarian agencies working in Afghanistan, hunger is not the only concern. The few water resources that have not dried up are often contaminated, which leads to heightened risk

of disease. Outbreaks of acute diarrhea have been reported across the country, a mild illness in the West but potentially fatal among malnourished Afghan children.

In a normal year, Afghanistan produces 4.5 million tons of wheat and imports another million. The drought has led to a decrease of almost 1.9 million tons of wheat this year. That means much more wheat must be secured from other sources during a period of historically high commodity prices. The high food prices, crop reductions and funding cuts for food programs planned for 2012 is likely to create growing food scarcity in often inaccessible villages.

"The areas affected by drought are



Breakfast at a shelter in Mount Clemens, Mich., Jan. 17

of the poverty line—hit a record high of 20.5 million.

Calling the number of uninsured people “intolerably high,” Carol Keehan, D.C., president and chief executive officer of the Catholic

Health Association, said the newly released statistics “demonstrate as clearly as ever the need for a strong, sustainable safety net.”

“Policymakers concerned for human dignity and the common good should keep our nation’s vulnerable persons in mind as they deliberate about how best to reduce debt and develop a sensible budget framework,” she said in a statement on Sept. 13. “Such steps should be taken without harming vulnerable people or imperiling the ability of health care providers to deliver the best possible care to all who need it.”

The U.S. South appears to have been hit the hardest in the last year. The South showed “significant increases in both the poverty rate and the number in poverty—16.9 percent and 19.1 million in 2010—up from 15.7 percent and 17.6 million in 2009.” The Census Bureau reports that since 2007 real median household income has declined 6.4 percent. It is

now 7.1 percent below the median income peak in 1999.

According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, the “grim” poverty figures probably would have been worse were it not for government interventions like the extension of unemployment insurance in 2010. That measure alone kept 3.2 million more Americans from falling below the poverty line, said Robert Greenstein, president of the center.

“All of that raises the stakes,” Greenstein said in a statement released on Sept. 13, “for the decisions that President Obama and Congress will make in coming months about whether to extend initiatives that were designed to address hardship during the recession, as well as whether to abide by a principle that the Bowles-Simpson commission report established that deficit-reduction plans should not increase poverty and thus should shield basic low-income assistance programs.”

hard or impossible to reach by road during the winter,” said the food program’s spokesperson, Assadullah Azhari. “So it is critical to get food assistance in place early, before those people are cut off by snowfall.”

Because of a significant funding shortfall, the W.F.P. plans to cut its programs in nearly half of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces. According to the W.F.P., the United States has reduced its funding of the food program’s activities in Afghanistan by more than two-thirds since 2009. “But we continue to appeal to donors for the support that will allow us to ensure all those in need of help in the coming months are assisted,” said Azhari.

W.F.P. estimates that it would take

\$200 million to reach the full seven million Afghans it hopes to assist; at present it is reaching only 3.8 million. “We are having to refocus our activities to continue supporting those who are most in need, especially in provinces that have the largest number of people who are either very highly food insecure or very food insecure,” a W.F.P. spokesperson, Challiss McDonough, said. “We will also continue school feeding in the south because of the role it plays in getting children, especially girls, to enroll and attend school.”

After 10 years of conflict since the ouster of the Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan frequently tops the list of nations that face the risk of food short-

ages and hunger effects on children. In addition to climate extremes like drought and flooding, crop production in Afghanistan is troubled by ongoing violence and unique problems like the need to clear fields of unexploded ordnance left behind by decades of conflict.



An Afghan child eats corn by a roadside in Kabul.

U.S.C.C.B. Backs Alabama Bishops

The chair of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Migration, Archbishop José Gómez of Los Angeles, has released a statement in support of efforts by Alabama's Catholic bishops and other religious leaders to turn back the state's new immigration law. They charge it threatens the ministry of the church. "The Catholic Church provides pastoral and social services to all persons, regardless of their immigration status," Archbishop Gómez said in a statement on Sept. 8, alluding to the First Amendment. "Government should not infringe upon that duty, as America's founding fathers made clear in the U.S. Constitution." Archbishop Gómez called upon the Obama administration and Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform "that balances the rule of law with humanitarian principles."

Abuse Victims Petition International Court

Victims of sexual abuse by members of the clergy, a U.S.-based organization for abuse survivors and a U.S.-based human rights organization formally asked the International Criminal Court in the Hague to investigate Pope Benedict XVI and other top Vatican officials. The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests and their attorneys from the Center for Constitutional Rights, a New York-based organization, presented their petition to the court on Sept. 13. They allege that "Vatican officials tolerate and enable the systematic and widespread concealing of rape and child sex crimes throughout the world." The petition claims the church leaders who bear "the greatest responsibility"

NEWS BRIEFS

The Rev. **Frank Pavone** has been suspended from ministry outside the Diocese of Amarillo, Tex., because of financial questions related to his leadership of Priests for Life.

• On Sept. 12 U.K. **Pax Christi** members held a silent vigil to protest London's Defense and Security Equipment International, the world's largest arms fair.

• The Rev. **Gualberto Oviedo Arrieta** was found stabbed to death in his rectory in the Colombia resort community

of Capurganá, the sixth priest killed in Colombia in 2011. • Leaders of Indonesia's "largest and most influential" **Muslim student group** went to the Vatican to extend an invitation to Pope Benedict XVI to speak at a conference in Bali in 2012. • Bishop **Martin Tetsuo Hiraga** of Sendai, a region hard hit by the earthquake and tsunami in northern Japan on March 11, released a document on Sept. 11 outlining the diocese's reconstruction efforts. • In a small victory for the Catholic Church in India's northern Orissa State, the local government **rescinded demolition orders for five churches** meant to replace the more than 230 churches and chapels destroyed in a wave of anti-Christian violence in 2008.



Remembering the March 11 tsunami

for such cases of abuse are Pope Benedict; Cardinal Angelo Sodano, dean of the College of Cardinals and former Vatican secretary of state; Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, secretary of state and former secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; and Cardinal William J. Levada, current prefect of the congregation. The parties filing the petition said, "This could be the first time that an international court asserts jurisdiction over the Vatican for crimes committed by its agents worldwide."

Gaza 'Unbearable'

The suffering in Gaza remains widespread despite the easing of the Israeli blockade in 2010, say U.N. and church officials. The Rev. George Hernández, pastor of Gaza's Holy

Family Church, said, "The need of the people and the humiliations that they must endure daily are unbearable." Father Hernández said Gaza residents have been "repeatedly subjected to low-level flyovers and even bombardments by the Israeli Air Force." Israeli aerial attacks began after the Popular Resistance Committee in Gaza attacked a bus carrying Israeli soldiers on Aug. 18, killing 14. Sister Davida, whose order, the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary, runs a school in Gaza, said that children were still reeling from the 2008-9 Gaza war. She said: "During the war, several girls died of heart failure. Even today, many children react to aircraft noise with fear and panic."

From CNS and other sources.



Addicted to War?

Recently we took our young children for some American history in Williamsburg, Va., and Yorktown, Va., site of the final battle of the American Revolution. The Yorktown park ranger recounted how George Washington was desperate to end the Revolution; he never imagined the war would last six years. My husband and I exchanged looks. We had just seen a friend off to his second deployment with the Army Reserves; last time it was Iraq, this time Afghanistan.

Today we are involved in endless wars, and no politician seems “desperate” to end them. Instead, discussions revolve around keeping troops in Iraq beyond the mandated withdrawal date. The children were chasing butterflies and picking buttercups, and we had no inkling if anything the tour guide said registered. But the following morning our 4-year-old son told me, “Mom, sometimes we kids fight.”

“I have seen this,” I told him.

“Sometimes kids fight over toys, when we want the same toy.”

“Yes,” I answered, wondering if this was the prelude to a confession of crimes committed against his sisters, until he continued. “But grown ups fight over the earth, and they call it war. And it makes George Washington sad.” I guess he had been listening to the park guide after all. “God doesn’t want us to be warring,” he said. “God wants us to be peace-ing.”

Indeed. Ten years into the U.S. war in Afghanistan, how well are we doing

with our peace-ing?

Certainly the initial goals of the U.S. invasion have been met. The Taliban are no longer the government. Al Qaeda training camps have been destroyed and key terrorists killed or captured, including Osama bin Laden in neighboring Pakistan.

The Afghan government may be riddled with what we view as corruption and nepotism, although many Afghans would call it taking care of their tribe. But it is an elected government, and it does not aid terrorist groups. Just the opposite—Afghan police and security forces every day put their lives on the line in defense of their people.

And herein lies the problem. Violence rates remain high in Afghanistan. The United Nations reported 1,462 civilian deaths in the first half of 2011, up from last year. Most are killed by antigovernment forces using landmine-like improvised explosive devices, detonated when a person steps on a pressure plate. Although “only” 80 civilians were killed by International Security Assistance Force air strikes, and Afghans understand the Taliban and insurgents are responsible for nearly 80 percent of civilian deaths, the United States does not get credit for attempts to protect civilians. Instead it is blamed, in the belief that the presence of U.S. forces in the country exacerbates the violence.

This exposes some of the key problems with counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere. First, it is very difficult for centralized violence (exemplified by U.S. military

organization) to meet effectively and contain highly decentralized violence. Second, one cannot argue persuasively that every life is sacred, especially those of noncombatants, while killing noncombatants. And third, restraining airpower to curb civilian deaths, however laudable, is not building peace.

Catholic peacebuilders know that peacebuilding requires participation, right relationship and reconciliation, but these are in short supply in Afghanistan. Reconciliation efforts to reach a political settlement have apparently so far focused only on the combatants; victims of the violence, many of them women, do not have a seat at the table.

Exclusion from the peace table is what leads women to despair that too often political reconciliation means men with guns excusing and paying off other men with guns for the violence they have done against women. For reconciliation to be just and for any Afghan political agreement to stick, women must have seats at the table.

Endless war is unsustainable. The global war on terror, including the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, has cost the United States \$4 trillion, nearly 30 percent of the U.S. debt, yet many of those in Washington lamenting the budget deficit are unwilling to rein in military spending seriously. The U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, Ryan Crocker, is right when he says, “You can’t kill your way out of an insurgency.” It is time to get peace-ing.

Ten years
into the U.S.
war in
Afghanistan,
how well
are we
doing?

MARYANN CUSIMANO LOVE is a fellow at the Institute for Policy Research and Catholic Studies, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

The Rev. Brian Welter, far right, vocations director for the Archdiocese of Chicago, leads young people in prayer at Maryville Academy in Des Plaines, Ill.



PHOTO: CNS PHOTO/KAREN CALLAWAY, CATHOLIC NEW WORLD



BISHOPS, THEOLOGIANS
AND THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

A New Relationship

BY DONALD WUERL

At an overflow audience at The Catholic University of America in April 2008, Pope Benedict XVI was greeted with sustained and vigorous applause as he spoke to the presidents of Catholic universities and colleges from across the nation. During his talk, the pope emphasized that “education is integral to the mission of the church to proclaim the good news. First and foremost, every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth.”

This year, as Catholic universities and the bishops observe the 10th anniversary of the application of “*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*” for the United States, it seems appropriate to reflect on the role of institutions of education and their participation both in the communion of the church that “*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*” highlighted so strongly and, consequently, in her great teaching mission. The invitation for a renewed collaboration in the proclamation of the faith comes at a new moment—the new evangelization.

It is well recognized that many have fallen away from the practice of the faith and lack a foundation in the essentials of the faith. Pope Benedict addressed several concerns about matters of faith when he spoke to the U.S. bishops at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception during the same week as his address to educators in April 2008.

For many, the Gospel has lost its taste, its freshness and its luster. We live in a time guided by a secularism that treats religion as a purely private matter. It is a time guided by an ingrained consumerism and materialism, by an isolating individualism and a pervading relativism that erode confidence in the truths of faith and in human reason itself. For too many

CARDINAL DONALD WUERL *is archbishop of Washington, D.C.*

people, their religious instruction failed them at several levels. Something went wrong.

But we are not without hope. At the same time, this is an age when many, especially the young, are experiencing a surge of interest in enduring values and a yearning for meaning, purpose and a spiritual life. In my ministry as the archbishop of Washington, D.C., I see evidence of this work of the Holy Spirit every day. Young people ask for the wisdom of the church and seek an introduction to Christ. One particularly powerful sign of this openness to the Gospel occurs annually at the Rally for Life in Washington, when youth from all over the nation—in an increasing number every year—celebrate the dignity of human life, the Gospel of Life. This past year we hosted nearly 40,000 young people, who represent a vibrant future for the church in our country.

There are convincing signs that for many the church stands at a cultural crossroads. As we look to the future, we can follow a pathway indicated by voices of this age that draw much of their inspiration from sources alien to the Gospel, or we can respond with a deeper appreciation of our faith and spiritual heritage and with the confidence that imbues generous and apostolic hearts. This is the new evangelization that Pope Benedict described as “re-proposing” the Gospel to those who are convinced that they already know the faith and that it holds no interest for them. It is the courage to invite our contemporaries to hear the message of Christ all over again, as if for the first time.

Recently, as I celebrated Mass at one of our Newman centers, I was pleased to find the church packed. The students explained that the chaplain had encouraged them to invite their friends. The students thought of themselves as apostles on a campus where witnesses to Christ are few. The new evangelization is all about knowing our faith, having confidence in it and sharing it with others.

Collaborators in the New Evangelization

The new evangelization must be rooted authentically in the good news. This saving message of the Gospel finds its home in the church. Its pastors provide the authentication of the message and verify its life-giving application to the circumstances of our day. Our confidence in the teaching office of the church is grounded in the fact that Christ’s message has been handed down, generation by generation, preserving its integrity and its vitality only through the church that he himself founded, beginning with the apostles and carried on in each age by their successors, the bishops. It is through the teaching office of the church that we can be

sure of the authenticity of the message that we proclaim.

The effort of the bishops to work more collaboratively with teachers, catechists and theologians at all levels of education can be seen in the cooperation of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops with the publishers of catechetical materials to ensure that those materials are comprehensive and faithful to the magisterium. Much of the catechetical revival that we are experiencing across our country can be traced to this successful initiative in which the bishops studied catechetical texts over a number of years and identified 10 doctrinal deficiencies that have hindered the formation of so many in recent decades. Adjusting those texts has already borne significant fruit in the formation of young Catholics.

Bishops do not carry out their ministry in isolation. Among their valuable collaborators are theologians.

Bishops, however, do not carry out their ministry in isolation. Among bishops’ valuable collaborators are theologians, whose privilege it is to explore systematically the truths of our faith according to the ancient adage *fides quaerens intellectum*, faith seeking understanding. As

every student of church history knows, theologians have proven invaluable through the centuries in the refinement and deepening of our understanding of the Gospel. Their contributions are most evident when the explorations of theology build upon the insights of previous generations and are fruitful only when they begin from the known truths of received revelation. Identifying those boundaries of authentic faith, the building blocks of genuine theological progress, constitutes a significant task of the church’s magisterium.

There is a powerful and symbiotic relationship, then, between the bishop and the theologian when both appreciate their respective roles in understanding and transmitting the faith. As Blessed Pope John Paul II explained in “*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*” (No. 29):

Bishops should encourage the creative work of theologians. They serve the church through research done in a way that respects theological method.... At the same time, since theology seeks an understanding of revealed truth whose authentic interpretation is entrusted to the bishops of the church, it is intrinsic to the principles and methods of their research and teaching in their academic discipline that theologians respect the authority of the bishops, and assent to Catholic doctrine according to the degree of authority with which it is taught.

The vibrancy of Catholic theological development is not

hindered by the exercise of the magisterium. Rather, it is the very teaching office that authenticates the fruit of theology.

Given that college- and university-level theological instruction takes place in the real circumstances of today's diminished faith formation, it is necessary to recognize that the student entering the "groves of academe" too often comes in need of evangelization and faith formation more than theological speculation. The sharp blade of precise theoretical investigation and speculation should be affixed to the handle of basic, firm faith formation.

To be sure, as in every academic field, theologians enjoy a legitimate autonomy, but it is an autonomy defined by the standards of their discipline and the boundaries of what is known with certainty. In the case of theology, it is precisely the truths of faith, taught by the magisterium, that constitute the subject matter of their work. It is an academic freedom, like any freedom, that is ordered to the truth and to human flourishing. As the pope affirmed in his talk at Catholic University, appeals "to the principle of academic freedom in order to justify positions that contradict the faith and the teaching of the church would obstruct or even betray the university's identity and mission, a mission at the heart of the church's *munus docendi* [teaching responsibility] and not somehow autonomous or independent of it."

When bishops individually or collectively disagree with a specific theological position or methodology, it is not because they do not understand the task of theology. It is because they do and also recognize their own unique and necessary role.

Catholic Universities at the Meeting Point

During his 2008 talk at The Catholic University of America, the pope observed that a "university or school's Catholic identity is not simply a question of the number of Catholic students. It is a question of conviction—do we really believe that only in the mystery of the Word made flesh does the mystery of man truly become clear?"

As we respond to the call for the new evangelization, there are growing signs of new, constructive cooperation between bishops and theologians at Catholic universities. The bishops' Committee on Doctrine, in collaboration with Catholic University, for instance, has planned a conference in September for bishops and theologians on the intellectual tasks of the new evangelization. As I write, I hope one of the outcomes of this multi-day meeting will be to refocus on the great mission of the church to bring Christ to the world. Another instance of fruitful cooperation, sponsored by both the Committee on Doctrine and the Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame in February 2012, will deal with celibacy and the priesthood. Here again bishops and theologians, including scholars from both seminary and

university faculties, will explore an element of Catholic faith and practice in a way that probably would not be experienced in any secular university setting.

One can envision similar efforts bringing the best of the church's theological expertise to significant issues today from the faith-filled and life-giving Catholic tradition on matters as timely as protecting innocent human life, legitimate types of stem-cell research, marriage, the environment, freedom of conscience and institutional religious freedom. Catholic campuses all over the nation can be centers for the new evangelization providing, in communion with the local bishop, the reasoned exposition of the truth of the church's teaching.

As we seek to make our way through the current cultural crossroads, there are many signs of hope and renewal. Among those signs, bishops and theologians are taking a new look at their relationship and the possibilities offered by their constructive collaboration, as these two examples of academic gatherings demonstrate. When their respective contributions are ordered to the proclamation of the Gospel, grounded in the truths of our faith and the teaching of the church that Jesus founded, bishops and theologians offer a profound contribution to the new evangelization and an irreplaceable gift to our contemporaries: a rejuvenated, fruitful and faithful exposition of the good news of Jesus Christ. **A**

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The Prosecution Rests

Why Darrel J. Vandeveld left Guantánamo

BY LUKE HANSEN

On March 7 President Obama rescinded an executive order from January 2009 that had halted new military charges against Guantánamo detainees. Military tribunals determining the guilt or innocence of some detainees have now resumed under revised procedures. That same month, the president also formalized a system of indefinite detention for a class of detainees who will never be charged or tried in military or civilian court.

Lt. Col. Darrel J. Vandeveld (Army Reserve) worked as a prosecutor in the Office of Military Commissions at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, until he became the second prosecutor to resign from the office because of ethical concerns about the process. Vandeveld, a devout Catholic, had served as lead prosecutor in the case of Mohammed Jawad, a Pakistani youth accused of throwing a hand grenade at U.S. soldiers. He was charged with “attempted murder in violation of the laws of war.” The U.S. military detained Jawad at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan (2002-3) and Guantánamo (2003-9) until his successful petition for a writ of habeas corpus and subsequent release to Afghanistan in August 2009. The army maintains that Jawad was 17 at the time of his arrest, but his family insists that he was closer to 12. Like many Afghans, Jawad has no birth certificate.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, Mr. Vandeveld has served in Bosnia, Africa, Afghanistan and Iraq. After resigning from the Office of Military Commissions, Vandeveld became the Chief Public Defender for Erie County, Pa., in December 2008. He has battled intermittent, chronic insomnia since 2006, when he returned from Iraq. In February he took a medical leave of absence from the public defender’s office to pursue treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder. He has returned to Erie County to work part time as assistant public defender.

How did your assignment to Guantánamo come about?

After the passage of the Military Commissions Act of 2006, the military needed experienced prosecutors who also had the requisite security clearance. There are few of us who possess those two qualifications. When asked if I would go

LUKE HANSEN, S.J., a Jesuit scholastic of the Wisconsin Province, is the volunteer coordinator at Red Cloud Indian School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

Mohammed Jawad speaks to his family after his release from Guantánamo.



to Guantánamo, I never hesitated. This was—if you’ll forgive the expression—an almost “heaven sent” opportunity to seek justice. And by “justice,” on some level, I meant revenge. I had served in several different combat zones, and I had witnessed friends and comrades killed in action. Two of them committed suicide. It is fair to say that I was not unaffected by that. I was angry all the time, and I went to Guantánamo seeking revenge in the only way left open to me: through the legal system.

What was the basic case against Mohammed Jawad?

Jawad, 15 or 16 years old, was living in Miram Shah, Pakistan, when recruiters from Hezbe-i-Islami-Gulbiddin, an Islamist terrorist faction in Afghanistan, approached him. According to what I believed at the time, Jawad was taken to a training camp in the mountains where he received rudimentary training in throwing hand grenades. In December 2003, in a crowded marketplace in Kabul, Jawad allegedly threw a grenade into a jeep carrying two U.S. Special Forces

PHOTO: REUTERS/OMAR SOBHANI

soldiers, and everyone in the jeep was terribly wounded.

Within hours, Afghan police transferred Jawad to American custody. When I received the case, I thought, this is no different from the many street crimes that I have prosecuted. Since Jawad was a kid, he had not been entrusted with any valuable information. He attacked a couple of Americans, which the Military Commissions Act described



as a crime. I filed charges against him, alleging that Jawad had attempted to commit murder in violation of the law of war.

What happened to Mohammed Jawad in U.S. custody?

At Bagram Air Base, Jawad was hooded and shackled, slapped across the face, thrown down flights of stairs and threatened. At Guantánamo, Jawad was placed in the “frequent flyer program.” That meant he was awakened every two hours and moved from cell to cell, which itself could take up to an hour. Army General Jay Hood had issued an order to discontinue the program—calling it ineffective, cruel and ultimately self-defeating, but his order was ignored.

In late 2003 Jawad attempted suicide in the crudest possible way: by banging his head against his cell wall. Guards observed it and let it go on for a period of time. What com-

pounded this inhumanity, however, was the response of the psychologist, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army. Instead of deciding that the interrogations needed to cease and that Jawad required mental health treatment, the psychologist concluded that since Jawad was in a vulnerable position, it would be a good time to interrogate him further. This was not an isolated incident at Guantánamo. It happened again and again.

How did you come to question whether you could continue?

Jawad’s defense counsel, Maj. David J. R. Frakt (Air Force Reserve), convinced me that “murder in violation of the law of war” had never been considered a crime under international law and hence could not be prosecuted under the Military Commission Act. Madeline Morris, a Duke University law professor, in an analysis of the Jawad case, gave such a compelling explication of the law of war and why it was inaccurate and wrong to charge Jawad as I had, that I began to realize, in a moment of epiphany, that I was participating in evil.

What else bothered you about the Jawad case?

My ethical concerns intermeshed with my moral concerns as a believing Catholic. We are commanded to love our enemies, and while that doesn’t mean simply allowing them to kill us, it does require encouraging them to a reciprocal love through humane treatment. Jawad was a juvenile when he arrived at Guantánamo. By international agreements we not only signed but championed, he should have been treated as an unformed adolescent who was himself, in some sense, a victim of war. We should have segregated him from adults, provided rehabilitation and reintegration services and afforded him access to a system of justice designed to meet those ends. Instead we ignored his status as a juvenile and sought to punish him as a terrorist.

How quickly did you come to this realization?

My ethical and moral sense developed over time as I re-examined my Catholic faith and came to realize that we will never prevail against violent Islamists by attempting to kill,

capture or imprison all of them. That is a prescription for what we have now: a never-ending conflict that has depleted America’s material resources, coarsened our population and degraded our commitment to justice and the rule of law. It took me too long to recognize these tragic

consequences of bloodlust, but once I finally did understand how badly we had erred morally, I did act, with a lot of encouragement from others.

So how did you proceed with the case?

I tried to convince the new chief prosecutor that we should

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Maryann Cusimano Love
on the legacy of September 11.
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enter into a plea agreement with Jawad, which would allow Jawad to serve some short additional time at Guantánamo, during which he would receive rehabilitative services, and ultimately be repatriated to his country of origin. I did not believe that Jawad was guilty, but because the specter of indefinite detention had been raised, I wanted to avoid a situation in which he continued to be held indefinitely with no resolution of his fate.

I brought the idea of a plea agreement to the chief prosecutor, who rejected it vehemently. He looked at me as if I had abandoned my allegiance to America and joined the enemy's cause. This is when I realized that I simply could not continue to participate in this travesty. Not knowing where to turn, I sent an e-mail to John Dear, a Jesuit priest.

Why Father John Dear?

I had read some of John's books because they are joyful and optimistic. Reading about peace and the nonviolent Jesus can provide a kind of hope for humankind—even for someone committed to the war. I wrote: "I am at the Military Commissions. I am gravely concerned about what we are doing as a country and what I am doing here at Guantánamo. What should I do?"

I never really expected him to respond, but within 24 hours, John returned a message that floored me. In essence: "Quit. Leave Guantánamo. The entire world knows that

what goes on there is a farce. Do not participate in evil. Leave and start your life over." I was 47 at the time, a reservist, established in my career, with a family. It did not seem as easy as that. I was afraid. It would have required a true leap of faith that I was not sure I could make.

What gave you the courage to finally resign your position?

I went to St. Anselm's Abbey in Washington, D.C., and stayed there for three days. In addition to praying the Liturgy of the Hours, I read three books: John Dear's *A Persistent Peace*, Nelson Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, and a collection of Martin Luther King Jr.'s speeches. I basically spent 72 hours in constant prayer. I barely slept. At the end of it, I felt—and this is the first time I have said this—I felt touched by the hand of God. My path became clear.

John Dear served in a parish of military people—some had sons and daughters in Iraq. Yet John told them truths that they did not want to hear, and he got into trouble for that. This is what I had done on a much smaller scale. Having read John's story, I emerged as someone who knew that I could make the decision to live as Christ wants us to.

Martin Luther King said that we are sometimes faced with great moral questions, and we have the ability to act or to refuse to act—but the moment we refuse to act is the death of the spirit. Reading these books and praying intense-



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ly worked an inner transformation. I have no idea what led me to St. Anselm's Abbey, but it changed me forever.

You had shared your concerns with defense counsel, and you were called by the defense to testify in the Jawad case. How did your commission colleagues respond?

After I testified, the Army began its campaign to kick me out. They tried to portray me as some sort of traitor. They sent me to Walter Reed for a mental status evaluation. I had to meet with a psychiatrist for the first time in my life. It was humiliating.

When I walked out of the psychiatrist's office, I looked at a group of soldiers—young kids—waiting to see the psychiatrist. They were anguished; there was so much pain. If I needed a sign that I was doing the right thing, this was it. I saw the damage that war can cause, and I felt shame for what those young soldiers experienced.

How would you evaluate President Obama's efforts to close Guantánamo?

President Obama ordered Guantánamo closed for the right reasons. It is a recruiting tool for terrorists. Because we have systematically disregarded international law and abused human rights in the so-called "global war on terror," we are more at risk for terrorist attacks than ever before. It is a travesty that we continue to act lawlessly and forfeit our own

rights simply because politicians tell us we should be afraid. President Obama has succumbed to those arguments. But Christ told us time and again in the New Testament: be not afraid.

President Obama claims that the revised Military Commissions give due process to the accused. What is your view?

The revisions to the Military Commissions Act were well intentioned and favorable, but the commissions can only be seen as a second-class, second-rate vehicle intended to secure convictions, not to strive for the truth. If the detainees are not to be tried in regular, domestic federal courts, then the only acceptable alternative would be to try the detainees who merit prosecution before military courts-martial. Prolonged or indefinite detention promotes arbitrariness and a denial of human rights.

Where do you find hope?

In my work with the Public Defender's Office, I find hope every time I stand up in court and urge the judge to see the human behind the shackled, prison-clothed person in front of him or her and to seek to do justice. This is what sustains me. Each day at work, my desire is to see God in everything and to recognize that all of us are better than the worst acts we commit. This is the beginning of my spiritual journey. **A**

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MUSIC | KERRY WEBER

SHOW A LITTLE FAITH

My slightly guilty aversion to Christian rock



I was going through a difficult few weeks not long ago. In an attempt to cheer me, a good friend sent me a link to a song via an online chat. I appreciated the gesture, but I was also skeptical. Once, when pressed by an icebreaker game at a retreat, I rated my friend's taste in music as a 3 out of 5. And because it was a retreat, I was being kind.

"Am I going to like this?" I typed.

"It's a God song," she wrote back. "And it's apropos."

A good song can be an excellent source of consolation during tough times, and during those weeks I found refuge in songs from Bruce Springsteen, the Old 97's and Hank Williams. I also sought refuge in prayer. I found an old bookmark with the "Memorare" on it and recited it

fiercely, more like a threat than a meditation. "Never was it known that anyone...was left unaided," I warned the Blessed Mother.

I had my rock music and my prayer, but little desire to combine the two in the form of the Christian rock song my friend recommended. Still, I clicked on the link and listened. The song wasn't going to replace Springsteen's "Thunder Road" as my all-time favorite. But thematically at

least, it was, as my friend suggested, apropos, its message meant to be inspiring. The music itself, not so much: guitars, some power chords, a predictable drum beat. Meh.

I often notice the spiritual themes in the music of secular musicians like U2

or Springsteen, and I know both Bob Dylan and Elvis Presley have recorded religious albums. I admire many artists who incorporate Christian themes into mainstream music. But even after attending 16 years of Catholic school and dozens of concerts, the words "Christian rock" still make me cringe.

Perhaps this Catholic schooling is the reason, at least in part, why I also feel slightly guilty about this aversion. I'm not sure why I have such a visceral reaction, because a part of me wants to like Christian rock, which combines two things I love. But while it works as a spiritual aid for some, I have not found many songs I enjoy.

Product or Poetry?

I bristle at what much of Christian rock music today seems to imply: that I need a hook in order to be drawn into my faith or a relationship with God. Too often bands or artists labeled as Christian rock smack of a giant marketing scheme rather than a meaningful invitation to communion within a large and wonderful faith. The music sends the message that I am unable to observe and absorb the joyful nature of a relationship with Christ without generic guitar sounds and repetitive lyrics to encourage me. It is as though the musicians think that if I get a Christian rock tune stuck in my head, the tenets of the

faith will get stuck there too; I'll get hooked.

Maybe there's truth to that. But in

order to have a tune stick in my head, I have to want to listen to it.

Most Christian rock feels more like product than poetry—either the lyrics fail to capture the nuance of faith and the complicated reality of life, or the melodies don't capture my attention.

ON THE WEB

Samples of Christian rock.
americamagazine.org/culture

Christian rock never seems as explicit and soulful as the best old country songs, and it isn't as subtly spiritual as the best rock and roll. Whether I'm listening at a retreat or while scanning the radio, I have rarely heard a Christian rock song that I wanted to listen to over and over, or that made me want to blast it at full volume driving down an open road.

Too many Christian rock musicians put the message ahead of the music and, while I commend the passion for the faith, their songs come off as overly earnest. Christian rock tries to make Christ cool, but Christ's message—that he died for our sins and loves us unconditionally—is radical with or without power chords.

Often, the songs sound like what an adult thinks a teenager would like to hear. They are just too literal and try so hard to be sincere that they cross the line into saccharine, leaving little to the Catholic imagination. The worst of them try to channel the blues

but lack the genuine sadness; to capture the sound of Gospel but lack the soul; to be rock and roll but cannot convey that sense of rebellion. That's a shame, because sorrow, soul and rebellion are important parts of the Christian life. We are meant to be countercultural, following in the footsteps of Jesus, the ultimate rebel, but that does not come across in most Christian rock.

There's Always 'Rosalita'

I am not the first person to yearn for a better combination of religion and

rock. That person was Larry Norman, a rock musician who, with his band People!, opened for the likes of The Doors and the Grateful Dead. Norman was a Christian. When he started combining his equally solid faith and music, he earned the title

cheesy and entirely genuine. It's catchy and, somehow, it works.

These days, most Christian rock lacks the humor present in that song and in some of the more traditional, even fundamentalist, Christian music, like the charming Southern Baptist song "Broadminded." The chorus, from a 1952 album by the country duo the Louvin Brothers, reads: "That word broadminded is spelled s-i-n./ I read in my Bible, they shall not enter in./ For Jesus will answer, 'Depart, I never knew you.'/ That word broadminded is spelled s-i-n." The song warns against gambling, drinking and dancing, among other things. At first hearing, it is a terrifying, threatening song, so perhaps I'm meant to take it more seriously, but its twang and tune make me want to find a dance hall where folks are two-stepping and downing whiskey. If that sends me to hell, at least I'll be tapping my foot on the way there.

Today's Christian rock songs also seem to be attempts to instruct, but

often leave me feeling flat, as if I've just read a toaster manual, whereas the best spiritual songs from secular artists like Dylan and U2 describe a process of cobbling together an imperfect yet more personal faith journey. If a Springsteen song is a hand on my shoulder during troubled times, Christian rock is a street evangelist with a pamphlet, a stranger loudly advertising salvation without really understanding where I'm at. Christian rock talks about praying, but the late Clarence Clemmons's wailing on a saxophone

MY EXCEPTIONS

As with nearly everything, there are exceptions. Here are a few notable songs fellow skeptics of the Christian rock genre might enjoy:

"Turn Around," by Matt Maher. Maher, a Catholic, is both popular and critically acclaimed. This song, and his music in general, is often textured and complicated. It adeptly combines the sort of stories you'd hear in an old country song with the rhythm of a good road trip song.

"The Fox, the Crow, and the Cookie," by mewithoutyou. This song is entirely alt-rock, reminiscent of Bright Eyes, and while it comes from a Christian band, it is actually a retelling of a Sufi folk tale. It's twangy and edgy in all the right places, with a solid but not in-your-face lesson.

"That's All the Lumber," by Ceili Rain. It's hard not to like a song that refers to St. Peter as Pete. Besides, the Celtic sounds are so cheerful and rich, you won't mind the somewhat ominous depiction of heaven.

"Revelation," by Third Day. This song from the Grammy Award-winning band has an anthemic quality and a sound that builds as it goes along. The lyrics are a direct invocation to God for help and direction, though they never say the word.

"Father of Christian Rock"; in the 1970s he opened his own label, Solid Rock. Even so, Norman was shunned by many conservative Christians, perhaps as much for his long, scraggly hair as for his treatment of social themes like racism and poverty. One of Norman's most famous songs, "Why Does the Devil Get All the Good Music?" has the endearing sound and tongue-in-cheek lyrics lacking in most Christian rock today. He sings, "There's nothing wrong with what I play/ 'Cause Jesus is the rock and he rolled my blues away." It's hilariously

during “Rosalita” sounds like prayer.

When I was in high school, a local radio D.J. discussed this particular Springsteen song on air, saying something like, “I could be having the worst day—my car broke down, got a flat tire, my goldfish died—but I hear ‘Rosalita,’ and everything’s ok.” I know what he means, and that is a kind of comfort I haven’t yet found in Christian rock.

During my difficulties I turned to my wonderful family and friends, but, as that D.J. suggested, I also turned to “Rosalita,” blasting the song a bit too loud and singing along with The Boss as he proclaimed, “Someday we’ll look back on this and it will all seem funny.”

It just felt apropos.

KERRY WEBER is an associate editor of *America*.

BOOKS | RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

A CHANGED MAN

MALCOLM X **A Life Of Reinvention**

By Manning Marable
Viking. 608p \$30

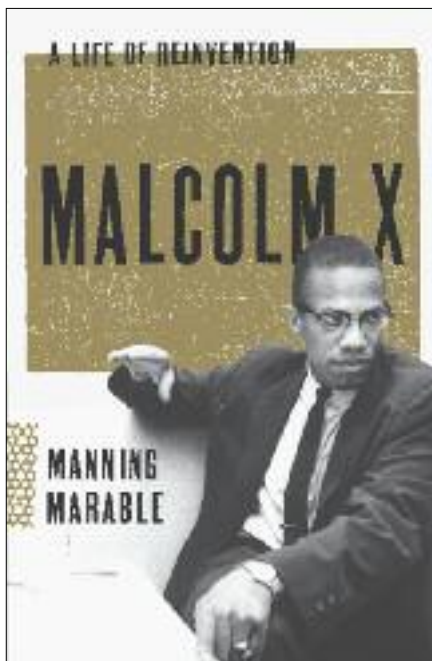
Alex Haley’s *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, the product of a three-year collaboration, had sold over six million copies worldwide by 1977. The ex-convict, reviled as a messenger of hate and shot down in a hail of 21 bullets, had been brought back to life not as a saint but surely as a martyr—and as one of the great voices of a revolutionary era.

To the Columbia University historian Manning Marable, who concluded this new biography, a 10-year project, just before his own death, Malcolm X is a more complex person than the pilgrim of the autobiography. But he is a “yardstick by which all Americans who aspire to leadership should be measured.”

Born Malcolm Little in Omaha in 1925, the son of a Marcus Garveyite activist run over by a streetcar and killed and a mother institutionalized with depression, the young Malcolm was a petty criminal and dope dealer with no education.

Reading widely in prison over six years, he became a convert to a cult version of Islam led by Elijah

Muhammad, who presented himself as God’s messenger and taught that white people are devils and that his followers must withdraw from civic life into the Nation of Islam. Influenced by Antonio Gramsci, who



survived prison by giving himself a purpose, Malcolm read Negro history, Herodotus, Gandhi and Nat Turner and taught himself to debate and challenge authority.

After his release in 1952, Malcolm joined Elijah Muhammad in Chicago,

then moved to Detroit, Philadelphia, Boston and New York training for ministry in the sect, whose membership then numbered fewer than 1,000 nationwide.

Moved by Malcolm’s oratory, wit and rigid discipline—he rose at 5 to pray, did not curse, smoke, drink, eat between meals or pursue women—new recruits drawn from prisons, unemployment lines, ghettos and the working class quadrupled the membership, which numbered 75,000 by 1961. Malcolm also caught the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and police, who found his mockery of white society inflammatory and planted informers in his audiences and bugged his phones.

Malcolm gained and lost in encounters with Bayard Rustin, James Baldwin, Louis Lomax, Maya Angelou, Muhammad Ali and Louis Farrakhan. Martin Luther King Jr., whom Malcolm alternately mocked and respected, met with him just once, for only a minute.

Malcolm stood apart from most of the others in the degree to which each saw him- or herself as an American. He did not identify with the American Dream; and until almost the very end considered Negro leaders who organized voters to support civil rights legislation and opposed violence to be wimpy “Uncle Toms.”

Marable structures his work around a chronology that tracks his subject’s every move, fleshed out with archives and interviews, plus a critical deconstruction of Haley’s *Autobiography*. The theme of character reinvention knits the narrative together as Malcolm Little morphs into Detroit Red, then into Malcolm X and then drops the X.

The conversions are three: the first resulted from his prison reading; the second, the realization that “whites” are brothers, came as he circled the Kaaba on his pilgrimage to Mecca; the third occurred during a 24-week jour-

ney through the Middle East and Africa, in which he came to see himself as a black citizen of the world.

The sub-theme is his rupture with the Nation of Islam and his struggle to rediscover himself one more time as the leader of two smaller movements—Muslim Mosque Inc. and the Organization of Afro-American Unity—before his enemies would kill him.

Marable admires his subject but does not flinch from his weaknesses. Perhaps the turmoil of Malcolm's first 26 years thwarted a better self fighting to emerge. I listened again to passages in my recordings of his speeches in which he turns on his audience like a stand-up comic with his routine on the "House Negro and the Field Negro." When the master is sick the House Negro identifies with the master. He asks, "What's the matter, Massa? We sick?" The Field Negro prays that the master will die. Malcolm ridicules the white American troops in World War

II, outsmarted by the dark-skinned Japanese, who can hide at night.

The worst moment in the story, for me, is in Los Angeles in April 1962, when an attempted arrest of Nation of Islam suspects outside a mosque grew into a melee between mosque members and over 70 police officers. Seven Muslims were shot; one, who tried to surrender, was shot dead from behind. For Malcolm it was time for an eye for an eye. He recruited an assassination team to target L.A.P.D. officers. Fortunately Elijah Muhammad reined him in. But he was ready to murder.

Malcolm turned against Elijah because, in violation of the rules against fornication, the leader had impregnated a series of women. Meanwhile, Malcolm's marriage to Betty Shabazz produced six daughters, including twins born after his death. But Betty complained he did not satisfy her sexually, and every time a daughter was born, he fled town on business. In his last years he began an affair with

an 18-year-old secretary.

Marable brings the volume to a violent and sickening climax, leaving both the stench of police or F.B.I. collusion in the assassination and a portrait of the Nation of Islam, the most likely culprits, as thugs straight from "The Sopranos." On Feb. 21, 1965, as Malcolm began a lecture at the packed Audubon Ballroom in Washington Heights, someone tossed a smoke bomb; and three men, one with a shotgun, stood up, shot him down and escaped. Marable identifies the three. Only one of them was convicted and sent to prison, along with two men who were in fact not involved. At the trial Betty walked past the defense table and shouted hysterically, "Those two men killed my husband"—the wrong men.

Eventually, the family fell apart. One daughter tried to hire a hit man to kill Louis Farrakhan, who she thought had conspired to kill her father. That daughter's son set fire to Betty's apart-



Janet McKenzie, *Madonna and Child—Boundless Love* (detail), 1999, Oil on canvas, Collection of Francis Cardinal George, OMI, Archbishop of Chicago

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ment in 1997. She died of the burns. In 2011 one of the twins was arrested for stealing from the widow of one of her father's bodyguards.

This book is Marable's greatest achievement.

I stand by what I wrote in "Malcolm X Lives" (*America* 4/22/67):

...in a quick, tragic existence he achieved in heroic manner what society usually credits to sages and saints: he had changed. He

had come to know, without flinching, the evil in himself and in the world.

But sadness now outweighs my admiration for Malcolm. If only someone could have gotten to him when he was young, kept him in high school and shepherded him into a university, he might still be alive. But who would he have become?

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J., is an associate editor of *America*.

ANN M. BEGLEY

GLASS HOUSES

J. D. SALINGER

A Life

By Kenneth Slawenski
Random House. 464p \$27

In 2010, at the age of 91, Jerome David Salinger died in Cornish, N.H., where he had lived in seclusion for over 50 years, claiming that he needed isolation to keep his creativity intact. Having acquired fame with the publication of the enormously influential *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), he spent the rest of his life avoiding publicity, refusing interviews and thwarting—as best he could—all attempts to publish biographical profiles of him. To be sure, his physical inaccessibility engendered more than the usual degree of curiosity and provoked much resentment—as though readers were owed his presence as well as his written words.

Despite vigorous efforts to protect his privacy, there exist a number of unauthorized accounts, some of them derogatory. To mention just a few, the journalist Joyce Maynard, who had lived with the master of short fiction for almost a year—when he was 53 and she 18—released *At Home in the*

World (1998), in which she reveals details of her relationship with what she describes as an eccentric, controlling personality. Also unflattering, in part, is his daughter Margaret's book, *Dream Catcher: A Memoir* (2000), which her brother, Matthew, discredited. Ian Hamilton's *In Search of J. D. Salinger* (1988), an objective account, is actually a revised version of the biography he had written two years earlier but that his celebrated subject had snatched from the hands of the printer on the grounds that it contained extensive quotations from his personal correspondence. The legal battle that ensued—Salinger v. Random House—resulted in major repercussions for American copyright law.

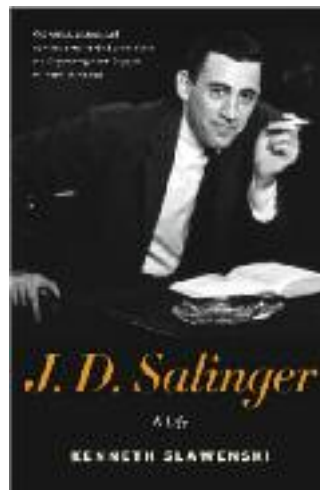
The latest biography, *J. D. Salinger: A Life*, by Kenneth Slawenski, the bulk of which was written while its litigious subject was still alive, is sympathetic, perceptive and eminently readable. It glosses over the less-than-

flattering material, as if reluctant to deal with unsavory facts that other writers have highlighted. The author of this volume draws a parallel—as so many biographers are wont to do—between the life and the work of his subject. Both clearly give testimony to the restlessness of heart of which St. Augustine speaks.

The portrait painted is that of a handsome and charming man with a biting, acerbic wit, who bears a striking resemblance to the famous protagonist of *Catcher*, the petulant, yearning teenager Holden Caulfield—often compared to F. Scott Fitzgerald's Jay Gatsby and Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn. He also resembles the Glass children, who appear in his later fiction—spiritual pilgrims who feel alienated in a vulgar, materialistic world populated by hypocrites and bores. Having immersed himself in Eastern and Catholic mysticism, Salinger finally embraced Zen Buddhism and Vedanta philosophy.

After the publication of *Catcher*, he devoted himself to creating fictional worlds populated by characters in quest of the Infinite, characters who hold a curious amalgam of Eastern and Christian tenets that reflect Salinger's own evolving beliefs. He began to view his writing as a form of meditation, an exploration of metaphysical questions and a means of offering spiritual enlightenment to others. Seeking to honor God through his work, he felt it his duty, Slawenski asserts, a holy obligation, to withdraw from the world to pursue his vocation.

A large chunk of this biography is dedicated to the evocation of Salinger's horrific combat experience during World War II: the landing on Utah Beach on D-Day, the Hurtgen Forest



campaign, the Battle of the Bulge, the liberation of prisoners from the Dachau concentration camp—events that profoundly affected the author, causing post-traumatic stress disorder and aggravation of the depression from which he suffered.

It is noteworthy that this dedicated writer of fiction, who continued to submit stories to *The New Yorker* that had been worked on in foxholes, chose, for the most part, not to write about the horrors he had witnessed. He did, however, depict traumatized veterans—the most notable examples being Sergeant X in the frequently anthologized “For Esmé—With Love and Squalor” (1950) and the suicidal Army veteran featured in the classic “A Perfect Day for Bananafish” (1948).

Upon returning to New York City, where he was born and where he grew up in increasing prosperity, Salinger attempted to resume a Greenwich Village version of the sophisticated lifestyle he’d had before the war, which included a failed romance with Eugene O’Neill’s daughter, Oona. Eventually, however, he came to the realization that the literary world and the glitter of Manhattan no longer suited him; so he moved to a 90-acre compound on a wooded hill in rural New Hampshire. By the time he married Claire Douglas, his second wife, he was leading a life that revolved around meditation, yoga and disciplined writing. The marriage ended in divorce, and in 1988 he wed Colleen O’Neill, a nurse 40 years his junior, with whom he spent the remainder of his days.

A meticulous craftsman who continually revised, polished and rewrote, Salinger expressed a preference for short fiction: “I am a dash man and not a miler.” Indeed, two long sections of his only novel originally appeared as short stories. His deft use of dialogue, mastery of idiomatic speech and use of first-person narration are distinguishing characteristics of his work. Such stylistic techniques as interior mono-

logue, letters and telephone calls gave him, Slawenski remarks, “the illusion of having...delivered his characters’ destinies into their own keeping.” In fact, he seemingly came to look upon his creations as real people, referring to Buddy Glass, his alter ego, as his “collaborator.” And to Elia Kazan’s request to adapt *Catcher* for Broadway, he replied, “I cannot give my permission. I fear Holden wouldn’t like it.”

Oscar Wilde remarked that all great men have their disciples, and it is usually Judas who writes the biography. That certainly is not the case here. Slawenski, who maintains the Web site *DeadCaulfields.com*, is clearly a fan of “the hermit crab of American letters.” That is how one critic referred to the writer, whose spectacular reputation rests on a very slender canon. Aside from multiple uncollected short

stories printed in various magazines, it consists of one novel that has never gone out of print; one collection, titled *Nine Stories* (1953); and two compilations, each with two related stories or novellas about the fictional Glass family: *Franny and Zooey* (1961) and *Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters and Seymour: An Introduction* (1963).

This is not the definitive biography. For one thing Salinger, although he published nothing after 1965, continued to write—for his own pleasure, as he confided. Reports have it that locked away in a safe somewhere there are hundreds of stories left unread except by the One whom he pursued.

ON THE WEB
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ANN M. BEGLEY has taught at universities on both east and west coasts. Her studies of Simone Weil and Marguerite Yourcenar appear in *European Writers: The Twentieth Century*.

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LETTERS

Howdy, Podner'

What a pleasant surprise to find in *Of Many Things* on Aug. 1, by Drew Christiansen, S.J., two great reviews of westerns. I am a fan of western literature, but I never expected to find an article about it in *America*. I have already read *Doc*, one of Father Christiansen's recommendations, which was excellent, and am ordering *Empire of the Summer Moon*. I wonder if *America* could more often review good recreational reading, which is often difficult to find.

RALPH RANIERI
Barva, Costa Rica

Bible Not 'True'? Don't Tell Us

Brian B. Pinter says in "A Fundamental Challenge" (9/12) that most Catholics who are literal readers of the Bible do not realize that this method is not part of their faith tradition and that these interpretations have been repeatedly discouraged by Catholic scholars, pastors and bishops. To some extent that is true, but it overlooks the fact that genuine critical study of the Scripture was not fostered by the church before the Second Vatican Council, or at least before Pope Pius XII. In fact it was condemned in the 19th century. And Catholic scholars who tried to use the modern methods early in the 20th century had to do so surreptitiously.

Incidentally, how big an advocate of the critical study of the Bible has our current pope been? To understate the matter, with his undying opposition to "relativism," he has not been an enthu-

siastic supporter. In the last 40 years, how many bishops have encouraged their people or teachers to read at least the smaller paperback works of Raymond E. Brown, S.S., or Michael D. Guinan, O.F.M.?

How many bishops could give a satisfactory explanation of inspiration and inerrancy? I suspect the hierarchy holds back because the "simple people" might be disturbed. I'm not surprised Brian Pinter met the opposition he did.

ANDY GALLIGAN
Tracy, Calif.

What About Alley Oop?

Brian B. Pinter's experience, reported in "A Fundamental Challenge" (9/12), parallels mine in two large Catholic parishes, one diocese and one regional adult faith formation certificate program. It is one reason I can no longer work for the church.

Much of the fault rests with the priests who in their paternalistic fashion continue to preach as if there were a historical Adam, Eve, Noah and so on. They assume Catholics are too stupid to understand biblical scholar-

ship, and they certainly don't want problems with their diocesan bishop, especially if they want to be a monsignor some day!

I once heard a pastor speak to a large adult initiation group. Questioned about the historicity of Genesis, he said that scientists know that humans and dinosaurs lived at the same time! I presume he was referring to the Book of Flintstones.

GREG BYRNE
Arlington, Va.

Did Jesus Multiply Bread?

The article by Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzman, "Beyond Catechesis" (9/12), quickly caught my attention as the grandfather of a young woman and man now attending Jesuit universities in the eastern United States.

I believe theology is the bedrock on which truthful catechesis rests. As a catechist since the 1980s, I have seen that the first catechists are parents, followed by religious and the laity. Sound theological study must be compatible with what the church teaches, and the theologians may ask questions that do not disparage or question the reality of

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Christ's teaching.

An example: Why did Christ feed the people on the hillside in a miraculous manner rather than ask them to share? When theologians raise doubts about this, it is no wonder bishops are concerned. The question concerns the theologian's motive. Does his or her presentation reveal a personal bias or a desire to publish something that will please a group unhappy with church doctrine?

HARRY D. CARROZZA, M.D.
Tucson, Ariz.

More on How to Preach

In response to "Time of the Preacher" (Current Comment, 9/12), Catholics come to Mass to be "fed." That's the function of the sermon. We want real food, not pabulum about social justice or inclusiveness. Here's a checklist I would like a bishop to circulate: Speak briskly, no pregnant pauses, no ums or ahs; repeat the central rhetoric of the Gospel story; a bit of humor; paint a picture the listener can carry home. Also watch Protestant ministers to learn how to do the triple repeat; raise and lower the volume of your voice and add a dramatic gesture; give facts on church history; compare and contrast with past Catholic practice and current Protestant beliefs.

CHRIS MULCAHY
Fort Myers Beach, Fla.

Not a New Americanism

Your editorial "The New Americanism" (8/1) refers to a letter from Pope Leo XIII to Cardinal

Gibbons in 1899. The old Americanism was a phantom heresy. Cardinal Gibbons wrote a masterly reply to Pope Leo, in which he thanked him but explained that this Americanism has nothing to do with the views, conduct or doctrine of Americans, that there was no priest, bishop or layman who uttered the views attacked in the papal letter. Rather, the Americanism of the 19th and early 20th century concerned the separation of church and state, with the liberals in the hierarchy supporting the American system.

Your editorial seems to claim that there is a New Americanism, implying that the one addressed in "Testem Benevolentiae" was actually full of errors. In truth, Americanism was a valued new form of government that let the church prosper along with the state and without interfering with one another. Today Catholics worthy of the name will rise to the defense of the poor. But let us not suggest that the callous disregard for the poor, the elderly or the unemployed is a *new* Americanism.

MARY Y. DILWORTH
Parkville, Md.

I Hadn't Noticed the Crisis

Kyle T. Kramer's column "Attention: Deficit Disorder" (8/15) claims that the "Catholic tradition speaks eloquently of our need for faithful stewardship of creation" and that the pope recently said the church is often the only hope.



To send a letter to the editor we recommend using the link that appears below articles on **America's** Web site, www.americamagazine.org. This allows us to consider your letter for publication in both print and online versions of

the magazine. Letters may also be sent to **America's** editorial office (address on page 2) or by e-mail to: letters@americamagazine.org. They should be brief and include the writer's name, postal address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Meanwhile the accent in my parish is on a new liturgy and moral lectures on sexual sins, with never a word about gay rights, the environment or creation. A very conservative archbishop and clergy want a return to an earlier church model with no conception of these issues. If Mother Nature is in peril, no one here has mentioned it—not from the pulpit, in the Catholic newspaper or on television. Thanks for bringing it to my attention.

VIRGINIA EDMAN
Toronto, Ont., Canada

Follow the Money

Re the editorial "Out of Afghanistan" (8/15): Before a rational and total withdrawal can be designed or achieved, our leaders have to come clean with the truth about why we are really there. It is not about freedom or democracy for the Afghan people. We are there for the same reason Russia was there in the 1980s and the reason we created the monster of Saddam Hussein to do our dirty work against them: money—more precisely, precious minerals, trillions of dollars worth hidden in those godforsaken mountains.

CRAIG MCKEE
Daytona Beach, Fla.

Padua Has One, Too

As a native son of New York City I have been looking forward to the opening of the ground zero memorial ("Temporal and Timeless," by Judith Dupré, 8/29). Meanwhile our tragedy has not been forgotten around the world. On the sixth anniversary, a memorial was dedicated in Padua, Italy, with a twisted steel beam donated by the U.S. State Department as its centerpiece. Designed by Daniel Libeskind and called "Memory and Light," it includes other symbolic dates, like July 4 and Italian Liberation Day on April 24. The memorial is online at www.snipurl.com/vaw7e.

JOSEPH CURTIN
Holland, Mass.

Other Tenants

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A), OCT. 2, 2011

Readings: Is 5:1-7; Ps 80:9-20; Phil 4:6-9; Mt 21:33-43

“What will the owner of the vineyard do?” (Mt 21:40)

In the past year, there have been an amazing number of uprisings, demonstrations and protests in Arab countries, some of which have led to a change in leadership. Some have been relatively peaceful, accomplishing regime change with little bloodshed. Others have been brutal and bloody, costing many lives. There are some similarities between these contemporary movements and the situation described in today’s Gospel, which can be read as a peasant uprising against an oppressive landowner.

Weary of their landlessness and powerlessness, the tenants do away with all the landowner’s envoys and even his son, the heir apparent, hoping to gain control of the land themselves. Verse 40 then poses a critical question: What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do? The response is swift and brutal. Violence breeds even more violence, and the tenants will be put to a miserable death. One way in which this parable can be read is as a commentary on the futility of violence to accomplish change in ownership and leadership.

A more traditional reading of this parable is as an allegory, in which the vineyard represents Israel, the tenants

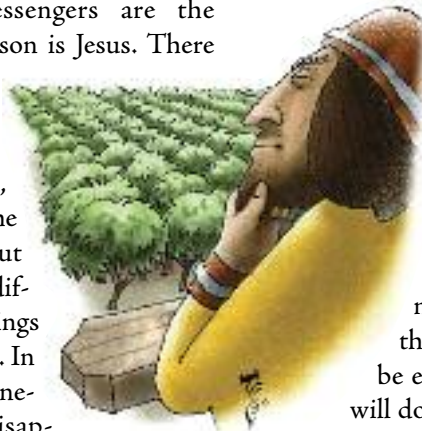
are Israel’s leaders, the vineyard owner is God, the messengers are the prophets, and the son is Jesus. There are also clear allusions to a familiar parable from the prophet Isaiah, which we hear in the first reading. But there is a decided difference in the endings of the two parables. In Isaiah, when the vineyard owner is disappointed in the lack of fruit, he destroys the vineyard.

In Jesus’ parable, the vineyard is not destroyed but rather entrusted to new leaders. In both parables, a focal point is the necessity of bearing fruit and the inability of the current leadership to cultivate the desired fruit. An additional twist is that if the parable is an allegory of salvation history, the inheritance that God’s people long to claim is a free gift of the son; it cannot be wrested from the owner. If the vineyard owner is God, would the response even to the death of the son not be forbearance, loving kindness and extending one more opportunity for repentance, rather than violent destruction?

In the context of Matthew’s Gospel, the parable is aimed at the religious leaders who oppose Jesus, and it points toward the necessity of new leadership. Some interpret the “others” to whom the vineyard is entrusted as the Gentile church that “supplants” Israel.

This interpretation should be firmly rejected. In the Gospel narrative, the change envisioned is from Jewish leaders who oppose Jesus to Jews who follow him. By Matthew’s time Jesus’ disciples, predominantly Jewish Christians, understood themselves as the “new tenants,” even as they struggled to define themselves in relationship to their sibling, Pharisaic Judaism.

The parable poses a searing question regarding leadership of any organization, institution or nation. If the leaders are not cultivating the fruitfulness of all members, then the leadership must be entrusted to others who will do so. Within the literary



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- How is the Spirit leading you to greater fruitfulness?
- Pray to the Spirit for guidance in trying new kinds of leadership in your faith community.
- How do you call forth the fruitful gifts of others?

context of the Gospel, hope is held out that current leaders could repent and become fruit-bearers and cultivators of fruitfulness in others. But the parable also notes that vintage time is near—code language for the eschatological time—the moment at which time to change runs out, and the decisions made all along have a finality. The Gospel invites us to insist on having leaders who can cultivate fruitful abundance for all and to pursue nonviolent means of bringing about change in leadership when that is needed.

BARBARA E. REID

BARBARA E. REID, O.P., a member of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Mich., is a professor of New Testament studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Ill., where she is vice president and academic dean. Her latest book, *Abiding Word: Sunday Reflections for Year B* (Liturgical Press), is a compilation and expansion of articles that first appeared in *America*.

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