

America in the Shadows

O Timothee, depositum custodi, devitans profanas vocum novitates et oppositiones falsi nominis scientiae, quam quidam profitentes circa fidem aberraverunt. Gratia vobiscum. 1 ad Timotheum 6

Gerard V. Bradley

Recently I was accorded the opportunity to testify before a committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. The lawmakers were considering a federal prohibition of “feticide,” which refers not to abortion but to killing an unborn child by assaulting the baby’s mother. More than half the states have passed such laws, or have interpreted existing homicide statutes to cover “feticide.” The bill, in favor of whose constitutionality I testified, has probably passed the House by the time you read these words. Its prospects in the Senate are uncertain. President Clinton will surely veto it.

I was one of eight or so witnesses at the hearing. The redoubtable Hadley Arkes also testified in favor of the bill. The only law professor witness opposing the feticide ban was also from a Catholic law school. Although the proposed law did not attempt to restrict abortion— where a woman *consents* to killing her unborn child— opposition at the hearing was entirely based upon *Roe v. Wade* and the abortion “right.” Opponents said that the bill implied that “fetuses” has some rights independent of the women carrying them. Indeed, that was the implication of the bill. But, they were prepared to deny *all inherent value* to the unborn. They were unwilling to concede *any* premise which *might* put aloft an implicit criticism of women who abort, even where the “right” to abortion was itself not at issue.

The grand spectacle at the hearing was listening to the “pro-choice” crowd— witnesses and members of Congress— clumsily try to keep their lips from revealing what was in their hearts. One Congressman, who is the Ayatollah of abortion “rights,” repeatedly caught himself *talking* as if he supported the bill. He would use the word “baby” or “child,” and correct it to “fetus.” One time he spoke of the woman involved as a “mother.” But, he corrected himself, she was only an “expectant mother,” because it’s not really a “baby” yet. Finally, he seemed comfortable talking about the “pregnant woman.”

The pro-choice speakers at the hearing know that abortion is wrong. They know why it is wrong, just as do the vast majority of pro-abortion people. But they are determined to say whatever they think helpful to defend *Roe v. Wade*. What I cannot figure out is whether this schizophrenia is, all things considered, cause for hope or despair. Whole nations and cultures can live in darkness, history shows, for a very long time, even if it is the people who have pulled the shades. ✠

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CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S PAGE:

America in the Shadows 1

LETTERS 2

OBITUARIES 2

ARTICLES:

Scriptural Ontology: The God of Abraham is God the Plenitude of Being .. 4

Nuclear Power and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences 7

Might a Little Dissent Be a Good Thing? .. 11

All Dreams Are Not Welcome 13

Catholics in the World of Mass Media 15

FEATURE:

Msgr. George A. Kelly: A Tribute 22

DOCUMENTATION 23

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS 25

AROUND THE CHURCH 26

FEATURED REVIEWS 29

BOOK REVIEWS 36

BOOKS RECEIVED 43

EX CATHEDRA 44

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Dear Dr. McNerny:

While reading the life of St. Peter Canisius, I came across the following letters written by him and St. Ignatius concerning Catholic universities. They will be of interest to Jesuit universities today as concerns *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* and thus also to the *FCS Quarterly's* readers.

St. Peter Canisius was head of the faculty of theology at the University of Vienna. He wrote to his friend Father John Polanco, the Secretary-General of the Jesuits:

This accursed plague of heresy ever increases here. The professors and students are so terribly infected by it that our University seems a very monster, nursing impiety and destroying rather than saving the youth of our land.

Those most addicted to the gospel of Luther are sought after diligently, and given fat stipends....The Government and the common people openly bestow their favors on the innovators...and all the while there is such a dreadful dearth of priests everywhere that the bishops, we fear, may more and more prefer to tolerate married and apostate priests in their parishes rather than see the people deprived of all services.

He wrote to St. Ignatius Loyola on July 7th and 17th, 1554, asking him for advice. Ignatius answered on August 18th:

...All public professors of the University of Vienna and other universities, as well as those who administer the government of the same, ought, it would seem, to be

deprived of office if they fall into bad repute with regard to the Catholic religion. In my judgment this applies also to rectors of private colleges, to pedagogues, and to lecturers, in order that those whose duty it is to train youth in piety may not instead corrupt them. Suspects ought therefore to be removed from their posts, and, much more, open heretics, lest they infect their youthful charges....

Yours sincerely,
Leonard Kennedy, C.S.B.
Toronto, Ontario

P.S. Quotations are from James Brodrick, S.J., *St. Peter Canisius* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1998, pp. 210-212).

OBITUARY

Msgr. Toomey of Australia Dead

Msgr. Kevin Toomey, O.B.E., of Melbourne, one of Australia's Catholic activists on behalf of the Church's teaching office, a leader of Down Under priests, and a friend of the Fellowship from the beginning, died on June 3, 1999. The local secular newspapers carried scores of obituaries from parishioners and public figures. One called him "the most impressive clergyman we have known." Another considered him "a Cedar of Lebanon in saving the faith."

For many years he was a leader of priests, partly because he was a

charismatic personality and an outstanding defender of the Church and the papal office. He came to New York after 1982 and became a fixture on its East Side. Thereafter, due to his influence, the Church of Australia was overrun by members of the Fellowship who became lecturers for Catholic audiences, spiritual directors for apostolic entrepreneurs, and theological advisors there.

The Australian prelate was amply prepared for his leadership role by his parish experience from 1952 onward, and his early association beginning in 1962 with the Church's social activists, Young Christian Workers especially. He became Pastor Emeritus in 1986, but rose to prominence, secular and

ecclesiastic, once he became national director of Australia's Pontifical Mutual Aid Societies (1979-1985). In the process Msgr. Toomey developed worldwide political and Roman contacts, acquiring along the way the honorary title office of the Order of the British Empire. At the time, the only other Catholic with O.B.E. after his name was the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney, a linkage which amused him to no end.

Msgr. Toomey has gone to God. May his friends keep his name alive. If the Church ever needed his model of priesthood, the 21st century is the time.

Requiescat in Pace. ✠

Msgr. George A. Kelly

Joseph P. Scottino, Ph.D., Former Secretary- Treasurer of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, Dies

The third president of Gannon University, Erie, Pa., and former Secretary-Treasurer of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, Joseph P. Scottino, Ph.D., died after a lingering illness on May 25, at the age of 70. Bishop Donald W. Trautman, Bishop of Erie, celebrated his funeral Mass at St. Peter's Cathedral, calling Dr. Scottino a most brilliant and exceptional Catholic educator and man of profound faith to whom the Catholic world of higher education owes so much. Men of vision are rare these days in America, the Bishop said, as well as educators of integrity like Dr. Scottino.

Dr. Scottino is survived by his wife of 47 years, Mary Louise Plavcan Scottino; one son Thomas and his wife of Chicago; two daughters, Mary Ann Scottino and her husband Andrew Kundrat, M.D. of Maryland, and Peggy Irvin and her husband Kevin; and five grandchildren.

Dr. Scottino received his M.A. in 1952 and Ph.D. degree in political philosophy from Fordham University in 1961. He joined the Gannon College faculty in 1955, teaching constitutional law and Catholic social thought. He directed the evening and summer sessions at Gannon in 1962. Appointed the Director of the Graduate Programs in 1964, he initiated the Master's of Business Administration Program in 1970, the first in Erie. In 1972, Dr.

Scottino was named Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and served until 1977 when appointed President of the college.

Dr. Scottino gained university status for the college in 1979, established the Advanced Technology and Productivity Center, formed an educational television station, and completed a \$21 million Investment in Excellence Program. He accomplished much in the area of health education programs in Erie, establishing the Gannon-Hahnemann Family Medicine Program, the Physician Assistant Program, various medical technological programs, and the Erie Postgraduate Medical Institute.

Retiring from the Presidency in 1987, a major building was named in his honor.

Dr. Scottino was deeply involved in community activities all his life. He served as a member of many medical, hospital, political, and financial boards. One of his major post-presidential interests and enthusiasms was the Center for the Study of the Presidency which he founded.

While he received many honors during his lifetime from civil, medical, and community organizations, he prized none more highly than the reception of the Cardinal Wright Award from the Fellowship in 1986, and his designation by Pope John Paul II as a Knight of St. Gregory in 1987.

Dr. Scottino served his university as a man of profound faith. All through his tenure as president, he resisted successfully all efforts to diminish the presence and directive influence of Scholastic philosophy and theology in the Core Program of the university, required of all students. He maintained constant

interest and encouragement in the Pontifical Center for Catechetical Studies, the second such American graduate program initiated with Msgr. Kevane representing the Holy See. He journeyed to Rome on several occasions to meet with Cardinal Garrone, Director of the Sacred Congregation of Catholic Education during the critical discussion following the Land O'Lakes meeting of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities in 1967. He steadfastly maintained his unquestioned loyalty to Catholic higher education at a moment when others questioned its future.

Dr. Scottino's prayer: "I prayed, and prudence was given to me; I pleaded and the spirit of Wisdom came to me. I preferred her to scepter and throne, And deemed riches nothing in comparison with her, nor did I liken any priceless gem to her; because all gold, in view of her, is a little sand, and before her, silver is to be accounted mire.... Yet all good things together came to me in her company,...I rejoiced in them all, because Wisdom is their leader...."

✠

Rev. Robert J. Levis



Scriptural Ontology: The God of Abraham is God the Plentitude of Being

by William Riordan

In his recent encyclical letter, *Fides et Ratio*, Pope John Paul II speaks of Sacred Scripture as containing texts, which possess a “genuinely ontological content,” and “elements... which allow a vision of the human being and the world which has exceptional philosophical density.”¹ An extended focusing of theological attention into the ontological depths revealed in these sacred pages could prove to be very valuable, especially in the current situation. Such qualified authorities as Ratzinger, von Balthasar, Dulles and J.-H. Nicolas have all commented on the desiccated metaphysics of much modern theologizing.² My purpose in this article is to offer some texts that I have found to bear rich metaphysical insights.

The classic text in which God discloses himself as the fullness of Being is Exodus 3:14. When Moses asks God (Elohim) what His name is, He replies, “I am what (that) I am (*eyeh asher eyeh*); thus you will say to the sons of Israel that I AM sent me to you.” It has become customary among some modern Christian exegetes to see this text as simply a reassurance to Moses and, through him, to all of Israel that God is with them and that He is Almighty.³ But God must first BE before he can *be with* Israel. The tradition, including many modern theologians, does not shrink from seeing in this passage a profound revelation, an “ontophany,” so to speak, of Who God is and not just of what He is doing. There is no question that with the Name are also given very explicit assurances about God’s concern for His people and His intentions to deliver them. This is especially evident in verse 16. But preceding these assurances is the revelation of the Name (verse 14) and the solemn proclamation that the *identity* of this saving God is the same as that of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and that this Name remains in perpetuity.

In a number of recent ecclesiastical documents,

the emphasis on the ontological and personal character of the Name (as opposed to the solely functional) has been evident. In his *Credo of the People of God*, Pope Paul VI states:

We believe that this only God is as absolutely one in his infinitely holy essence as in his other perfections: in his almighty power, his infinite knowledge, his providence, his will, his love. He is “He who is” as he revealed to Moses... “He is Love,” as the apostle John has taught us... so that these two names, Being and Love, express ineffably the same divine essence of him who has wished to make himself manifest to us, and who, “dwelling in unapproachable light” (1 Tim. 6:16), is in himself above every name and every created thing and every created intellect.⁴

Although the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* clearly states the salvific significance of the Name (cf. especially paragraph numbers 205, 207, 211, 212), the rich ontological (and, hence, intimately personal) significance, is also indicated.

A name expresses a person’s essence and identity.... To disclose one’s name is to make oneself known to others. (203)

... (God) is infinitely above everything we can understand or say. (206)

The revelation of the ineffable name “I Am who Am” contains the truth that God alone IS. The Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, and following it the Church’s Tradition, understood the divine name in this sense: God is the fullness of Being and of every perfection, without origin and without end. All creatures receive all that they are and have from him; but he alone *is* his very being, and he is of himself everything that he is. (213; cf. 215—God is Truth itself...; 221—God’s very being is love.)⁵

As noted above, the Septuagint translation, a translation into Greek by Jews and for Jews, renders Exodus 3:14, “*eyeh asher eyeh*,” with the words, “*ego eimi ho On*,” meaning literally: “I am THE BEING” ... “Thus shall you say to the children of Israel, THE BEING (*ho On*) has sent me to you.”⁶ Here, in “ho

On,” the article “ho” (the) precedes the present participle, “on.” Thus, *present, on-going act* is expressed. There is a definite timelessness and persisting-in-being indicated here that is also found in many other Old Testament texts.

They (the heavens and the earth) shall perish, but you remain... like clothing you change them, and they are changed, but you are the same, and your years have no end. (Ps. 107:26-28; quoted in Heb. 1:10-12; cf. Sir. 42:21; Jam. 1:17)⁷

There are other texts that resonate strongly with the ontological significance of Exodus 3:14. In Sirach 42 and 43, there is an extended celebration of the magnificence of God in all His works “even to the spark and the fleeting vision!” (Sir. 42:23). After a recounting of the wonder of God in all He has made, Ben Sirach concludes:

We may say much and still fall short; so the last of words is: He is all (Sir. 43:28; cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; Rev. 3:14; Rom. 11:36).⁸

This great assertion of God as supreme plenitude of Being is in no way pantheistic for it is immediately followed by the phrase, “for greater is He than all His works.” (Sir. 43:29; cf. 2 Macc. 7:28). There are other context clues as well, as with the phrase,

At God’s word were His works brought into being, they do His will as He has ordained for them. (Sir. 42:15)⁹

The literally *radical* difference between God, the fullness of Being, and His spoken-into-being creatures is evident here. This passage recalls Wisdom 13 where the author declares the foolishness of men,

who from the good things seen did not succeed in knowing the *Being (ton Onta)*... now if out of joy in their beauty they thought them gods, let them know how far more excellent is the Lord than these for the original source of beauty (*ho gar tou kallous genesiarches*) fashioned them. (Wis. 13:1-3)¹⁰

Note once again the explicit statements regarding God as *Being*, and creatures as *deriving from* that Great Being. The Greek expression “*genesiarches*” means, literally, “generating source.” Since the source cannot give what it does not have, God must be all that the derived creatures are but in His own enduring, self-same way.¹¹ This insight is

key and is found clearly stated just two verses later:

For from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author (*ho genesiourgos auton*), by analogy (*analogos*), is seen. (Wis. 13:5; cf. Rom. 1:19-20).

Here we find in the Creator to creature (Deriver to derived, Source to sourced) relation, the analogical basis for our knowing of God.

The recognition of God as plenitude of Being is a crucial foundation for every aspect of our life in Christ and for all of our theological understanding and language. Without that recognition, theology is forced to rely merely on evanescent “metaphors” and “re-imaginings” that can come and go with the prevailing cultural-historical-political context. There is nothing in all creation that could with certainty command that we must recognize that God is the absolute Being, unchangeable and, therefore, as the One pre-anticipating all things in Himself. Once the sheer and unspeakable Reality of this Being is apparent, a further recognition becomes available to the Christians: it is precisely this Being who is the incarnate One, Jesus Christ. We have been saved by the God who is, personally, unlimited fullness of Being and of Beauty; our Maker has become our husband (Is. 54:5-6).

How else could Christ, in His *ego eimi* (I AM) statements be claiming that divine status? For it is apparent that it is not just a function that He is claiming in these passages but a specific Personal identity Who wishes to reveal His Being... “Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be I AM” (Jn. 8:58; cf. 8:24). There is more than an assurance of assisting presence here. It is a matter of being. The way in which Jesus *is*, though He is “not yet fifty” (Jn 8:57), is primordial. He precedes Abraham. And, it is not simply that He *was* before Abraham but rather that He *is*. This text is regularly read in the light of Exodus 3:14 and shows even more clearly the yet undiscovered metaphysical depths of the Name. Jesus, because He is the I AM, precedes Abraham as He certainly must if He is to be “the Lord, the God of Abraham...” (Ex. 3:15-16).

In the Letter to the Hebrews, the whole of the first chapter is an intensely compact exaltation of Christ’s divine ontological identity. The author even goes so far as to assert that the Son is the “*charater tes hypostaseos*,” that is, He is the “imprint,” (Heb. 1:3;

cf. 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15)¹² of the Father's "hypostasis" (substance). Verses 5–14 are a carefully selected listing of Old Testament texts, effectively orchestrated to manifest Christ the Son's divine identity as far surpassing the angels.

And again, when he leads his first-born into the world, he says, "Let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb. 1:6).

And further, the text quoted earlier from Psalm 102: 26–28, celebrating the incorruptible Being of God (in comparison to even the very enduring quality of the heavens and the earth) is recognized as true of the Son. There are other passages in the New Testament like these that point emphatically to the unique and undeniable metaphysical weight of God, the Being. These are not Hellenistic accretions. These passages, in both the Old and the New Testament, show that the Semitic mind knows the weight (*chabod*) of the divine Presence. Our Holy Father is on very solid ground (*Urgrund*) in speaking of the "genuinely ontological content" of many Scriptural texts. From his General Audience of July 31, 1985:

Thus the God of our faith—the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob—revealed his name. It is "I Am Who I Am." According to the tradition of Israel, the name expresses the essence.

The Sacred Scriptures give different names of God, such as "Lord" (e.g. Wis. 1:1) "Love" (1 Jn. 4:16) "Compassionate One" (e.g., Ps. 86:15), "Faithful One" (1 Cor 1:9), "Holy One" (Is. 6:3). But the name which Moses heard from the midst of the burning bush is as it were the root of all the others. *He who is* expresses the very essence of God, which is self-existence, subsistent Being, as the theologians and philosophers say. In his presence we cannot but prostrate ourselves and adore.¹³ ✠

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NOTES

1. John Paul II. *Fides et Ratio: On the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*, Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1998, no. 82.

2. Cf. Ratzinger, J. *The Nature and Mission of Theology*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993, pp. 13–29.

Balthasar, H. von. *The Glory of the Lord: I—Seeing the Form*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982, p. 17–23.

Dulles, A. "Criteria of Catholic Theology," *Communio*, XXII, (Summer), 1995, pp. 305–306.

Nicholas, J.-H. *Synthese Dogmatique: de la Trinite a la Trinite*. Freiburg: Editions Universitaires, pp. 36–43.

Cf. especially the remarkably profound work of Andre Hayen, *La Communication de l'Etre d' apres Saint Thomas d' Aquin*. Paris-Louvain, Desclée de Brouwer, 1957, vol. 1, pp. 85–90, 173–178.

References like these could be multiplied.

3. The new *International Bible: Commentary* sees the Name, "YHWH in terms of being: YHWH's being means active participation and involvement as well as free choice and unimpeded power." Certainly the sovereignty of God is evident here but it appears that the meaning of the Name is primarily in terms of God's association with creation and, especially, Israel. Farmer, W. (editor). *International Bible Commentary: A Catholic and Ecumenical Commentary for the Twenty-First Century*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998, p. 414. Cf. also Brown, R. *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Prentice Hall, Inc., 1990, p.47.

4. Paul VI. "The Profession of Faith of Paul VI (1968)" in *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*. Dupuis, J. (editor). New York: Alba House, 1996, p. 24. Pope John Paul II quotes this same passage in his *A Catechesis on the Creed: God-Father and Creator*. Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1996, p. 118. He uses the passage to introduce a lengthy discussion of the Divine Name in the book of Exodus. Commenting on the words of Paul VI, he writes:

Paul VI made reference to the name of God, 'I am who am,' which is found in the book of Exodus. Following the doctrinal and theological tradition of many centuries, he saw in it the revelation of God as 'Being'—subsistent Being, which expresses in the language of the philosophy of being (ontology or metaphysics used by St. Thomas Aquinas), the essence of God. (p. 119)

5. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Ligouri: Ligouri Publications, 1994. Cf. the still valuable historical background provided by Claude Tresmontant. *The Origins of Christian Philosophy*. New York: Hawthorn Books, 1963, especially pp. 55–58.

6. *Septuagint Version of the Old Testament and Apocrypha: Greek and English*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976, p. 73. Cf. Critical text in K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, editors, *Biblia Sacra Utriusque Testamenti Editio Hebraica et Graeca*. Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. 1994, for Hebrew text and A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*. Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979, for Greek.

7. Cf. CCC 212. Regarding God's immutability, cf. also Genesis 21:23, Isaiah 40:28, Sirach 42:21, a John 5:11–12 and God as the enduring and generative "rock" in Deuteronomy 32:18,30,31. Cf. Schmaus, M. *Katholische Dogmatik*. Munchen: Max Hueber Verlag: 1960. pp. 504–505.

8. Here, with Sirach 43:28, we have felt it to be advantageous to provide a more literal translation the NAB (1970).

9. This obviously re-echoes the whole of Genesis, chapter 1, where each of the kinds of beings are *spoken* (through God's word) *into being*. Psalm 33:9—"For he spoke, and it was made; he commanded, and it stood forth." These texts anticipate John 1:3,

"Through him (the Word-logos) all things came into being... as well as Hebrews 1:3 "...in this, the final age, he (the Father) has spoken to us through his Son...through whom he first created the universe...and he sustains all things by his powerful word (reimati)." Cf. Colossians 1:15-20; Ephesians 1:22,23.

10. Wisdom 13:1. For the words, "the Being," the NAB text (1970) reads, "him who is." The underlined is my own translation of "ton onta," which is the accusative singular for "ho on." For Aquinas, the Divine Name given in Exodus 3:14, which also surfaces at other points such as these, is the most important name of God apart from the Trinitarian names. Cf. *ST I*, q. 13, a. II. this is also the case for Rabbi Moses Maimonides. Cf. *The Existence and Unity of God: Three Treatises Attributed to Moses Maimonides*, Rosner, F. (translator). Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, Inc. 1987, pp. 174-180. The following is especially pertinent here:

The Tetragrammaton (Y-H-V-H) is an exclusive title that expresses the plenitude of the essence and the subsistence of God...The other divine names, 'periphrases' or cognomens' connote one or another aspect of Divine activity, derived from this great Name, just like in the ontologic order, the totality of beings proceeds from the essence of the Creator.

Cf. Smith, W. "From Schrodinger's Cat to Thomistic Ontology," *The Thomist*, v. 63, n.1 (January 1999) p. 59.

11. This point is a veritable Leitmotif for many of the Fathers both East and West, Dionysius and Augustine to name only two. They certainly saw the creational ontology implicated in these sorts of Scripture texts. For Aquinas, too, this insight is *fundamental*. The following references would constitute only a short sampling of texts where the Angelic Doctor takes up this theme: *Sent.* I, dist. II a, 2 and 3. *De Ente et Essentia*, cap. 6; *De Div. Nom.*, cap. 5, lect. 1 and 2; *Compend. Theol.*, cap. 21,22,24,27,68,133; *Summa Theol.* I, q.4,a.2; q. 12, a.2; q.15. a.2; q.19, a.4; q.22, a.1. Cf. also John Paul II, *A Catechesis on the Creed: God-Father and Creator*. Op. cit., pp. 120-143.

12. Cf II Corinthians 3:18 and Colossians 1:15 where the term image (*ikon*) bears the same weight as *imprint* ("character" in the Greek).

13. John Paul II. *A Catechesis on the Creed: God-Father and Creator*. Op. Cit., p. 117.

Nuclear Power and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences

By Peter Hodgson

In November 1980 the Pontifical Academy of Sciences held a meeting to discuss world energy problems. The papers presented at this meeting and the conclusions were published in a volume of 776 pages.¹ Although these conclusions were of great importance and deserved wide publicity they remain almost entirely unknown. This shows a serious deficiency in communication that merits urgent attention.

The widespread applications of science frequently raise moral problems that are of great importance for the future of society. Such problems are often the subject of statements by bishops' conferences and other Church bodies. Among contemporary problems that have been treated in this way is the question of energy supplies in general and nuclear power in particular; by nuclear power is meant the generation of electrical power by nuclear reactors, not nuclear weapons. Many Church statements have been made on nuclear power, but most of them are unsatisfactory because they are based on an inadequate knowledge of the basic science and technology.² It is often not sufficiently well under-

stood that it is only possible to reach a sound moral judgement on such questions by taking full and balanced account of a large number of connected scientific and technical problems, wherever possible expressed numerically.

One of the few such statements that satisfies these criteria is that published by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in 1981. Realizing the importance and complexity of the problem, the Academy invited a group of 32 experts from many countries worldwide to a meeting held in November 1980. They included experts in nuclear physics, the electrical industry, biophysics, plant science, chemistry and medicine³; this ensured an authoritative study at the highest level.

The published proceedings of the meeting contains the full texts of the papers presented, together with the ensuing discussions, and ends with a four-page summary of the conclusions. This begins by emphasizing that "Energy plays an essential role in the material, social and cultural life of mankind. At the present stage of world development it is not possible without additional energy availability to cope with the population growth, increasing demand for food, and with the problem of unemployment: furthermore,

a lack of energy can indeed menace world peace.” The abundance and low price of oil has fueled rapid economic growth in recent decades, but without reducing the economic gap between industrialized and third world countries. The increasing dependence on oil “has contributed to the instability of the world economy.” The world demand for energy will continue to increase due to population growth and to the increase in the energy consumption per capita. World oil production is unlikely to increase and so world energy needs cannot be satisfied. The steep rise in oil prices has destabilized world financial systems, contributing to inflation and unemployment. “This situation has placed non-industrialized countries in an extraordinarily vulnerable position.”

As a result, “We have no time to waste. Energy policies are urgently needed, involving concerted action by the responsible bodies, and this requires the support of public opinion and energy users. Unfortunately, even in the industrialized countries, public consciousness of the problem is lacking.” Thus “a joint effort by the industrialized countries and the oil-exporting countries is required to provide means—such as a joint fund—to help the poorest countries to develop their own energy resources. Only coal and nuclear power together with a strong energy conservation policy and continued gas and oil exploitation and exploration—can allow us to effectively meet the additional needs for the next two decades. It is emphasized that the industrialized countries must reduce their oil consumption and leave it essentially for specific end uses (transportation, petrochemistry, etc.), and for the basic needs of the developing countries. No energy source should be neglected if we wish to resolve the energy crisis. A strong research effort must be made to develop renewable energy sources which, among other things, can encourage decentralization of human settlements, thus reducing the disturbances of the excessive urbanization process that has occurred and is still occurring in the world. In particular, solar energy, under its various forms (thermal, thermodynamic and photovoltaic energy, biomass, etc.), have demonstrated good potential especially for non-centralized energy supply.” Wood is still extensively used as a fuel, and so increased attention must be paid to tropical forest management.

A mix of energy sources is desirable to deal with unexpected scarcities. Energy issues must be tackled at the national and regional, as well as the global, levels. Problems of energy management, storage and transport require attention. “Electricity can be expected to play an increasingly important role in the life of mankind, in view of its convenience and flexibility.”

Particular attention was paid to the possible effects of the increase in the carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere, and extensive research was advocated.

“As regards nuclear energy, some concern has been voiced as to the possible links between nuclear energy and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In this field, however, it is recognized that, once a certain general level of knowledge and technical expertise has been acquired, a country’s development of nuclear weapons is primarily determined by political considerations. Thus, with adequate precautions, there is no reason to bar the development of nuclear energy for civil uses.” It is essential to take care of the health of those engaged in energy generation, and to respect the environment and the health of humanity.

The summary concludes that it should be possible “to assure adequate availability of energy before or about the turn of the century, provided necessary actions are taken now with sufficient vigor.” The present growth of energy consumption cannot continue forever and so it is necessary to develop less energy consuming ways of life. The developed countries should help the developing countries by promoting technology transfer, education and training. Nations are increasingly interdependent so that new modes of cooperation should be developed.

Scientists have particular responsibilities to evaluate the data and advise political leaders so that they can take decisions that will satisfy the needs of present and future generations. Co-operation between scientists, engineers, sociologists and churchmen “is highly desirable, and the national and even international level, especially in so far as it brings out the human and hence ethical dimension of energy issues.”

This study by the Pontifical Academy was made the basis of the submission of the Holy See to the International Conference in Nuclear Power held in Vienna September 13-17, 1982.⁴ The leader of the

Vatican Delegation, Msgr. Peressin, referred to the peaceful applications of atomic energy, including food conservation, new techniques of plant breeding, medicine, hydrology and, most important of all, energy for industrial and private use. He reminded the Conference that many United Nations Agencies have stressed that the economic growth of the Third World countries seems “to be impossible without some applications of nuclear energy.” Therefore, Msgr. Peressin continued, “my Delegation believes that all possible efforts should be made to extend to all countries, especially the developing ones, the benefits contained in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.”

Although I try to keep myself informed about Church statements on nuclear power, I heard about the work of the Pontifical Academy quite by accident. I was unable to obtain a copy by writing to the Academy, and eventually succeeded through the personal efforts of one of my Oxford physics students, who was at that time studying for the priesthood in Rome. As soon as I read the document I realized its importance, and urged that it be reviewed in a prominent Catholic weekly, but without success. I therefore wrote an article on it that was published in the *Clergy Review*.⁵

A Conference on the Christian Dimensions of Energy Problems was organized by the Catholic Union and the Commission for International Justice and Peace and held in England in April 1982. It is noteworthy that it took no notice of the work of the Pontifical Academy in 1980. This is unfortunately quite typical; studies are undertaken and conferences arranged, by people without any knowledge of what has already been achieved. It is therefore impossible to make any progress; they are continually trying to invent the wheel. By contrast, in the scientific community, a prime requisite for serious research is a thorough knowledge of what is already known. There are scientists who are unfamiliar with the literature (often through no fault of their own) and write papers that might have been interesting two years ago, but are now quite useless. Such scientists are not taken seriously and their papers are rejected.

The result of all this is the production of statements that are frequently worse than useless, with a small number of very competent and valuable statements that are so poorly publicized that they have

little effect.

There are several reasons for this unsatisfactory state of affairs. The first and fatal mistake of those responsible for many Church studies is to underestimate the magnitude of the scientific and technical work that must be undertaken before any realistic moral judgment can be made. In the case of nuclear power, it is essential to study in a quantitative way the world energy needs, the resources of raw materials, the economics of the different methods of energy generation, and their associated hazards and effects on the environment. This requires the co-operation of experts in many fields. Only when this is done is it possible to cut through the smoke-screen of politically-motivated propaganda obscuring the whole subject and then go on to establish the true situation that must be taken as the basis of any realistic moral judgment on *the* best energy sources to choose. The report should be written up by the scientists and the moral theologians working together.

Without the participation of qualified scientists the report may well contain many wise and sensible thoughts, but the cumulative impression will inevitably be that it comprises well-meaning generalities that are unlikely to have any practical result at all.

This work need not be done in every country; indeed it is preferable that it be done on an international level. Nevertheless it is also desirable that there is in each country a group of qualified people who keep the subject constantly under review. If this is not done, then when the report comes from the international committee it will not be well understood and so its conclusions cannot be properly implemented.

The work of the Pontifical Academy was of the highest standard, and its conclusions have stood the test of time. It has had, however, very little effect because of a scandalous and disgraceful failure in communication. The Pontifical Academy apparently considered that its work was done when the volume was published, but apart from the submission to the IAEA Conference in Vienna it had very little additional publicity, so far as I am aware. In Britain, the Catholic press has adopted much the same anti-nuclear stance as the secular media. If it had been properly publicized, the Report of the Pontifical Academy would have enabled the Church to give a

valuable lead in public discussions concerning the acceptance of nuclear power.

To ensure this, the summary of the Report should have been printed in large numbers and sent to a wide range of key people, from bishops to media leaders. A vital link in this process is the weekly press and also magazines dealing with world affairs. The editors need to be aware of the status of the international committee and the importance of giving wide publicity to their Report. They should also know some well-qualified scientists who can comment on the Report and answer questions.

This failure of communication in the Church is widespread: many valuable documents are produced in Rome, but their contents never reach the people for whom they are intended.

The chief merit of the work of the Pontifical Academy is that they got the facts right. There is little that is new in their Report; it simply presents in a balanced way material that is available elsewhere in much greater detail. The specifically Christian contribution is by comparison rather meager, and this is a real weakness of the work of the churches in such areas. There is little long-term scholarly commitment to the moral analysis of problems like global warming, the energy crisis and nuclear power. Few moral theologians devote their lives to thinking about them. The authorities of most churches failed even to discover the essential facts and to put them into perspective, and this is no more than an essential preliminary to serious moral thinking. There is an urgent need for some moral theologians to spend years mastering the facts and thinking about them in the light of Christian principles. This very necessary theological work simply cannot be done by busy bishops on the evening before they are due to address some conference. There are some men in the Churches who are potentially able to do such work, namely the young clergy who studied science to degree standard before ordination. They know enough to understand what is going on, but not enough to make weighty contributions to the debate. They see very clearly that vague and well-meaning platitudes are no substitute for a clear moral lead. Usually their scientific knowledge rusts as they are swamped by other duties. Yet if they were specifically assigned to theological studies where their

scientific knowledge would be used, and given the opportunities to learn from experts, to take higher degrees, to devote most of their lives to study, then in a few decades we would be in a position to make a serious contribution to the debates on global warming, nuclear power and similar problems that are of such vital importance for the future of humanity. Then, in the words of *Fides et Ratio*, “moral theology will be able to tackle the various problems in its competence such as peace, social justice, the family, the defense of life and the natural environment, in a more appropriate and effective way.” ☒

Peter Hodgson has lectured on and tutored physics and mathematics in the University of Oxford for forty years, and has been engaged in research in experimental and theoretical nuclear physics for over fifty years. He was a member of the Council of the Atomic Scientists' Association from 1952-9, and edited its Journal from 1953-5. He has written about fifteen books and three hundred research papers, holds three doctorates and is a Fellow of Corpus Christi College and of the Institute of Physics. He is the President of the Secretariat for Scientific Question of Pax Romana, and recently served as a Consultant to the Pontifical Consilium for Culture. His books on the implications of nuclear physics for human society include Nuclear Physics in Peace and War (1961), Our Nuclear Future (1983), Energy and Environment (1997) and Nuclear Power, Energy and the Environment (1999).

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Might a Little Dissent Be a Good Thing?

By Robert G. Kennedy

Some have suggested that a little dissent might be a good thing for the Church, and I quite agree. Dissent in certain matters can be good for an organization, and its ready toleration in a business, an army, a university, or a church can be a sign of genuine health and vitality.

Having said this, however, I wish to raise a couple of issues. The first has to do with the question of whether all dissent in theological matters is essentially the same sort of thing, or whether, like cholesterol, there might be "good dissent" and "bad dissent." What I have in mind is this. The whole teaching of the Catholic Church at any given moment is composed of doctrines of varying characters. Some doctrines are at the very foundation of Catholic faith and the Church has always been committed to them (e.g., Jesus rose from the dead). This is true even if not all bishops and theologians held them and defended them at every moment. Other doctrines, as Newman argued 150 years ago, develop over time; or perhaps it would be better to say that the Church's understanding of them develops over time. These doctrines (such as the person and nature of Jesus) may have been held in some vague and inarticulate way early in the Church's history, but have become more precise over time. Even in the modern period there may be doctrines that need considerable refinement or doctrines for which substantial explanations need to be articulated.

It is also important to recognize the difference between doctrine (which is generically about "faith

and morals") and practice. Church practice concerns such things as who ought to elect the pope, whether priests ought to marry, how deeply involved the Church ought to be in politics, what sort of music ought to be played during liturgies, and so on. Dissent, of course, can concern both doctrine and practice.

To dissent is to assert and to hold firmly a proposition, whether about doctrine or practice, that opposes the position which the Church has adopted in some official way. It seems to me that dissent from the defining doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church (e.g., the Real Presence, the Christological doctrines, unqualified respect for human life, etc.) is "bad dissent." Dissent of this sort is not healthy, but rather tears at the fabric of the community and undermines the integrity of the Church. At the other extreme, it might very well be healthy to tolerate and even encourage vigorous debate about the proper application of Catholic social thought to modern economies or about the Catholic position on evolution and creation.

Along the way, perhaps we ought to recognize that the Church's mature position on many questions developed as a result of just this sort of passionate debate. It is true that at times the Church has adopted explanations of moral doctrines it later had to abandon when they were discovered not to be sound (but this is not the same as abandoning the doctrine). It is also true that at certain points in history a variety of views were held by Catholics on an issue that was only resolved quite a bit later. (Thomas Aquinas, himself, for example, considered what we know as the doctrine of the Immaculate

Conception to be improbable.)

This leads me to my second issue, which is the question of whether, as a matter of historical record, the Catholic Church has ever formally committed itself to a position about, say, the moral legitimacy of an act that it later abandoned in favor of a contrary opinion. Some say that it has and that “good dissent” was instrumental in bringing the Church to adopt a better position. The issue of slavery is cited as an example. For this to be a good example it must be the case that the Church (that is, the pope and the bishops in communion with him) taught at one time that slavery was morally acceptable and later rejected that position in favor of the doctrine that slavery is always wrong. Is this really the case?

Some comments on slavery are found in the New Testament, and one might reasonably imagine that in 2,000 years a good bit of ink has been spilled over the issue. Let’s see what sort of argument can be made for the position that the Church has reversed itself.

Here is a 19th century statement from the Vatican: “Slavery itself, considered as such in its essential nature, is not at all contrary to the natural and divine law....” This seems clear enough, and not a little embarrassing for American Catholics who had just a year before concluded their Civil War. Just a century later, however, we find the Second Vatican Council condemning slavery as criminal and urging everyone to “spare no effort to banish every vestige of social and political slavery (GS 27, 29). Moreover, in 1993, Pope John Paul II wrote in his encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* that some acts are “intrinsically evil,” and that such acts are always wrong, quite apart from any intentions or circumstances. That is to say, nothing can ever justify such acts. He goes on to provide a short list of such acts, which includes murder, abortion, genocide, prostitution, and *slavery*. There is no leap of logic involved to conclude that one and the same act cannot be both “not at all contrary to the natural and divine law” and “intrinsically evil.” This is a clear contradiction.

Or is it? If we read a bit further in the older Vatican statement we find that slavery is defined in a rather peculiar way: “The sort of ownership which a slave-owner has over a slave is understood as nothing other than the perpetual right of disposing of the

work of a slave for one’s own benefit— services which it is right for one human being to provide for another.” What the slave-owner owns, in other words, is the work of the slave, not the slave’s person. Of course, this is rather an artificial distinction because in practice if one has the right to sell, give away, or exchange in some way the work of a person even over that person’s strenuous objections (which right the statement acknowledges), then one also has effective control over the person.

Nevertheless, what the Vatican seems to be saying here is that if it is legitimate to own anything about a person it is no more than the right to dispose of his economic production. Myriad other statements, including this one, insist that this right is limited by the firm duty to respect the human dignity of the slave. The fact that, by the 19th century, it was practically impossible for slavery in this antiseptic sense to co-exist with genuine respect for human rights led the Church to abandon efforts to sustain this distinction. We have seen something quite similar recently in the Church’s more rigorous position on capital punishment. In both cases the Church has maintained that, in principle, the practice might be morally legitimate in certain narrowly limited situations, the actual circumstances are such that these conditions are never really satisfied, and so the practice cannot be defended.

To investigate this further would take us far too deeply into a discussion about slavery spanning more than 1,500 years. Over the course of these years the position of the Church has indeed developed, but not from one doctrine to its contrary. Instead, it has moved from a position of tolerance in practice of a pervasive social institution to the tolerance in theory of a limited form of slavery which it sometimes called voluntary or justified, to the conviction that even this form of slavery can be reasonably assumed not to exist in the modern world. To be sure, over the years various theologians offered finely distinguished arguments in support of certain forms of slavery, forms which in fact did not really exist. They also argued that slavery might be justified, if other aspects of the slave’s human dignity were scrupulously respected, in circumstances in which an authority might otherwise be justified in killing a person. (Thus it was thought that it could be legitimate to enslave an enemy soldier

whom you might otherwise kill, or a convicted criminal who might otherwise be justly executed. Indeed, given the Vatican's 19th century definition, this is pretty close to what we actually do today to criminals given life sentences without parole.)

It is also true that some number of theologians and bishops dissented from this position, but the prominent ones to do so tended to dissent in support of slavery! No doubt, we can also find examples of clergy or religious— to say nothing of Catholic laity—who owned slaves in antiquity and even in America. This is hardly something about which the Church ought to be proud, but neither is it a practice that can be legitimately cited as an example of Church doctrine.

In point of fact, the history of the Church provides extensive examples of the resistance of the Church to the institution of slavery. It was, for example, virtually unknown in the Christian Middle Ages, which probably makes that civilization the first to be able to make such a claim. Even in situations in which the Church had little power to change the social structure, it persistently taught that slaves are persons with a human dignity equal to that of their masters, and that they must be treated as such. It persistently taught that innocent persons could not

be justly enslaved, and Christians in the Middle Ages even offered themselves as substitutes to free others enslaved in other parts of the world.

Suffice it to say that the Church's modern position on slavery is not a reversal of its prior position, but a development of it. In fact, the authorities often cited to show a clear reversal of doctrine did not "declare and reiterate" the Vatican's 19th century position on the legitimacy of slavery, but sometimes actually condemned it. At most, they supported it as a just punishment, but they never favored it as a practice consonant with natural law.

I respectfully invite submission of a single solid example of a doctrine properly adopted at one time by the Church that was later abandoned in favor of an opposing doctrine, and if one can find such a change, to show that dissent from important doctrines was a contributing cause of the change. I will remain open to the possibility, but I believe that a fair examination of the historical record will show that no such example exists. ✠

Robert G. Kennedy is in the department of management at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota. This essay was posted on an internal electronic bulletin board at that university.

All Dreams Are Not Welcome

An Address to College Students Honors Convocation, Xavier University April 17, 1999

by Fr. David Meconi, S.J.
Teacher of the Year

There is another university in Cincinnati—a university which will remain nameless but whose boundaries run somewhere along Macmillan and Clifton Avenues. This other university in Cincinnati has recently adopted the motto: "All dreams are welcome here." All dreams are welcome? One can only

wonder what this institution plans to do about daydreaming, not to mention nightmares. No doubt this university has dreamt of graduating one of their star athletes for years now! But a university cannot allow all dreams. A university exists to set forth the highest standards and train accordingly; to forward all students to the service of Truth. The great paradox is of course that human dreams are free to destroy themselves. Dreams of bigotry, sloth and cowardice, dreams of unjust power and vain glory, dreams which place personal choice over human virtue are not, by definition, to be welcomed at a university.

Dreams unbridled become a people's downfall; the prophet Zechariah warns against "those divin-

ers with false visions: Deceitful dreams they tell, empty comfort they offer. This is why they wander like sheep wretched: they have no shepherd” (10:2). Far from fostering fantasy and pipe-dreams, the business of a university is not to welcome but to winnow dreams: to transform deceit and self-delusion into wisdom and sanctity.

A university must hence be wary of all and any dream language. Welcoming indiscriminate dreams is the fruit of a therapeutic culture forgetful that true human longings terminate in things divine. A University would do well to remind its students that placing one’s own plans of blessedness and the good life over any consideration of what God has set up to be so, leads both individuals and their societies to their own destruction. As you have all read in Plato’s *Republic*, tyranny is caused by getting whatever one dreams of: the result of placing one’s desires above the divine element found within the soul (590 c-d), becoming enslaved to a disordered mind blinded by lower sights.

Your generation falls heir to a culture slowly forgetting the higher things: and your task as Xavier students and soon-to-be alumni is to remind yourselves and the world that not all things belong to Caesar. As the Ancients knew so well, politics and commerce may be natural and necessary pursuits but they do not treat the human person’s most noble concerns. Serious concern for philosophical and theological matters are today said to deflect us from the really important things of life. It seems that the smaller our faith in dogma, the larger our faith in dreams.

St. Augustine bids us to order our lives on two principles: service of neighbor and devotion to the Divine. Toward the end of the *City of God*, he suggests the following consideration: “What matters is how you answer these two questions: What do you possess as a result of your love of truth and what do you pay out in response to the obligations of love of neighbor? For no one ought to be so leisured as to take no thought in the service of others, nor so active as to feel no need for the contemplation of God” (XIX. 19). Herein lies the heart of your Jesuit education: contemplative in action—men and

women so taken by the love of God that they lose themselves in service of the other. Perhaps this was what John Henry Cardinal Newman was getting at when he told university students a century ago, that they should strive to become “at once oracles of philosophy and shrines of devotion.”

But the dreams for which you should live and die are not centered on yourself but on God and your neighbor for whom God suffered. Dream language as envisioned by a University that would welcome all, surely ignores the salvific role of suffering and patient trial—for dreams rarely make room for toil and perseverance. Socrates repeatedly warned the young men who questioned him not to limit themselves to temporal goods but to philosophize in such a way so as to be raised out of this dream world. He knew that rising to see the truth would oftentimes be painful but it was one’s only way out of the cave. Classical wisdom has always known that the philosopher must sometimes leave Athens and that inevitably the Cross must be carried. The world’s wise resort to dreaming because they cannot imagine a wealth beyond corruption, a wealth won through humility and surrender. Cardinal Newman’s idea of a college graduate was someone so wise that he spent a part of his day kneeling asking for salvation. His poem, *Dreams*: “Oh! Miserable power/ to dreams allow’d, to raise the guilty past, and back awhile the illumined spirit to cast/ On its youth’s twilight hour;/ Nay, hush thee, angry heart!/ An Angel’s grief ill fits a penitent;/ Welcome the thorn— it is divinely sent,/ And with its wholesome smart/ Shall pierce thee in thy virtue’s palmy home,/ And warn thee what thou art, and whence thy wealth has come.”

We stand before you this morning asking you not to dream any dream but to seek the truth of things and order your lives accordingly. Don’t just dream but see! Francis Xavier lived to bring the Faith to India and the Orient, dying with his eyes set on the coast of China. When in 1552 Xavier is called to leave this earth, another missionary is born: Matteo Ricci, a Jesuit mathematician and astronomer who would soon continue Xavier’s work. Our Jesuit ancestors were true dreamers because they

were visionaries of God: their visions were not turned inward but onto the One who loves each of us so much; here is our wealth, our infinite wealth! And as we come upon the new Millennium, the source of this wealth has neither changed nor dried up— we too are called to continue this mission, Xavier’s mission, to bring the love and wisdom of God to a world slowly forgetting him—or even

worse, making Him in its image—and if you lay your intellect and desires down for His service, in whatever you do, you will not be doomed to dreaming your own dreams but you will see, you will see great marvels. As this University calls you to do: open your eyes and see, with Xavier and all of God’s friends, see countless wonders: *Videbitis mirabilia magna*. Thank you. ☩

Catholics in the World of Mass Media

by Avery Dulles, S.J.

The following is a Lecture for the Salesian Guild, Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, given January 23, 1999.

I eagerly accepted this invitation from my friend Father Matthew Gamber because I am anxious to support his important work and that of the Salesian Guild in any way that I can. I felicitate the Guild for its many accomplishments in the fifty-five years of its existence here in Cincinnati. From the materials that Father Gamber sent me in advance I am impressed by the way in which you are responding to the need for committed believers to enter critically and creatively into the complex world of contemporary communications.

Let me begin with a disclaimer. I am not a specialist in communications. I hardly turn on the television except for news broadcasts. I rarely go to movies; and I know no more about computers than is strictly necessary to type a manuscript. I use the fax but I have not yet acquired an e-mail address. My preferred world is definitely the world of paper and print. I can learn much more from books than from images and sounds, and learning is what interests me. From my standpoint as a survivor of the print generation, I cannot tell you much about the newer media that you do not already know. But I shall make some observations about how the use of these media seems to be affecting the faith of Catholics and the prospects of evangelization.

In many of his encyclicals and addresses Pope John Paul II has referred to the world of mass communication as a “new Areopagus.” The allusion, of course, is to St. Paul’s famous sermon at Athens, in which he first proclaimed the gospel in the cultural center of the ancient world. That sermon, as reported in Acts 17, is an outstanding example of missionary adaptation. Paul builds on the religious sensibilities and poetic traditions of his pagan audience, while at the same time insisting on what is distinctive to the Gospel. We are led to believe that he achieved very limited success, because doctrines such as bodily resurrection struck his hearers as absurd. And as we may gather from First Corinthians, he found that the doctrine of the Cross was foolishness to the Greeks. Nevertheless he did make a dent with the conversion of Dionysius and several others, and thus planted the first seeds of the great harvest of Hellenistic theology in the patristic era.

The world of communications, which John Paul II asks us to evangelize, stands at the very center of contemporary culture. We live in an age of mass communication, electronic communication, multimedia communication. Huge international conglomerates are absorbing radio and television stations and publishing firms, and extending their control to books, magazines, newspapers, telephone systems, computer web sites, radio, film, television, and so forth. Each medium has its own potential, its own limitations, and its own dangers. In this talk I shall be thinking especially about film and television, and some of my generalizations may not apply very well to computer technologies and the World Wide Web.

Marshall McLuhan once made the famous statement, “The medium is the message.” Taken at face value, this aphorism is false, since every medium is capable of carrying a variety of messages. But the aphorism contains a truth, since every medium tends to shape the message according to its own inherent logic and to block out any message that does not suit its own mode of communication. The problem of evangelization is, first, to find out how the dominant media can be used for transmitting the Christian message and, secondly, to overcome the limitations that tend to distort or screen out that message.

Successive historical eras can be designated in terms of the prevailing forms of communication. In primitive times oral communication was dominant; writing was rare, and most people were illiterate. In the patristic and medieval periods, oral culture was displaced by manuscript culture. At the dawn of modern times manuscript culture yielded to print culture, which is only in our time ceding ground to a culture that is predominantly electronic. No one of these cultures has perfectly served the goals of Christianity, but all of them could be, and were, used to some effect.

Oral culture lends support to the personal authority of the prophet or preacher, who stands up and delivers a clear and definite message, as the early Christians did in their missionary proclamation. Apostles such as Peter and Paul set forth the essential Christian message (the kerygma) in concise narratives that could be summarized in brief confessional formulas, such as “Jesus is risen. Jesus is Lord.” These statements, backed up with the personal authority of the apostolic witnesses, were received by communities of disciples. Oral culture therefore served well for purposes of Christian proclamation. But for assuring the permanence and universality of the faith and for inculcating the fine points of doctrine, the spoken word was insufficient. Already in the earliest period it was supplanted by other means, especially the canonical Scriptures.

In the manuscript culture of the Middle Ages, the prime locus of authority shifted from the oral to the authoritative text, enshrined in sacred books—primarily the Bible, but also, secondarily, the

writings of the Fathers. Christianity was taught by priests and monks outstanding for their erudition in the word of God. In the high Middle Ages the clergy developed a sophisticated and subtle style of university education. The commentator was always subordinate to the text. The bottom line was no longer, “I say unto you,” but rather, “It is written.”

Since manuscripts had only limited circulation, and since literacy was limited to an elite class (the clerics or clerks), the written word had to be supplemented for the great masses by visual art, drama, and music, all of which flourished in the medieval Catholicism. In the great cathedrals, sacred dramas were played; sacred music was sung, and sacred art flourished in stained glass windows, statues, icons, and frescoes.

The advent of print culture overturned the medieval system. The Protestant Reformers took advantage of the printed word and the literacy of the new bourgeoisie to circulate affordable vernacular editions of the Bible and pamphlets promoting their own interpretations. While attaching great importance to preaching, some Protestants were hostile to sacred art. Catholics, while continuing to cultivate the arts, were likewise drawn into the realm of print, disseminating their own versions of the Bible, their own catechisms, and their own polemical tracts.

As books and pamphlets multiplied, the locus of authority gradually underwent another shift, from the sacred text to the authors, who claimed authority to produce texts of their own. In the Enlightenment the entire system of revealed religion and sacred texts was challenged by authors who appealed to experience and demonstrative argument as their authorities. Individual readers were encouraged to form their own judgment on the basis of evidence. In the so-called “age of reason,” theology itself was obliged to become rational and critical, borrowing the weapons of its adversaries. The Church was on the defensive. It sought to shield the faithful from infidelity by instruments such as ecclesiastical censorship and the Index of Forbidden Books.

The communications of our own era might be best characterized by the term “multimedia,” with the recognition that electronic transmission is

dominant. Print culture survives, not only in books, magazines, and newspapers but, in variant form, in computer printouts. Oral proclamation is experiencing a certain revival, thanks to the capacity of radio, television, and videotapes to capture the living voice and even the appearance of the speaker. Music, of course, holds an important place in the electronic culture.

One new element in the contemporary situation is the virtual elimination of time and space. Communication has become instantaneous and worldwide. A volcanic eruption in the Hawaiian Islands, a flood in China, or a car bombing in Israel can be observed minutes later in the living rooms of people in New York or Moscow. Such occurrences can be made graphically present to people who make no greater effort than is required to press a button or turn a dial.

The culture of the media is not simply a matter of news coverage. As means of instruction and entertainment, the new systems transmit an incredibly rich menu of ideas and behavioral patterns, including the weird and exotic. In technologically advanced cultures such as our own, sports events, dramas, and musical festivals are accessible on a daily basis to ordinary people. Films can create imaginary worlds— that of “Star Wars,” for instance— that seem as real as the world in which we actually live. The line between fact and fiction becomes blurred.

Driven by a compulsive search for greater markets, the media deliberately select what will draw the greatest numbers of viewers. This is notably the case with television, which is supported by advertisers who want to sell their products. To a great extent, the global culture industry promotes itself, since it would die without huge audiences. Catering to the tastes of the general public, it takes account of the religious, moral and esthetic sensibilities of its clientele, but in its quest for attention it finds itself driven to emphasize what is new, different, and surprising. Hence it suffers from a continual drift toward sensationalism, eroticism, and violence.

The electronic revolution, as we all know, is having a profound impact on the human psyche. Along with other factors in our culture it is

producing a new mentality that we cannot afford to neglect. John Paul II frequently calls attention to the new culture that is being forged by the contemporary media.

Each of us would probably come up with a somewhat different characterization of the typical person produced by the new culture industries. My own impression is that the enormous power and impact of the productions tends to engender a rather passive consumer, who is content to be a spectator rather than an actor, a follower rather than a leader. We let ourselves be manipulated by the interests of the opinion-makers, who are in turn driven by the demands of the market. We thus forfeit our independence of judgment. Accustomed to surfing, we lose our ability to focus on anything in particular. We switch from one perspective to another rather than consistently following up any one point of view. Having more choices at our finger tips than we can seriously appraise, we lose our capacity for profound and permanent commitments and our taste for sustained analysis. Our attention is absorbed by the superficial— by appearances (one might say) rather than reality. All too often, we allow our humanity to be debased by representations of brutal violence and sexual licentiousness.

Paul Valley, an experienced British journalist, sums up the matter well. News values, he says, include factors such as novelty, conflict, power, scandal, titillation, and self-interest. Opposed to these are what he calls “Kingdom values,” the values cherished by the Church. Under this heading he lists love, justice, compassion, self-sacrifice, fidelity, perseverance, community, forgiveness, solidarity, and mission. “It would be an exaggeration,” he writes, “to suggest that these two sets of values are polar opposites but there are clearly huge areas of disparity.”¹

From this side of the Atlantic, Michael Budde gives an equally pessimistic appraisal:

The cumulative and interactive effects of global culture industries... threaten the capacity of the church to survive as a movement committed to a distinctive vision and practice rooted in Christ. Especially (but not exclusively) for the Catholic Church, the ability of the church to reproduce

itself in the lives, bodies, and hearts of its members is being undermined at the level of fundamental religious formation.²

These appraisals can be tested by examining how the Catholic Church fares in the contemporary communications situation. It cannot be ignored, since it figures as a large, conspicuous, and somewhat powerful institution. But it appears as strangely odd, rather suspect in the modern world. Its faith shows up as one of many options, often as an implausible option based on excessive reverence for tradition and authority.

These perspectives enter into the ways in which the official teaching of the Church gets reported. “When the news media cover religion,” writes Budde, “it is to focus on controversy, scandal, the unusual, or freakish.”³ The popular media seem fixated on questions of sex and authority, and even in these areas the authoritative statements are reported in truncated form, without nuance and without supporting rationale.

The secular media, with their inbuilt bias toward the conflictual, the emotive, and the scurrilous, and their detachment from particular religious commitments, seem unable to report any statement of faith without accompanying it with contrary reactions, along the lines of the “talk show.” When a program is run about Christ and the Gospels, the media habitually interject interpretations that cast doubt on the reliability of the New Testament. So likewise, when they report doctrinal or disciplinary action on the part of the Church authorities, the media seek out commentators who will dissent, with the result that in the end the official position is neutralized by contrary reactions. Emphasizing contrasting points of view, the media regularly leave the impression that the position of the Church could have been different and is perhaps mistaken. This is not because the reporters or programmers are necessarily hostile but rather because of the inherent tendencies of the medium itself, as already described.

The problem is compounded by the predilection of the mass media for change. The more novel and radical the events, the greater is their journalistic appeal. This bias toward novelty is unfavorable

to the Catholic Church, which depends on fidelity to a revelation already given and continuously handed down in Scripture and tradition. The Church makes news at precisely the points where it can be made to appear that she has rejected her own tradition.

The treatment of the Second Vatican Council may serve as an example. The popular media tend to present it as a doctrinal revolution, plunging the Catholic Church into all the ambiguities of the secular world, dismantling her venerable traditions, and dissolving or at least weakening the authority of her hierarchical government. From popular accounts one could easily get the misimpression that a reactionary Roman bureaucracy had blocked the sweeping changes mandated by the Council, when in fact Rome was implementing exactly what the Council called for. The media reinforce the popular assumption that all the teachings and practices of the Church are subject to limitless change.

Still another source of difficulty for the Catholic Church and for any sacred institution is the tendency of the media to dwell on the surprising and the shocking. The profanation of the sacred is an easy path for gaining wide publicity. Thus, a cathedral such as St. Patrick’s, located in midtown Manhattan, becomes a magnet for hostile demonstrators who, by disrupting worship services, gain wide coverage in the media, which are generally on the lookout for misdeeds of church personnel—especially priests and religious—who fail to live up to their vocational commitments. Undue attention is therefore given to regrettable lapses such as pedophilia on the part of priests.

Catholics who are anxious to improve the image of the Church and to promote effective catechesis of the young can easily become angry or discouraged in the face of the obstacles I have mentioned. But their anger is unavailing, since the difficulties are in great part endemic to the media.

We can, of course, urge the media to do better. When they misrepresent Catholic teaching or practice they should be called to task. Generally speaking, religious reporting is inferior to the reporting of politics, finance, and sports, which often contains a considerable amount of expert analysis. The

media can perhaps become more self-critical with respect to the stereotypes they tend to manufacture. We may hope for a greater supply of well-informed and able religious journalists such as Peter Steinfelds of *The New York Times* and Ken Woodward of *Newsweek*.

Although we cannot expect that the secular media will deliberately promote the Gospel, the possibilities of evangelizing through the media should not be entirely discounted. It must be recognized, in the first place, that the Catholic Church is enormously telegenic. Its antiquity, its continuing vitality, and its universality make it fascinating to the media of our time. As demonstrated by Franco Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth*— to mention only one example— the Gospel story retains abiding power to captivate and move large audiences. The Church has a long and fascinating history filled with heroism and drama. Deeply imbedded in a multiplicity of cultures, it has liturgical and cultural expressions corresponding to many of them. It has extraordinary monuments in art and architecture, music and literature. It has majestic ceremonies and personalities of extraordinary stature, including some remarkable saints and popes of the present century.

The artistic heritage of Catholic Christianity has been portrayed on television in richly glowing terms by Kenneth Clark's *Civilization* series and by Sister Wendy Beckett's series on the history of Western art. The courage of St. Thomas More was dramatically conveyed by John Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons*. Episodes from the history of Catholic missionary activity have been favorably (though somewhat ambiguously) portrayed in films such as *The Mission* and *Blackrobe*. Saints such as Joan of Arc, Vincent de Paul, Bernadette of Lourdes, Therese of Lisieux, and saintly figures such as Oscar Romero and Dorothy Day have been subjects of popular films. In *The Waterfront* the work of Jesuit labor priests was brought to the attention of a broad public.

Contemporary Catholic religious events obtain extensive media coverage. When a pope travels to a new country, canonizes a saint, issues an encyclical, or dies and is buried, and when a conclave gathers to elect his successor, the media take notice— more, I suspect, than they would for the leaders of

any other religious community. The basilica of St. Peter and the magnificent square in front of it afford an impressive setting.

To compensate for the negative portrayals, we need to find more ways of publicizing the Church's success stories, which in their way can be just as dramatic as the occasional failures that receive so much attention. The tremendous outreach of the Church toward the poor, its work for peace and human rights, its championing the cause of the weak and oppressed— all of this makes excellent material for the communications media. What is required is often a little more initiative in getting the good news out.

To offset the inherent biases of the secular media, new systems of communication can be formed under Catholic auspices. The Catholic Church in this country has had remarkable radio and TV personalities such as Bishop Fulton Sheen, but it is usually acknowledged that Protestant evangelists have made much more effective use of television. The most successful effort along this line has been Mother Angelica's *Eternal Word Television Network*, a cable channel that transmits from Birmingham, Alabama and reaches millions in many continents by satellite. TV programs such as those of the Christophers and those of Msgr. Thomas Hartman and Paulist Father Bud Kieser have had considerable impact. Catholic radio stations are burgeoning in many parts of the country. A national Catholic radio network, (CRN), is currently being launched.

Immense new fields for the apostolate of the media are now opening up on the Internet. The Holy See and the bishops conferences have easily accessible sites on the World Wide Web. Although these web sites offer little by way of evangelization, they are valuable sources of information. But in some cases they transmit misinformation. According to Roger Cardinal Mahony of Los Angeles, "What is presented on the Internet and elsewhere as 'Catholic' is often not in fact so."⁴ More control is no doubt needed to prevent people from being misled by groups that do not have any official standing or approval. An Index of Prohibited Websites would probably not be much help!

We hear a great deal about the need for the

Church to adapt to the current media. As I have been saying, maximum use must be made of the capacities of the new media for communicating the Catholic faith. But at the same time, we must be aware of the limitations of these media and of the respects in which the Church could not adapt without betraying her mission. She must continue to preach and teach the deposit of faith that has been committed to her, whether or not the new media provide suitable channels of transmission. The Church cannot forsake her Scriptures, creeds, dogmas, sacraments, and divinely instituted organization. She must preach a message of humility, service, and sacrifice.

Reflective authors therefore caution against the formula, “If you can’t beat them, join them.” Budde maintains: “The push toward great use of culture industry vehicles is problematic in the extreme. It presumes the neutrality of culture industry tools ethically and in terms of effects on communicators, messages, and audiences; such is a profoundly naive and ill-informed view, in my opinion.”⁵ Paul Valley expresses a similar admonition: “In the end there is a fundamental incompatibility between much of the work of the Church and that of the media....The Church should not waste too much time on trying to influence what is fundamentally a tainted process. It will spend its time more cost-effectively elsewhere.”⁶

Before concluding, let us reflect for a few minutes on what this “elsewhere” might be. Aware that the mass media can never be adequate for the successful communication of the faith, the Church desperately needs its own internal systems of communication in order to catechize and instruct the faithful. Because the Church is a communion, it needs to be held together by constant communication, both sacramental and verbal. The faith is best communicated in a context of worship and prayer, in which the Holy Spirit is invoked. Liturgical and sacramental participants have been adequately catechized. But they do little for persons who have not learned the meaning of the ceremonies.

The pulpit is a precious instrument for exhortation and instruction, but we cannot rely upon it to fill all the demands of religious education. A seven-

or ten-minute homily once a week, in the context of Eucharistic worship, cannot provide an adequate religious education even for the relatively few who come to Mass every week. In order to be inoculated against the pervasive relativism and hedonism of the global culture industry, Christians need to be much more thoroughly socialized into the traditions and values of the Church. This requires a system of schools, catechetics, retreats, and missions as well as a vast body of doctrinal literature suited to the capacities of different groups of readers. The RCIA, if conducted by knowledgeable leaders, can be a precious instrument of evangelization and catechesis.

Budde recommends a lifelong catechumenate with a strong emphasis on full religious conversion. He sets great value on small ecclesial communities such as that of San Egidio, an international lay association founded in 1968 by a group of high school students in Rome, which now has affiliates in two dozen countries with a membership of more than 15,000. He has words of praise for the Neocatechumenal Way, a movement founded in 1964 in Madrid. Without wishing to assess these particular movements, I agree that initiatives of this type are needed to make the Church sufficiently strong and distinct to resist the debilitating pressures of the global culture industries.

The Internet can be a valuable resource for parishes and small communities. Some creative pastors already put the Sunday readings, their homilies, and their parish bulletins on web pages. They use e-mail to keep in contact with absent parishioners, such as students in college. These methods supplement, but do not replace, immediate face-to-face contact among living persons.

For a Church that evangelizes the world, the first essential is that its own members be effectively evangelized. Too many of our Catholics have never learned to understand their lives in terms of the Cross and Resurrection. They have a very inadequate personal relationship with the Lord, and are only dimly aware of the ways in which he makes himself present through the teaching, pastoral ministry, and sacraments of the Church. It is not surprising, therefore, that many are only half-

convinced of the Gospel message.

The problems of handing on the faith and of evangelizing the world are not primarily technical. If we have the will and the sense of urgency, means and methods will be found. The more basic problem is in the dimension of the faith. Do we still believe that the Christian message is true and important? Secular society enters into a very precarious situation when it ignores questions of truth and attempts to direct itself without reference to God and to Christ, the center and goal of all creation. Because so many people do not know why they are alive or how to achieve the purposes of their existence, our civilization exhibits alarming symptoms of decay. Will our world have to sink still deeper in confusion before it becomes receptive to the Gospel like the prodigal son reduced to penury?

If Catholics are failing to spread their faith through the electronic media it may be because many of them do not see why they should evangelize at all. The finest pastoral plans for social communications will fail unless we have believers on fire with the love of God. The preeminent need is not for technical proficiency but for eager adherence to the word of God. Paul said it best when he wrote to the Corinthians: "When I came before you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words of human wisdom.... My speech and message were not in plausible words of wisdom....that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Cor 2:1-5). In season and out of season Paul proclaimed Christ crucified. He was often rejected; he was repeatedly whipped and imprisoned, and eventually martyred, but in the end he made more impact than all the skilled rhetoricians of his day taken together. His words still inspire millions of believers all over the surface of the globe.

In short, then, the real problem of communications for the Church is the problem of holiness.

The demand is not for clerical rock stars and game-show hosts but for transparently sincere believers, whose message will come through because the power of God stands behind it. Technical skill, useful though it be, cannot take the place of interior union with God. The Church will succeed in the field of communications if, and only if, it raises up saints.

Let me conclude with a word from your patron, St. Francis of Sales, whose feast day occurs tomorrow, January 24. Excluded from his diocese by the hostility of the Calvinists, he repudiated the use of force. Ideas, he maintained, cannot be conquered by cannon fire. In an age of polemics he sought to win hearts by spreading love. "It is by charity," he wrote, "that the walls of Geneva must be shaken; it is by charity that the city must be invaded and recaptured.... Everything gives way to love. Love is strong as death, and to one who loves, nothing is difficult."⁷

At points where we find resistance to the word of God our best efforts will not avail unless we rely on love and prayer. With these arms we shall often find it possible to bring down the walls of hostility as Joshua did when he brought down the walls of Jericho with the blast of a trumpet. ✠

NOTES

¹ Paul Valley, "The Media, the Church, and the Truth," *Priests and People*, 8 (1994): 175-80 at 176.

² Michael Budde, *The (Magic) Kingdom of God: Christianity and Global Culture Industries* (Boulder, Col.: Westview, 1997), 54.

³ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴ Roger Cardinal Mahony, "The Church and the New Justice Issues," address delivered at Denver, Colorado, March 28, 1998.

⁵ Budde, 84.

⁶ Valley, 180.

⁷ Saint Francis de Sales, "Harangue pour la prise de la possession de la prevote de S. Pierre de Geneve," in *Oeuvres* (Annency, 1896), 7:99-113, at 107, 110.

Msgr. George A. Kelly: A Tribute

by Cardinal John J. O'Connor

Never in the more than 20 years since I first met Msgr. George A. Kelly have I met him without thanking God that this erudite street-wise prelate is on the Church's side. He has written a library-size stack of books, each more provocative than the other, each bursting with dynamic orthodoxy from fly-leaf to finale.

When I first became a bishop for the armed forces in early 1979 and was confronted with a highly complex and intellectually challenging task, peripheral to my pastoral duties but important to the Church, it was to Msgr. Kelly that I turned before all others. His insights proved indispensable. If I had to give an address in an academic setting, it is to this academician's works that I have turned to get a sense of the field, a context of what is being thought and written, pro and con his own positions.

Why this column at this time? Maybe because the summer always makes me think about this clerical Jimmy Cagney in what must be among the last of the straight straws in the world. Maybe because already we are more than halfway through the final year before the millennium and I am poignantly conscious that neither Msgr. George nor I will be likely to clock too many years after the bell tolls. Maybe because I have been feeling modestly guilty about having missed a more than somewhat classy symposium held in his honor this past April, even though the missing was not my fault.

Msgr. Kelly was for years the tireless father, producer and general factotum of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, both the organization of scholars itself and its incisive publication. The publication may well be the most extensively underappreciated journal around; the work of some of the least appreciated Catholic and Catholic-minded intellectuals in the country. Were there no other reason than for his giving the world the Fellowship, Msgr. Kelly deserved the highest-level gathering of scholars that could be gathered, and he got what he deserved.

The intellectually formidable Archbishop George Pell of Melbourne, Australia, was one of them. He was my house guest, and awed me by recounting the essence of the scholarly papers presented in abundance.

For many years Msgr. Kelly held forth on the campus of St. John's University in Queens. Member of the faculty, he simultaneously founded and directed the Center for Advanced Study of Catholic Theology. Previously, as director of religious education for the Archdiocese of New York and esteemed by His Eminence, Cardinal Spellman, he developed a major reputation as a student and champion of labor. (During the ill-fated strike of cemetery workers, well before my time in New York, Msgr. Kelly objected strongly to the supplanting of gravediggers by seminarians.)

But speaking of which—gravediggers, that is—let me assure Msgr. George that this column is intended as a long overdue tribute, not a premature obituary. But it's a tribute he must, and I know gladly *will*, share with a very large band of brothers. Every once in a while this calloused conscience of mine finds itself ashamed to look around at the legions of indescribably faithful priests who have taught, preached, ministered, celebrated, sacrificed for lifetimes of fourscore years and more, and recognized that they have served with little notice and with rare plaudits. In singling out one, Msgr. Kelly, who has never wavered for a billionth of a second in his dedication to the Church, I point my gratitude to the countless numbers filled with the same zeal, a vast forest of faithful oak trees.

I missed your symposium and your party, Msgr. George, and although I sent a letter of apology, I want as many people as this column reaches to know of my gratitude to you, scholar in a straight straw, foe *formidable* of theological and scriptural chicanery, working man's best friend. *Ad multos annos.* ✠

This tribute is a reprint of Cardinal O'Connor's "From My Viewpoint" column in Catholic New York, July 15, 1999.

Catholic New York and the Responsibility of Mass Media

Jesuits' Old Views

Catholic New York
July 15, 1999, p. 13

To the Editor:

Catholic News Service's well-constructed summary (CNY, July 1) of the latest Jesuit response to *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (June 21) reiterates old views of theirs which have been rejected by the Holy See at least a half-dozen times, on four continents, over 30 years.

In 1973 Paul VI's Congregation for Catholic Education requested American college presidents, voluntarily but "unequivocally," to incorporate into their statutes (with enforcement instruments) the corporate commitment of their colleges to Catholicity. All the devotees of the Land O' Lakes declaration of autonomy for college presidents, with Jesuits in the lead, ignored the Holy See. Six years earlier, Paul's First Roman Synod of the world's bishops had decried the "errors of faith" being propagated among the faithful by "men of more advanced education," who nonetheless remained deaf to the Roman pleas on behalf of the faith.

Ten more years of fruitless dialogue were endured by Rome, as college administrators regularly grieved over the loss of secular status, money and social peace they would suffer, if they obeyed the pope. In 1983 John Paul II issued a new Code of Canon Law,

covering colleges as well, but no one in the Catholic halls of ivy paid attention, in spite of the measurable spiritual harm already inflicted by professors in Catholic colleges on the young.

Seven more years would pass, again, and as if recalling St. Paul's dictum that law is only necessary for "the lawless and the disobedient" (1 Tim. 1:9-11), John Paul II promulgated *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* in 1990, specifying the minimum conditions under which a college could function and still call itself Catholic. The college establishment, as if it were a collective bargaining unit in the Church on a par with the pope, said no again. And it importuned a bishop to seek a dispensation because Americans were different from Catholics in other parts of the world. The pope said no once more.

The following year, Father Avery Dulles, S.J., for a Fordham University audience, tracked the fall of religious influence on American higher education—"from denominational to generic Christianity, then to vaguely defined religious values, and finally to total secularization." Father Dulles further opined that this "drift is by now (1991) inevitable in practically all Catholic universities." Clearly, the Catholic university establishment was drawing its life's blood from "the heart of the State," not *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* ("the heart of the Church").

A college or university is merely the highest level of someone's system of education, be it state, Church, private corporation or professional body. All higher education has a common core, but an institution's reason

for existence, for its identity, is determined by its sponsor. The secular institution, to say the least, is neutral both on God and on Christ. A Catholic college which defines itself in secular terms, but keeps its religious name, is at best only nominally Catholic. More likely, in the words of Cardinal Newman, it is an institution in which Church authority is not "directly or actively" involved, one which has become the Church's rival. If truth is the issue here, a Catholic college seeks first the kingdom of God, and its president is no more autonomous from the Vicar of Christ, than he is of Christ himself.

Msgr. George A. Kelly
President Emeritus
Fellowship of Catholic Scholars
Rockaway Beach

REPLY TO MSGR. KELLY

Catholic New York,
July 22, 1999, p. 13

To the Editor:

I welcome the agreement of Msgr. George A. Kelly (Letters, July 15) with my remarks on the Catholic identity of universities at a conference held at Fordham in 1991. On one point he was inaccurate. I did not say that the trend toward secularization is inevitable, and in fact I recommended a number of measures for countering the trend.

I am surprised by the way in which Msgr. Kelly takes the Jesuits to task. What he calls "the latest Jesuit response to *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*" is culled from a press report of apparently extemporaneous remarks made at a panel

discussion of several Jesuit educators at a meeting of university development personnel in San Francisco last June.

If Jesuits were “in the lead” at Land O’Lakes in 1967, as Msgr. Kelly alleges, they were by no means alone. That regional conference of the International Federation of Catholic Universities was convoked by Father Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C. Of the 26 signers of the statement, only 10 were Jesuits. Two signers were archbishops, and one of the monsignori who signed is today an archbishop.

As for the apostolic constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, it was drafted with the help of several Jesuits and was generally well received in Jesuit circles. Jesuits, like other educators, are not of one mind regarding the canonical implementation of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Many of us suspect that ways can be found to implement the “mandate” for teachers of theological subjects in this country, but we recognize that zeal must be tempered by prudence so that the remedy will not inflict unintended damage.

Father Avery Dulles, S.J.
Fordham University
Bronx

**UNPUBLISHED LETTER BY
MSGR. KELLY**

July 23, 1999

Miss Anne Buckley
Editor
Catholic New York

Dear Miss Buckley,

I knew my criticism of “the Jesuits” for their campaign against *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* would be countered by someone, but did not expect it to come from Fr. Avery Dulles. Nor do I wish to rekindle our serious disagreement of a quarter-century ago, when he was President of the Catholic Theological Society of America (1975–1976). Fr. Dulles knows I applaud many of his recent statements on controversial Catholic issues.

But I stand fast in my conviction that “Jesuits” were the driving force in the Land O’Lakes movement and are today leaders in the opposition to *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* implementation.

That a mere “10” Jesuits, especially their “big guns,” could dominate the original Land O’Lakes meeting of 26 attendees should surprise no one. That “mere 26” in a very short time re-fashioned the thinking of over 230 college presidents in opposition to episcopal oversight of their works for the Church.

(It is true that a phrase like “the Jesuits” does not mean all Jesuits, only their leadership which often speaks for all Jesuits. When the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars was founded in 1976, the driving forces were Jesuits, hardly collaborators with their Land O’Lakes confreres.)

I may have misread Fr. Dulles’ nuances, as he suggests, but on April 21, 1991 at Fordham his unpublished text on the secularization of American higher education (p. 18) reads as follows: “Many competent observers are of the opinion that this drift is by now inevitable in practically all Catholic universities.”

I saw Jesuit anti-papal leadership, up close and personally in Rome, at the 1972 International Congress of Catholic Universities. There the Georgetown President rose to dare Cardinal Gabriel Garrone, the Pope’s Prefect for Catholic Education, to impose papal norms on his university. A year later (1973) I asked the same Cardinal in Rome if he agreed with that Jesuit view. Never did I see this classy Frenchman so mad: “Is there no other voice in the United States save that of the Jesuits and Fr. Hesburgh?” (Out of that question grew the Fellowship 3 years later.) Ever since, most influential Jesuit publications have taken a consistent anti-papal stand, in spite of the fact that Paul VI on August 6, 1975 warned 70 Jesuit University Rectors about their expected fidelity to the hierarchy and the Holy See.

I see great hope in Father Dulles’ note of last year that “between us (and with much help from others) we can help contain some of the madness that now passes for Catholic Christianity.” Much of that madness exists today on Catholic campuses—curable only by the grace and wisdom of John Paul II. Without this one shepherd, the one fold disappears.

Cheerfully yours in Christ,
Msgr. George A. Kelly

Rev. Thomas F. Dailey, OSFS
Executive Secretary

“Summer break” — a phrase usually associated with the academic year, this is becoming an oxymoron in the circles of the Fellowship!

As an organization, the Fellowship has been actively preparing for the 1999 convention in Chicago. By now all members should have received our summer mailing, with information concerning the convention, the *Membership Directory*, and the election of four new members of the Board of Directors.

—The 1999 version of the *Membership Directory* will be distributed to members who attend the convention. For those who cannot attend, it will be mailed in October.

—The new members elected to the Board of Directors will be announced at the convention and in the next issue of the *FCS Quarterly*.

Individual members of the Fellowship have also been busy,

even in the summer! Notable activities include the following:

William Brennan, professor at St. Louis University School of Social Service, has published an article in the May 1999 issue of the *New Oxford Review* entitled “Anti-Fetal Rhetoric: America’s Best-Loved Hate Speech.”

Larry Chapp has been appointed Acting Academic Dean at Allentown College of St. Francis de Sales (PA).

Fr. Thomas Dailey, OSFS has published an article entitled “The Wisdom of Irreverence: Job as an Icon for Postmodern Spirituality” in the July 1999 issue *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Culture*.

Fr. John Kobler, CP has published an article in the June 1999 issue of *Catholic International* entitled “Tackling Malaise in the U.S. Church: The Recovery of the Mystagogical Catechesis of Vatican II.”

Congratulations and best wishes to **Fr. Bernard O’Connor, OSFS** who was appointed the third President of Allentown Col-

lege of St. Francis de Sales (PA).

Along with a few colleagues, **Joseph Varacalli** has edited a work entitled *The Saints in the Lives of Italian-Americans: An Interdisciplinary Investigation*. The book is available from the Center for Italian Studies at SUNY Stony Brook (NY). In addition, **Varacalli** has written *Bright Promise, Failed Community*, a work on American Catholics which will be available from Lexington Books in the Spring of 2000.

Finally, several members of the Fellowship will be involved in an upcoming *Touchstone* conference in Chicago on October 7-9, 1999. Entitled “Return to the Father’s House: God the Father and Human Fatherhood,” the conference will feature presentations by **Paul Vitz, Leon J. Podles**, and **John Haas**.

Ours is an on-going “fellowship,” so if you have any scholarly news to share, please contact the Executive Secretary ... or visit our website at <http://www4.allencol.edu/~philtheo/FCS>.

ERRATUM

The list of Gavin Boyd’s recent publications in the Spring 1999 issue was incomplete. He has edited the following volumes:

The Struggle for World Markets
(Edward Elgar (UK) 1998)

Structural Change and Cooperation in the Global Economy, edited with John Dunning (Edward Elgar (UK) 1999)

Deepening Integration in the Pacific Economies, edited with Alan Rugman (Edward Elgar (UK) 1999)

Globalizing America, edited with Thomas Brewer (Edward Elgar, forthcoming)

In progress is a volume on *Corporate Governance and Globalization* which is being edited with Stephen Cohen for Edward Elgar.

Gavin Boyd is an Honorary Professor in Political Science at Rutgers University, Newark, New Jersey, and lives at 856 Bridges St., Halifax B3H 2Z7, Nova Scotia, Canada.

James Hitchcock

Bishop G. Patrick Ziemann of Santa Rosa (Ca.) has resigned his see after admitting that he had a sexual relationship with a priest of the diocese, Father Jorje Hume Salas. The priest, who was removed from his parish by Bishop Ziemann in 1996 for embezzlement, claims that the bishop “blackmailed” him into a sexual relationship, which the bishop’s lawyer has denied.

A nun working in Hume’s former parish has charged that the priest, a Costa Rican who was recruited for Santa Rosa to serve as a lay youth minister, was ordained by Bishop Ziemann without evidence that he had attended a seminary or was otherwise trained for the priesthood. Hume has filed suit against the diocese charging the bishop with coercion and sexual abuse.

Archbishop William J. Levada of San Francisco, who has been appointed administrator of the diocese, praised Bishop Ziemann for his devotion and dedication.

★ ★ ★

Catholic Charities of the East Bay, a division of the diocese of Oakland (Ca.), has inaugurated the Safe Schools Project in both private and public schools, designed to inculcate tolerance of “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and questioning” young people.

★ ★ ★

Cardinal Bernardin Gantin, dean of the College of Cardinals, has decried what he calls “careerism”

among bishops who seek promotion to other dioceses. He suggested that bishops should remain “married” to one diocese throughout their episcopacies. Cardinal Gantin is former head of the Vatican’s Congregation of Bishops, which is responsible for recommending candidates for the episcopacy to the Pope.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, expressed agreement with Cardinal Gantin, saying that transfers from one diocese to another should be considered only in the case of very large sees. Cardinal Camillo Ruini, Vicar of the diocese of Rome, defended current practice.

★ ★ ★

The Holy See’s Congregation of Bishops has issued new rules whereby national bishops’ conferences can issue statements on doctrinal or moral issues only when they are approved unanimously or are approved by the Holy See.

★ ★ ★

Father Raymond Collins has resigned as dean of the School of Religious Studies at Catholic University of America, claiming that his resignation was forced because he protested what he called the university’s failure to investigate charges of sexual harassment against a faculty member. Some of Father Collins’ supporters speculate that his ouster is related to his refusal to support *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the Holy See’s statement on Catholic higher education.

★ ★ ★

Criticism of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* on the part of educators and other Catholic liberals continues. The Vatican document has been attacked by, among others, Jesuit Father Thomas Reese, editor of *America*; Father Thomas Rochford of the Jesuit Conference in Washington; Holy Cross Father Edward Malloy, president of the University of Notre Dame; Margaret O’Brien Steinfeld, editor of *Commonweal*; and priest-sociologist Andrew Greeley. Critics have called on the American bishops to reject the document, which they claim would be destructive of Catholic higher education.

Jesuit Father John Piderit, president of Loyola University, Chicago, has given qualified endorsement to *Ex Corde* and urged the Association of Catholic Colleges to modify its opposition. However, Monika Hellwig, executive director of the association, insists that the Vatican document is unacceptable. She also says that Cardinal Pio Laghi, prefect of the Holy See’s Congregation for Catholic Education, has told her that *Ex Corde* is not to be “taken literally” and that he criticized certain American colleges which, he said, consider themselves “100 per cent Catholic.”

Meanwhile a study at the University of Dayton has found that, in hiring faculty, administrators of Catholic colleges and universities consider “Catholic values” more important than the Catholic faith itself, with only 57 per cent of faculty designating themselves as Catholics. Ron

Katsuyama, director of the study, said it shows that “Catholic institutions are strong in their ability to accommodate people with different values.”

★ ★ ★

Larry Flynt, a professional pornographer and publisher of *Hustler* magazine, spoke at Georgetown University, a Jesuit institution. Auxiliary Bishop William Lori of Washington condemned Flynt’s speech on a Catholic campus. Georgetown officials said they did not endorse Flynt’s appearance but defended it on the grounds of academic freedom.

★ ★ ★

DePaul University of Chicago, operated by the Vincentian Fathers, officially celebrated Gay Pride Week, including a Queer Kiss-In and a Drag Ball. DePaul President Father John C. Minogue stated that DePaul, which is now the country’s largest Catholic university, operates according to “the best traditions of Catholic education.” Organizers of Gay Pride Week claimed to receive expressions of support from priests on the faculty.

★ ★ ★

A Massachusetts court has upheld Boston College’s dismissal of Mary Daly, long-time theology professor at the Jesuit institution. A radical feminist, Daly was fired for refusing to allow males to enroll in her classes, which, the college pointed out, is a violation of federal civil rights laws. Over a period of many years Daly had been defended by the college against charges that she was un-

dermining Catholic doctrine in her courses and her writing.

★ ★ ★

The Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, after a lengthy investigation, has ordered Salvatorian Father Robert Nugent and Sister Jeannine Gramick, a School Sister of Notre Dame, to desist from all pastoral activities among homosexuals and has barred them from holding any office in their respective religious communities.

The CDF’s decision followed a report five years ago by a committee chaired by Cardinal Adam Maida of Detroit, which found that New Ways Ministry, with which Father Nugent and Sister Jeannine were closely associated for many years, did not uphold the teachings of the Church concerning homosexuality.

New Ways Ministry was originally located in the Archdiocese of Washington but was forced out some years ago by Cardinal James A. Hickey. It has been barred from some dioceses but, despite Cardinal Maida’s report, continued to be welcomed in others. (For example, before he was forced to resign because of pedophilia, Bishop Keith Symons of Palm Beach (Fla.) endorsed Father Nugent’s and Sister Jeanine’s appearance in his diocese and dismissed their critics as “ill-informed.” Recently the Boise [Id.] diocesan newspaper praised their work and endorsed a seminar they were scheduled to conduct in the diocese.)

Father Nugent announced that, in a spirit of obedience, he would abide by the CDF’s ruling. Sister Jeannine called the Vatican

decision “fundamentally unfair” and said she had not decided whether to obey it.

Pax Christi USA, a “social justice” group of which some bishops are members, criticized the decision and urged that it be revoked. Bishop Walter Sullivan of Richmond has urged the American bishops as a group to demand its retraction.

★ ★ ★

Dignity, another organization of Catholics which justifies homosexual activity, claims that Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit, in response to a question, has stated that he believes that sexual activity between persons of the same sex can be moral.

★ ★ ★

Following objections from the papal nuncio to Canada, retired Bishop Remi De Roo of Victoria (B.C.) canceled a speech he was scheduled to give to the International Federation of Married Catholic priests. The objections were said to come from the Congregation of Bishops in Rome.

★ ★ ★

Call to Action, a national group of dissenters from various Church teachings, reported that in the fiscal year 1997-8 it received over half a million dollars in contributions from “members,” and had assets of \$682,000 at the end of 1998. Some of the organization’s members are religious orders, and it also receives support from some diocesan offices.

★ ★ ★

Irish singer Sinead O’Connor, taking the name Mother Bernadette Mary, was “ordained a

priest” by a bishop of the schismatic Latin Tridentine Church. O’Connor gave the church \$200,000 but took the donation back after critics charged that it smacked of simony. O’Connor achieved fame some years ago when she ripped apart a picture of Pope John Paul II on national television.

★ ★ ★

Auxiliary Bishop William Murphy of Boston, acting on behalf of the archdiocese, banned the use of church buildings by Massachusetts Women Church, an organization which lobbies for the ordination of women and stages demonstrations at the annual archdiocesan ordinations.

Bishop Murphy specifically ordered local Jesuits to cease support of the group, which claims to be implementing an official Jesuit commitment to the cause of women. Officials of Women Church were invited to meet with archdiocesan officials in the chancery office but refused on the grounds that the chancery is a “seat of patriarchy” and proposed a Jesuit house instead.

★ ★ ★

An editor of the *National Catholic Reporter*, John L. Allen Jr., predicts a coming conflict in Ameri-

can Catholicism between younger priests who tend to be orthodox and lay staff members at various ecclesiastical levels, who he says are predominantly committed to change. “The American Catholic Church is, in other words, educating two sets of ministers whose belief systems are worlds apart,” according to Allen. He points out that dissident movements in Europe, as in Austria, are largely fueled by church employees.

★ ★ ★

Bishop Wilton Gregory of Belleville (Ill.), vice-president of the American hierarchy, charged in a sermon that Catholics who oppose immigration and “affirmative action” are “blinded by bigotry and hatred” and “shamelessly seek new followers with whom to share their depravity.”

★ ★ ★

The Pontifical Council for Christian Unity has stated that the recently issued joint Lutheran-Catholic statement on justification does not represent a change in Catholic teaching or a repudiation of the decrees of the Council of Trent. Instead, the Congregation indicated, the statement affirms that present Lutheran teaching on the subject does not fall under the Council’s condemnation.

★ ★ ★

Following his death in June, Cardinal Basil Hume of Westminster addressed the American bishops at their semi-annual meeting. Unable because of illness to accept an invitation to address the bishops in person, the cardinal sent a videotape in which he criticized the Holy See for, among other things, “interference” in the affairs of local dioceses and “heavy-handed” treatment of theological dissenters.

Bishop Joseph A. Fiorenza of Houston, president of the American hierarchy, called Cardinal Hume’s address “insightful and thought-provoking” and said the cardinal was “among the great and good spirits of our time.”

★ ★ ★

According to an Anglican study, Christianity is growing in Africa far more swiftly than anywhere else in the world, increasing at a rate of 3.5 per cent every year, which amounts to about six million new members annually.

★ ★ ★

Three Roman Catholic priests have been ordained in Russia, the first since before the Revolution of 1917.

James Hitchcock is professor of history at St. Louis University and a charter member of the Fellowship.



Jacques Maritain:
The Philosopher in Society

James V. Schall. Lanham, MD:
 Rowman & Littlefield Publishers,
 Inc. 272 pages. \$22.50 paper.

Reviewed by Marc D. Guerra

Jacques Maritain is undoubtedly the most famous Thomist of the twentieth century. A seemingly compulsive writer, Maritain authored over fifty books and two hundred essays on subjects in speculative and practical philosophy. Moreover, he was the public face of the Scholastic renaissance in metaphysics that occurred in the first half of this century. Yet some twenty-six years after his death, it is now clear that his enduring legacy lies not in speculative philosophy or metaphysics, but in the transformation he helped bring about in Catholic social thought. An impassioned defender of the spiritual dignity inherent in the modern notion of human rights, Maritain frequently used his formidable talents as a rhetorician to champion the justice of liberal democracy. The understandings of human rights and “Christian Democracy” that he formulated in books such as *Man and the State* and *The Rights of Man and Natural Law* were in part aimed at persuading the Catholic Church to abandon its support of traditional regimes and to adopt a more sympathetic view of the modern state. To appreciate the impact that Maritain has had on Catholic thought, one only has to observe that today most bishops and theologians simply assume that democ-

racy is the only legitimate form of government compatible with Christianity.

James V. Schall offers a comprehensive and thought-provoking introduction to the political thought of this influential French thinker in *Jacques Maritain: The Philosopher in Society*. The second volume to appear in Rowman & Littlefield’s “Twentieth Century Political Thinkers” series, Schall’s well-written book argues that Maritain provides a much needed “model [for] modern political thought” (p. xi). What set Maritain apart from the majority of modern political thinkers was the fact that he was, first and foremost, a philosopher; his thought touches upon a full range of concerns, from the nature of art, to the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, to the metaphysical foundations of evil. Whereas modern political philosophy deliberately bracketed all “ultimate questions” in an effort to solve the political problem, Maritain’s political philosophy was motivated by his desire to discover the truth. For Schall, Maritain stands out among modern political thinkers. Because he agreed with St. Thomas that reason must remain open to natural and revealed truths, he was able to ground his political judgments in a coherent theological metaphysic. He agreed with Plato—perhaps too naively—that in order to know political things, one has to know more than just political things. As an alternative to the politicizing tendencies of modern political philosophy, Maritain proposed a Thomism

that viewed all practical political truths as being derivative of, and finally subordinate to, more properly philosophic rights.

Given Maritain’s emphasis on the need for human reason to “progress from political philosophy to philosophy” (p. xii), it is not altogether surprising that Schall’s book begins with a discussion of Maritain’s analysis of the first modern thinker to deny the necessity of this progression, Machiavelli. Maritain began a series of essays shortly after the start of World War II, the most famous being “The End of Machiavellianism,” in which he attempted to establish a direct connection between Machiavelli’s doctrines and the brutality and the nihilism of fascism and National Socialism. Maritain’s essay carefully draws out the implications of Machiavellianism and shows how the doctrine’s internal logic “eats away at the substance of political life;” its illusion of “immediate success” rests on the fundamental confusion of art and politics (p. 9). Over and against Machiavelli’s politics of princely self-aggrandizement, Maritain speaks of the inescapable primacy of the common good.

Because he presents Maritain’s argument with greater clarity than it had been originally formulated, Schall is able to show how Maritain was himself a type of “political realist.” Maritain agrees with Machiavelli that the exigencies of political life often require rulers to use fraud and force. And he condemned the false scrupulousness of “hyper-moralists” who deny the political

legitimacy of such actions (p. 4). But unlike Machiavelli, Maritain did not view the fact that rulers periodically have to use fraud or force as the key to understanding human nature. Maritain faulted Machiavelli for mistaking the distortions of sin for the deepest truth about man's nature. Having rejected Christianity's teaching about the Fall, Machiavelli claimed to see "moral evil where he was sometimes witnessing deliberations about which was a lesser evil" (p. 8). Maritain somewhat strikingly suggests that it was a lack of refinement about realism that led Machiavelli to believe that human nature supported the practice of evil. Machiavelli lacked the kind of theological understanding of human nature that could provide "an ethical alternative to Machiavellianism that [did] not shy away from or deny the situations that seem to make Machiavellianism inevitable" (p. 6). Maritain, in other words, asserts that only a metaphysic that recognizes the unnaturalness and the reality of sin is capable of formulating a "principle of just and legitimate means in all political cases" (p. 17).

While Schall is helpful at bringing out the complexity of Maritain's political realism, he never fully comes to terms with some of the thornier questions raised by Maritain's theological alternative to Machiavellianism. To take one example, Maritain's famous "principle of tolerating the lesser evil" on some level is at odds with classical Christianity's belief that the choice of any kind

of evil is never *wholly* legitimate. St. Augustine and St. Thomas also pointed out that while Christians' participation in politics was unavoidable, even desirable, it required the acceptance of a certain degree of moral evil. But in contrast to Maritain, both thinkers displayed a greater appreciation of the fact that such an admission implied that the standards of justice that are operative in political life are necessarily diluted. St. Augustine and St. Thomas consequently would be suspicious of the kind of latent utopianism that lies behind a principle that suggests that citizens and statesmen can act justly "in *all political cases.*"

The theoretical core of *Jacques Maritain* are the three central chapters in which Schall discusses Maritain's philosophy of democracy. Maritain agreed with Henri Bergson's claim that democracy was an outgrowth of the classical and the revelational traditions. He understood the principle of democracy to be equally based on the philosophic teaching about natural law and the Biblical teachings on the love of one's "neighbor and dignity of the person" (p. 99). Simply stated, for Maritain, without the influence of Christian principles, political philosophy would be incapable of presenting a theory that "justifies democracy" (p. 102).

What Christianity specifically offers democratic theory is a truthful and an accurate account of the nature of the human being. In an insightful chapter entitled "Democracy: Anthropocentric and Christian?," Schall carefully examines how Maritain's notion

of Christian humanism lies at the heart of his democratic project. Christian humanism, for Maritain, acknowledges "that God is the center of man" (*Christianity and Democracy*, Ignatius Press, p. 28); it accepts the Christian categories of grace and freedom and embraces Christianity's teaching that human beings are both sinful and redeemed. Most fundamentally, it rejects the false idea that human beings are radically self-sufficient. Schall points out that it was Maritain's moral seriousness that caused him to be such a relentless critic of modern philosophy's anthropocentric humanism. Maritain opposed modernity's fictive claim that the only restraints man experiences are those which he wills for himself. Maritain realized that while human beings may initially find this alleged liberation exhilarating, it is finally deeply corrupting. For the failure to recognize natural or divine restraints inevitably leads to the kind of "inhuman humanism" that gave birth to "the dangerous intellectual premises of Nazi Germany" (p. 100). Only a true humanism, that is, a Christian humanism, is capable of providing democracy with the kind of healthy understanding of man that it needs to sustain itself.

As Schall notes, Maritain uses the word "democracy" equivocally. On the one hand, he uses "democracy" to designate all non-despotic regimes. Such regimes aim at the common good and uphold a principle of pluralism that supports the autonomy of sub-political associations, such as families and churches. Most

importantly, democratic regimes respect the political authority of popular consent. Maritain locates the source of all political authority in the people's basic right of self-governance. Appealing to the arcane "transmission theory of authority," Maritain claims that political authority originally resides in people and not in any given person *per se*. Rulers thus receive political authority through the consent of the entire political community—Maritain never explains, however, how a political community can exist prior to the establishment of a political authority. The people's right to self-government cuts across the entire spectrum of political communities: "Whatever the regime ... may be, authority, that is the right to direct and command, derives from the people... the realization of this basic verity (long ago pointed out by some great Schoolmen) had been a conquest of democratic philosophy" (*Man and the State*, CUA Press, pp. 127–129). However on the other hand, Maritain uses the word democracy in its more familiar sense to denote the political arrangements that characterize the modern constitutional state. Democracy in this sense designates a type of regime that holds periodic popular elections, establishes a separation of powers, and respects the equality and human rights of all citizens.

But Maritain's own rhetoric, particularly in his writings on human rights, often blurs the distinction between these two meanings of democracy. Schall interprets Maritain's writings on

human rights as noble, but ultimately failed, attempts "to coordinate modern rights' talk... with natural law principles" (p. 86). In these works, Maritain sets out to invest the popular understanding of rights with a deeper and more substantive meaning. As Schall points out, Maritain was critical of the subjective idea of rights found in the works of early modern political philosophers such as Hobbes and Locke. Maritain appreciated that while modern right doctrines claimed a basis in nature, their actual origins lay in a voluntaristic understanding of the human will. Modern natural rights doctrines articulate an empty, nominalistic conception of what each individual is supposedly due. In contrast, Maritain conceives of human rights as complements to the traditional Thomistic teaching about natural law. Whereas natural law speaks of duties that one owes to others, human rights speak of an "objective rightness... that exists in my relationship to everyone else" (p. 85). Human rights properly understood are not grounded in self-interest, but in those objective communal relationships that foster the good life.

The problem, however, is that while Maritain criticizes the contentless character of modern natural rights, he simultaneously praises the modern state for its unprecedented ability to protect many of these rights. Although Schall does not directly acknowledge this tension, he implicitly points to it by noting that Maritain's "extensive" list of rights "confuses rights with legis-

lation" that could be enacted within a liberal democracy (p. 86). The practical result of this confusion is that when Maritain's writings are viewed as a whole, they suggest that only liberal democracy is able to secure the kind of socio-political arrangements and fundamental human rights that characterize a truly non-despotic regime.

Schall's book concludes with a discussion of Maritain's reflections on the possibility of "a world political order." As he does throughout *Jacques Maritain*, Schall here presents Maritain's argument in the most charitable light. Despite this, the reader cannot help noticing that Schall is far less sanguine about the possibility, or even the desirability, of a world state than Maritain. Schall notes that Maritain describes the possibility of a world state as "a problem;" he accordingly implies that its existence is something for philosophy to resolve. Maritain himself observed that if the "idea" of a world state "is grounded... on true and sound political philosophy, it cannot be impossible in *itself*" (p. 203). The solution that Maritain proposes is a "*fully political* theory of world organization" that "acknowledges that man's social and political nature itself is ordered to things that are not political" (p. 209). Such a world organization would not lose sight of the supra-political end of human beings. Moreover, it would hold out the "heroic" possibility of bringing about an "appreciable equalization of the standards of life of all individuals" (p. 212).

Schall attributes Maritain's rather fantastic musings about a world state to the fact that: 1) "he was writing before any actual world body had time to manifest its limited character" (p. 212), and 2) that he thinks about this possibility not as a political man but "as a philosopher" (p. 202). However both of these explanations seem unduly generous. To begin with, many prominent thinkers, from Aristotle to Raymond Aron, have harbored deep suspicions about the despotic propensities of the world state. In truth, Maritain's speculations about a world state point to a deeper problem with his thought as a whole. For all of his seemingly political concerns about "the democratic project," Maritain finally was not an emphatically *political* thinker. As the subtitle of Schall's book correctly points out, Maritain thought of

himself as a philosopher in society, not a philosopher of society—and certainly not a philosopher of political society. Maritain's tendency to view political things from the metaphysical heights meant that he never treated the common-sense understanding of political life, the indispensable starting point of political philosophy for Aristotle, with the seriousness it deserved. In the final analysis, what Maritain's Thomism offers is not so much a political philosophy, but a philosophy of "practical sciences" like political philosophy. This helps to explain why Maritain could be so insightful about the reductionist tendencies of modern political philosophy and yet frequently arrive at apolitical, hyper-theoretical conclusions in many of his own political judgments. Maritain's "*fully political* theory of world organization," for example,

would not allow for the kind of "ruling and being ruled in turn" that is constitutive of political life. What Schall's book ultimately shows is that Maritain's great strength lies in his ability to point to the areas where Thomistic political thought must continue to work, particularly in regards to its understanding of rights and the nature of liberal democracy. *Jacques Maritain* is valuable no less for the light it sheds on Maritain's political thought than for the fact that its author reminds us in his commentary of the need for Thomism to combine its central theoretical insight with the kind of attention to detail that can do justice to man's political nature.

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The Church Impotent: The Feminization of Christianity

by Leon J. Podles, Ph.D.
Spence Publishing Company,
Dallas, 1999. xviii + 288 pages.
\$29.95

Reviewed by Rev. Leonard A. Kennedy, C.S.B.

Dr. Podles is a retired English professor who has used his retirement to do a great deal of research on men and religion. His bibliography covers twenty-four pages. He is a Catholic who is solicitous for his Church but not angry with it. He wishes, how-

ever, to draw attention to the fact that "Catholic circles are full of committees and conferences on the place of women in the Church, and almost none on the absence of men," and he warns that, "if the feminization of the Church continues, men will continue to seek their spiritual sustenance outside the churches, in false or inadequate religions, with highly dangerous consequences for the church and society."

All major writers on the subject today agree that women in Western Christianity are more religious than men, and this conclusion is based on all criteria of religiosity, such as church atten-

dance, willingness to pray, or involvement in church activities. Moreover, the clergy of all Western Christian religions score very low on "masculinity surveys," along with artists, editors, and journalists. And effeminate and homosexual men are disproportionately present in the clergy.

This, however, need not be the case. Jews, Muslims, and the Orthodox do not follow this pattern. And Catholics were not like this in the earlier centuries of the Church's history.

Podles distinguishes between maleness and masculinity. Maleness is a biological given, whereas masculinity is achieved by train-

ing and discipline. Many cultures, aware of this, have had initiation rites for youths approaching manhood. They have considered it necessary to formally provide a passage from women's society, particularly from dependence on the mother, to a bonding with men. The youth undergoes death to a former way of life and is granted entrance to a new one. This passage involves something difficult, a struggle, to teach the young man that life is a struggle and he must fight.

This message is necessary for Catholics too, of course. It teaches the difference between maleness and masculinity. Masculinity involves responsibility, responsibility for one's family and one's society. The male is by nature more aggressive than the female. He has to learn that this is for a purpose, so that he can support and defend his family, and fight, even die, for his country.

"Patriarchy is not... a synonym for... a system in which male traits are valued over female ones. Still less is it simply a synonym for exploitation and domination, though that is the current feminine usage. Patriarchy is a system in which fathers care for their families and find their emotional centers in their offspring. In ancient Israel, the image of the father was not primarily one of authority and power, but one of adoptive love, covenant bonding, tenderness, and compassion. Patriarchy, we can easily forget, was and is a great achievement in the face of the male tendency to promiscuity and alienation from children and the women who bear

them....Biblical patriarchy, far from a curse, is one of the greatest achievements of any religion."

The male must, for a time, separate himself, as it were, from the feminine world, but only to make himself a real man, and then to be reunited with that world. "The patriarchs reflected the fatherhood of God, although very imperfectly. The God of the Hebrews was not like the irresponsible masculine gods of the surrounding pagan cultures, because he did not abandon the children he begot, but cared for them.... Their cultures taught the Jewish men that they should not be simply male animals, aggressive, assertive, and violent, but fathers, whose aggressiveness would be transformed by responsibility and who would manifest a gentleness and a concern for children, an expression of a completed masculinity that has reunited with the feminine world of the family, while still maintaining the separation necessary to exercise authority."

Podles traces the beginning of the feminization of the Catholic Church to about the year 1000 A.D. He claims that three influences came together at this time to bring this about. First, he credits St. Bernard's teaching that every soul is feminine to God and that everyone should become a bride of Christ, who is the Bridegroom of each soul. Previously it was taught, as it is in Scripture, that Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church collectively.

Secondly, society had developed so that at this time it was much safer than previously for

women to live together in convents, and there was an explosion in the number of women who did so. This necessitated them being looked after by chaplains, usually religious, who developed with them a "feminine" spirituality. With find this spirituality in the women mystics who flourished at this time and in the writings of John Tauler, Master Eckert, and Henry Suso, who directed some of them.

Podles sees evidence of this feminization as a result of the conversation between mystics and Jesus. "The emphasis on the self-disclosure of Jesus' emotions through his verbal revelations to women mystics is itself feminine. Men disclose themselves through their actions, women through their words. Women have a greater awareness of and loquacity about their emotions.... This emotional sensitivity [of men] is a form of self-protection. If men have to undertake the dangerous tasks of society, a cultivation of emotions will interfere with their ability to carry out their tasks. For a man to talk freely and at length about his emotions sounds feminine, and that is what Jesus does in the visions in which he reveals his heart. Jesus in Scripture is much more reticent about his emotions; he reveals his anger, affection, and distress, but he does not talk about them." And Jesus talks in these revelations about his distress at sin, his deep and tender affection for souls, etc., not about "his anger at Satan, the wrath of God which is also the fire of his holy love, or his comradeship with those fighting against evil,

both of which are prominent in the Gospels and are masculine emotions.”

Thirdly, Aristotle’s writings were coming into Western Europe at this time. It was not until the nineteenth century that the existence of the human ovum was discovered. Until then it was thought, following Aristotle, that, in procreation, men were the active agents and women were passive, simply providing a nest, as it were, for the child. This alleged biological passivity was seen to reinforce the idea that women are passive in regard to God, readily accepting his word and his commands, and thus setting an example for men, who are less passive by nature. The Virgin Mary was seen as an ideal in exercising this passivity, which was instanced especially in her saying yes to God at the Annunciation. “In this tradition, which dates substantially from the twelfth century, the masculine humanity of Christ is irrelevant as an example for Christians. The feminine, obedient, responsive soul of Mary is the true model.”

For Podles, however, “receptivity is not the center of femininity. Integration and communion are at the heart of femininity.” And “Mary’s response to the Word is not passivity. She does not remain in quiet contemplation, but acts.”

The result of this feminization of spirituality was not simply to fashion a spirituality for nuns or for women but also to imply that there was only the one spirituality for all. This made a great change in the lives of men. For the first

three centuries of the Church’s existence masculinity had been honored by the high regard given to martyrs. Though there were women martyrs, masculinity as an ideal involved willingness to die for what is really important. Following the Age of Martyrs masculinity had been honored by the high regard given to monks, who were seen as a different kind of martyrs. St. Athanasius said that “the martyrs were often consummated in a battle lasting a moment, but the monastic institute obtains a martyrdom by means of a daily struggle.”

Now, if the feminization of the Church began eight hundred years ago, it has reached its zenith in the last thirty years. What are some present-day instances of this feminization?

The liturgy and the Bible are being rewritten to expunge references to men. Some dioceses have deliberately preferred, as a matter of policy, to hand over parishes to nuns or laywomen rather than to permanent deacons. The existence of hell is downplayed. Some think that there is no hell (a doctrine called Universalism), others simply that, though it exists, no one is in it. Even the fallen angels are conveniently forgotten. Life is not seen as a struggle to the death, which to a degree robs masculinity of its praise. Some women reject obedience because they are “seeking a God with whom they can be one, not to whom they must be subject.” This same premise, that we become one with God, is sometimes stretched to mean that we can be so one with God that

we cannot sin, a doctrine which is called Quietism. The premise is today stretched even further, to conclude that everything is God, a doctrine called Pantheism. Feminists want God to be a Mother or a Parent, not a Father. And even God the Son to be called God the Child. And the Holy Spirit to be “she.” Yet “only God’s self-revelation in the Scriptures gives us access to an understanding of his inner life, and the Scriptures constantly characterize the intra-Trinitarian relationship of God as masculine.... The First Person... is called Father by the one who knows him, Jesus.” “The Church is feminine because it is a communion, and a reflection of the divine communion of the three persons in the Trinity.... God is feminine in that he is a communion, but he cannot be addressed as feminine since we speak to him as a person, and his tripersonal nature is masculine. The Church is a personification rather than a person.... But the individuals who make up the Church are masculine because they are called to be imitators of the Son in his masculine action of sacrifice and expiation.” “Central Christian doctrines, such as the Trinity and the Atonement, are under severe attack, and may banish from the popular consciousness of Christians, to be replaced by a self-worship that cloaks itself in Christian language.” We have Catholic women urging “the honoring of women’s divinity” and the rejection of “the practice of self-sacrificial love” in favor of “self-realization.”

“As the Church became more and more feminized, the predominance of feminine emotions encouraged both mystics and theologians who counseled them to attempt subtle change in Christianity to make it conform more to the desires of the feminine heart. A change of emphasis here, a neglect of inconvenient Scripture there, and soon a religion takes shape that, though difficult to distinguish from the Christianity of the Gospels, somehow has a quite different effect. Pantheism and Universalism, for instance, are the heretical exaggerations of feminine attitudes, but how far can one go in stressing the immanence of God and his will to save before Christianity is left behind? When does bridal receptivity become passivity, and when does passivity become Quietism? There have been differences of opinion over where to draw the line. The authorities win in the textbooks, but the mystics have often won the battle for popular influence.”

For Podles, all human beings seek transcendence, something greater than themselves. Some men seek it in sexual activity, in which they go beyond themselves, to a child and thus society. Other men seek it in participating, actively or passively, in sports, in which a group transcends the individual, and physical excellence satisfies the desire for achievement. Some seek it in brotherhoods, such as Neo-Nazi

groups. If they do not seek it in the right way they will seek it in the wrong way.

When it comes to suggestions about what to do to make Catholic men more religious, Podles says that we should not be “bent on expanding the role of women in the Church and ignore the absence of male laity.” Also that Catholic churches “that cultivate a gay atmosphere (Archdiocesan Gay and Lesbian Outreach, gay choirs, gay tolerance talks in schools) will keep heterosexual men away. Fear of effeminacy is one of the strongest motivations in men who will sometimes die rather than appear effeminate.”

He recommends an initiation ceremony, or process, for young men, and gives an example of one devised by a United Church minister, a program administered by the men’s fathers as a group.

Sermons, also, can be more directed to men than is usual, dealing with their role in the family, their work, their struggles. And, indeed, life should be pictured as a struggle, which it is. “The tone of contemporary Catholicism too often is an irritating optimism, in which administrative triumphs are trumpeted as if they were the Second Coming.” “There has been a little honest confrontation with the mystery of evil,” he says, “and this lack of confrontation has led to a trivialization of Christianity that makes it especially unappealing to men who want to spend their

lives not on verbal games and pleasant rituals, but on the serious matters that can yield an insight into the meaning of existence.... Sin and damnation have disappeared in an ecclesiastical atmosphere of universalism and self-fulfillment.” “Churches that can preach the Gospel without the modifications that make it easy and bourgeois have a great advantage in reaching men.”

Finally, “what has been missing in the preaching of the Church, although it is prominent in the canonical Gospels, is the element of brotherly love, but brotherhood understood not as a vague affection, but as blood-brotherhood and comradeship. This self-sacrificial masculine love is deeply desired by men and is one of the things that make war tolerable or even desirable. However, earthly wars are but a result of a far deeper conflict, the war in heaven in which we are called to participate.” “Men are made for brotherly love. It is the escape from the prison of self in which all human beings are locked.... Men seek brotherly love at the workplace, in gangs, in fraternal organizations, in war, but rarely in church or anything to do with church. Although the New Testament is permeated by the brotherly love which men desire, a barrier presents men from seeing it, and from seeing in Christ the Brother the meaning and fulfillment of the sacrifices that men make in order to become men.” ☒

*The Catholic University as
Promise and Project:
Reflections in a Jesuit Idiom*

by Gerard V. Bradley

In 1990, on the Feast of the Assumption, Pope John Paul II published his Apostolic Constitution for Catholic higher education, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. The Holy Father called upon national bishops' conferences for ordinances to "appl[y] concretely" the General Norms he promulgated. On that day Bill Clinton was governor of Arkansas. There was still a Soviet Union, and Mikhail Gorbachev was its President. Saddam Hussein had just invaded Kuwait.

The Chicago Bulls have since won six world championships, even though Michael Jordan took a couple of years off to play baseball. Yugoslavia disintegrated. My wife and I had four children. But in the United States, at least, there are no ordinances, and no authoritative application of ECE.

The first U.S. bishops' proposal was shot down by the Catholic academy; the second by the Vatican. The third set of proposals, crafted by a Committee headed by Cardinal Bevilacqua, are being reworked this summer. The whole NCCB is scheduled to vote on (what would be) a fourth draft in November. The Vatican has final say in the matter; no ordinances may be applied without the Holy See's *recognition*.

Why has it taken (at least) twice as long to enact ECE ordinances as it did to fight the Civil War, or to defeat Hitler?

Because the academic establishment cries doomsday. Catholic college presidents say that implementing ECE will extinguish the institutions—their institutions, the Catholic universities—it is designed to structure and nurture. They say that they *cannot* be Catholic universities as envisaged by ECE because others, especially Caesar, will not let them be Catholic. Their group—the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU)—recently circulated a draft alternative to the Bevilacqua norms. This lukewarm proposal was “especially mindful” of Catholic institutions' governance by state charters and civil laws, legal conditions necessary to qualify for needed public aid, criteria employed by regional accrediting associations, and “other expectations” related to colleges and universities in the United States. Ironically, ACCU opposes Canon 812, requiring episcopal approval of Catholic theologians, because it would compromise the colleges' “institutional autonomy.” It seems rather that the colleges are prisoners of everyone's requirements and expectations for them, except of course the Church's.

The alleged legal and other external impediments to implementing ECE are either false or grossly exaggerated. But the rhetoric of impossibility, however trumped up, serves this purpose: it allows the Catholic academy to oppose implementation of ECE without flatfootedly dissenting from the Apostolic Constitution, and without exempting themselves from the law of the

Church, as if to secede. One could reasonably infer, however, that behind the apocalyptic rhetoric is a vision very different from that of ECE.

Here it is. Michael Buckley, S.J. is a Professor of Theology and Director of the Jesuit Institute at Boston College. His new book on *The Catholic University as Promise and Project* presents a full-orbed and forceful alternative to ECE. Although the chapters were all previously published as separate essays, the book is a coherent, if not quite systematic, vision of what Buckley calls a “Catholic, Jesuit” university. This vision, or one very much like it, has been the silent premise of opposition to ECE. Meditate a moment on *Promise*, and you can conjure in your mind's eye not only the twenty-eight Jesuit colleges, but the whole mainstream of Catholic higher education in America.

Buckley aims to steer a middle course between ECE and (what he regards as) some radically assimilationist models of the Catholic university prevalent today. He seeks a third way apart from the grim alternatives of “secular,” and “sectarian” or “restorationist.” He has in mind a university distinctly and irreducibly Catholic, but at the same time a real contemporary university. He has not a favorable word for the pre-Vatican II “custodial institutions,” from which your dad received his Bachelor's degree.

Buckley is a doomsayer, too: The “very possibility” of a Catholic university is at stake. But Buckley's criteria of disaster are internal educational and Catholic

ones. With refreshing candor, he squarely rejects the General Norms of ECE, and the provisions of Canon Law upon which, the Pope said, they were “based” and which the norms “develop[ed].” Buckley calls for (only) a “strong presence” of intellectuals committed to the “Catholic tradition.” The term “faithful Catholic” is nowhere in the scheme, and requiring a majority of them on a faculty— as ECE does— would destroy the necessary catholicity, and Catholicity, of Buckley’s university.

Buckley’s rejection of Canon 812, and with it any trace of an “ecclesially limited” theological discourse, is pronounced. In a rare dive for cover behind a nameless “many” alarmed others, Buckley grimly speaks of “de-meaning” and “unwarranted” mandates, professions of oath and fidelities, and episcopal interferences within pontifical faculties concerning academic appointments or promotions.

Buckley rejects the canonical requirement (Canon 810, explicitly incorporated by the Holy Father in ECE) that *all* teachers be outstanding for their “integrity of doctrine” and “probity of life.” He does not think that even *Catholic* faculty members must be orthodox. He laments that the “custodial institution” of yesteryear treated religion as “propositional orthodoxy and Christian morality.” That sounds pretty good to me, but Buckley considers those colleges to have been no more intellectually serious, and just as sociologically limited, as “Going My Way.”

Occasionally Buckley tries to harmonize his vision with ECE. He would be faithful, in his own way, to the “central summons” of ECE. He treats the Norms as “legislation,” positivistically understood as one way, and not a fruitful one, of carrying out the central message of the “papal introduction” to ECE. He concedes, however, that the “papal introduction” does not speak “explicitly” of his conception; it suggests Buckley’s “organic unity of desire” (More on that shortly). Buckley says that what the “norms will later legislate must be seen as instrumental to this ‘finality,’” as “subservient to it and to be judged accordingly.” This opens up for Buckley the possibility of being “faithful” to ECE and the Canon Law while failing to observe either of them. Distressing parallels to the Orwellian rationalizations of dissent come to mind: Catholics who say the only way to really honor their marriage is to get a divorce, or who say that sometimes the best way to respect life is to terminate it.

Buckley is doubly mistaken about the ECE Norms and Canon Law. They are, of course, binding, whether one likes them or not. And the chief among them— the approval of theologians, a majority of faithful and upright Catholics on the faculty— are *not* positivistic specifications of the principles (or “summonses”) which *really* make a Catholic college. They *are* the principles of a Catholic university, *essential* to its identity as such.

Buckley’s vision is a complex and learned one. Each of his three

terms— Catholic, Jesuit, university— does important definitional work. He defines a “community” as any group with a shared interest. An “academic community” is defined by its formalized collaboration in the pursuit of knowledge, the particular interest which all its members share. What specifies the university as Christian is charity among its members. The questions which have priority on the Catholic academic community’s agenda— about “ultimacies”— further specify the university which he recommends. Philosophy and theology will, because they deal directly with “ultimacies,” serve as “architectonic wisdom.” The “serious presence,” numbering “strongly among the faculty,” of “Catholic intellectuals” is also essential. The aim here is to bring the “variant traditions” of the Catholic “tradition” into close conversation with the (rest of the) universe of “serious discourse.” And Buckley means to include among the faculty representatives of *all* thought taken seriously in the host culture.

The principle of interaction among the polyglot constituents of Buckley’s Catholic, Jesuit university is utter freedom. It is impossible to overstate the mortal danger Buckley spies in what he misleadingly calls “fideism,” by which he means structuring the academic marketplace of ideas according to the truth. Rules against force or fraud are necessary, and they may be true in some sense, but they are justifiable as instrumental to the functioning of the marketplace.

No university has attempted

such a gargantuan task. None which tried could succeed. The array of what is considered serious thought in our culture especially is beyond the capacity of any one institution. Communication being what it is, it is now scarcely necessary to assemble an academic United Nations seminar in a single place, in order for the big conversation Buckley envisions to occur. Besides, one would think that the truths of the Catholic faith would provide some criteria for admission to the Catholic university chat room, especially where the host culture is a Culture of Death. Yet it seems that Buckley would have included on the Georgetown faculty of 1860 a large number of proslavery apologists. But Georgetown would have been more Catholic—and none the worse off as a university—had it excluded all such persons.

Perhaps Buckley means by “serious” more than a catalog of indigenous conversational cohorts. If he does mean it as a partly, or wholly, evaluative term, we are left with not a picture of a Catholic university, but a sketch. And one that can scarcely be Catholic: if the faculty *is* to be assembled according to moral criteria, his opposition to Canon 810—“integrity of doctrine” and “probity of life”—is all the more striking.

Buckley rejects all episcopal involvement in the intellectual life of the university. He seems to intend no insult. The “bishops have their obligations; the university has its obligations.” He does not question the authority of the

bishop to characterize what transpires within the university as contrary to the faith, if that is what the bishop judges to be the case. The freedom of professors to speak, which Buckley insists is essential to the Catholicity of the university, does not “touch” the bishop’s responsibility to make judgments about the orthodoxy of what is said. And vice versa. Hence, Buckley concludes, “academic freedom” is in “no way contradictory” to the Magisterium.

The Magisterium remains outside Buckley’s field of vision, even as he argues that Christ is the “paradigm” of the university. What can this mean if Christ’s Vicar—Peter and his successors up to John Paul II—are strangers to the enterprise? That the Magisterium works the other side of the street? The care of souls is the great solvent of (otherwise) distinguishable competencies in the Church. What should the president of Boston College do, according to Buckley, if the local Ordinary told him that neither he nor any other responsible person may call that institution “Catholic”? What if the Ordinary informed BC’s President that souls were endangered by the college’s recognition of a gay and lesbian student group?

The distinguishing Jesuit elements in Buckley’s vision are two: a distinctive theology which undergirds and justifies the whole enterprise, and a special, overarching commitment to “social justice.” To take the latter first. The 32nd General Congregation of Jesuits “demanded,” according to Buckley, that “every

Jesuit enterprise be evaluated and finally judged by these two criteria: its service to the faith and its promotion of justice.” This “demand” requires, as part of a proper “humanistic” education, students to acquire “a developed sensitivity [to] human pain and social injustice”: “millions who face genocide and slaughter in Middle Africa,...the hopeless urban proletariat on the streets of Calcutta, the refugees from East Timor,” migrant workers of California, black youth in Detroit, unemployed Hispanic youth in San Diego, those who live off food stamps, and many others. There is no mention of the millions who have died from abortion, in Detroit and San Diego and elsewhere on these shores, nor of the millions of women spiritually mutilated by the experience.

Aiming high for social consciousness among students is good as far as it goes. But Buckley does not notice that no school will produce students more Catholic than its faculty, even if the Catholicism at work is heavily tilted towards social justice. He reserves no place for hiring faculty according to *their* social justice sensitivity. (Unless, again, he means to smuggle in such criteria under the cover of “serious.” Perhaps libertarians and Republicans will not be counted as “serious.”)

Buckley’s justifying theology is dubious. Here are its three leading points. First, he states baldly that “nothing is finally profane.” But evil, especially including sin, is profane. And not everything which is good is reli-

gious; many good things are secular, even though they can be integrated within a holy life, and even though all our good works are material which God will transform into the heavenly Kingdom. “Everything, then, becomes a way to God because everything is descended from God,” Buckley concludes. This is simply false.

Second, Buckley takes over from Ignatius a doctrine of “instrumental causality,” which Buckley says is the “basic theological structure” for the educational program of the Jesuit university. “There is nothing in nature or in grace that is not from God through God and for God, and the finality of each is realized through the organic subordination suggested in the theology of instrumentality.” There is nothing *good* in nature which is not from God. Even so, it is false that the “finality” of each (good) thing is realized through “organic subordination.” Christians are not only not acting as divine instruments when they sin, not everything they do which contributes to their vocations can be described as making them “divine instruments.”

Here is Buckley’s payoff on these two (false) premises. The “governing purpose” of the university is the “unity of the gospel with all human culture.” “Human culture” is now valorized, if not sanctified; its role in the divine creative plan secure. “Gospel” here seems to mean “faith,” and that means, as far as I can tell, commitment to an unseen order beyond the everyday. There is, apparently according to Buckley,

a native magnetic attraction between the two, such that if left together in a bounded area, they will unite in a cosmic contemplative embrace. This unity just **is**, per Buckley, the aim of the Catholic university. It is a bit of heaven on earth. Given these axioms, one can see how the only, and Original, sin on campus is to inhibit inquiry. For inhibition derails the train to the Kingdom. It is almost blasphemous.

Buckley seeks support, if not authority, for his vision in canonical texts. But he adduces a verbal simulacrum more than he does a genuine coincidence of thought. One telling instance is his abuse of section 8 of *Gravissimum educationis*, the Vatican II document on Christian education. According to Buckley, it says that the Catholic university is that community of higher education through which the Church “strives to relate all human culture to the announcement of salvation.” (Later he says “...to the gospel of salvation.”) A better translation would substitute “orients” for “relate,” and “message” for “announcement,” thus more tightly integrating the (whole) context of the Gospel, and not the fact that there *is* a gospel, with the educational enterprise: the Catholic school “so orients the whole of human culture to the message of salvation...” The aim, according to the Council Fathers, is to produce graduates who will lead an “apostolic” life, and thereby serve as a “saving leaven” in the community.

But *this* section of the Vatican document does not speak of

Catholic higher education. Section 10 does. *It* says that the aim of these institutions is that “the convergence of faith and reason may be seen more clearly. This method follows the tradition of the doctors of the Church and especially St. Thomas Aquinas.” This sounds a lot closer to the custodial institutions of the past and ECE, than it does Buckley’s contemporary Catholic university.

Buckley organizes much of his discussion around the undertaking of theology as “faith seeking understanding.” *This* really is the paradigm for his university. As a purely semantic matter, the phrase can have several meanings. The meaning which coheres with all else Buckley says in *Promise*—and which is current among Catholic theologians— is that “faith” is event experience, and does not primordially include doctrine. Doctrine represents a fallible human effort to give expression to the “faith.” On this common view, theologians specialize in the task of explicating faith experiences, and thus enjoy a de facto primacy when it comes to doctrine. Doctrine is the product of theology which, on this view, remains the effort to explicate the experience of contact with God—or “faith.” “Catholic theology” is this effort focused upon the person of Jesus. The “catholic faith tradition” is that collection of theological explications concerning Jesus, a compilation whose principle is not (not at all!) orthodoxy, or compatibility with truths certainly known as such by virtue of revelation and divinely guaranteed human

teaching. The principle of the compilation is that the variant voices all speak about what the speaker identifies as “Jesus.”

But the faith had doctrinal content from the beginning. When the apostles preached about what they had learned from and about Jesus, they were not acting as theologians. As the Second Vatican Council taught in the Constitution on Divine Revelation: “in order to keep the Gospel forever whole and alive within the Church, the Apostles left bishops as their successors, ‘handing over’ to them ‘the authority to teach in their own place.’” Simply put, when the Magisterium speaks authoritatively, it *verifies* or *falsifies* assertions. It is a fount of truth which should be at the heart of the Catholic university’s life.

Buckley also mischaracterizes parts of ECE which he does not simply reject. The “central

summons” of ECE does, in fact, appear in the “papal introduction.” It is not relied upon by Buckley, either: a Catholic university’s privileged task is “to unite existentially by intellectual effort two orders of reality that too frequently tend to be placed in opposition as though they were antithetical: the search for truth, and the certainty of already knowing the fount of truth.” An account of the common good of a Catholic university community which responds to this summons would be along these lines, written by Germain Grisez: cultivating and sharing intellectual virtues and knowledge of the truth, including Catholic faith and its truths; justice and charity in relations among all members of the community; religious significance of the enterprise considered as cooperation in God’s creative plan.

The Holy Father in ECE says that Catholic universities are

“born from the heart of the Church.” That is what *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* means. Buckley refers to Catholicism as “the parent culture” of the Catholic university. *Promise* is a timely and valuable intervention in the graying debate over ECE. In it the opposition to ECE lays its cards on the table, and thereby permits the full scale engagement heretofore stalled by the rhetoric of impossibility. It should not be a long battle. The views are irreconcilable. We can now more clearly see that the dispute is not fundamentally about educational policy or institutional blueprints, much less is it about law and accreditation. The dispute is about the meaning of the faith.

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The Life of St. Thomas More
 Peter Ackroyd. New York: Nan A. Telese, 1998. 447 pages. \$30.00

Reviewed by Paul J. Voss

In this new book, Peter Ackroyd presents a complex and attractive Thomas More. The book, which actually topped the best-seller list in England for a period (something rare for an “academic” biography), will appeal to a great variety of readers in this country as well. While profiling the life of one man, the book also covers a wide array of

topics. For example, those interested in English history, specifically the evolution from the late medieval world into the early Renaissance, will find the turbulent years from 1500–1540 especially important. Students of religion and law will encounter a tale of the triumph of common law over canon law, of the English state over the Roman Catholic Church. Ackroyd also presents the circulation of ideas among More and other humanists on the continent, outlining the dynamic, yet often overlooked, literary community that followed

Chaucer (who died in 1400) and preceded Shakespeare (born in 1564). Finally, those readers drawn to portraits of courage and issues of individual conscience will not be disappointed.

This engaging account owes, of course, as much to Ackroyd’s skill as a writer as to the enthralling subject of Thomas More. In addition to telling and retelling the familiar and not-so-familiar aspects of More’s life, Ackroyd paints early-Tudor London with arresting charm and detail. Ackroyd’s own learning, for example, allows him briefly to

explain the complexity of early sixteenth century law, the Tudor educational system, More's continental friendships, the court of Henry VIII, the production of printed texts, the rise of the "new learning," and a host of other topics. His treatment of Catholicism, including informed discussions about the Mass and sacraments, suggests far more than passing knowledge. Ackroyd does not, like many post-moderns, simply dismiss More's religious beliefs as the superstitious impulses of a less enlightened mind. He examines the religious ideas and practices seriously, investigating both the intellectual and social content. As a result, the reader can better appreciate the magnitude of choices and decisions facing More.

One great virtue of this book is displacement. For the past fifteen years, scholars and students of More cited the work of Richard Marius, *Thomas More: A Biography* (New York, 1984) as the most recent study. In his book, Marius obsesses over More's sexuality and the alleged contradictions which caused chaos in his life. For Marius, and other modern-day More detractors, the erstwhile Lord Chancellor possessed few, if any, virtues. Marius believes, in fact, that fury and inner torment define the essential character of More. This account becomes, however, a victim of its own rhetoric, fashioning a largely unlikable Thomas More in order to pass historical judgment without worry, to disparage without guilt. For Marius, More was an obsequious advisor, insincere

friend, and oppressive husband. His letters "seethe with insult and contempt" (148); his *Utopia* is "heavy-handed and puritanical" (164). In the final analysis, Marius concludes that More "was no hero, no true leader ... he exercised no independence, and was far from being a martyr" (363). With Ackroyd's new, and certainly more inclusive, study, students of More now have another option.

Ackroyd corrects a number of mistaken notions, but does not engage in simple hero-worship or hagiography. Although he recognizes the flaws and weaknesses of the man (including bouts of worldly ambition and flashes of real anger), he sees the final triumph of character and conscience. He repeatedly emphasizes, perhaps unwittingly, More's genuine sense of duty and obligation to his family, friends, and faith. Consider, for example, the much-debated "marriage" between Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn in 1533. Although More was no longer Lord Chancellor, Henry expected More, still a King's Councillor, to attend the various celebrations. More's friends (and family members) strongly encouraged him to attend as well, even sending him money to purchase a new gown for the occasion. Yet More appreciated that his presence at any function celebrating the nuptials would grant tacit approval to the impending union; he also knew the grave consequences of staying away. More did not attend, the record shows, any of the ceremonies. According to Ackroyd, at

this time "the true courage and spirit of the man now emerge" (342). Far from a political neophyte, More fully understood the implications of recent history and all his own political extrapolations proved accurate. In a few short months, Henry VIII required all subjects to sign an oath acknowledging the king as supreme head of the Church. More's conscience, of course, would not allow for such consent. After fifteen months in the Tower of London, More was executed on 6 July 1535.

The history of sixteenth-century Catholicism benefits from this work. Ackroyd clearly questions some of the commonly-accepted beliefs put forth by Protestant historians of Whig sympathies. According to these accounts, widespread dismay among the laity spawned the English Reformation. It was, the argument goes, a grass-roots movement reflecting the will of the people. The displacement of the Pope, the suppression of the clergy, the dissolution of the religious houses, the unprecedented iconoclasm, and the scores of executions were the natural and inevitable outgrowth of popular anti-clericalism and English patriotism directed toward an old, antiquated church. However, recent work by eminent historians such as Christopher Haigh, J.J. Scarisbrick, and Eamon Duffy (among others) strongly challenge these assumptions, demonstrating that English Catholicism flourished during More's early years. The laity encountered, in spite of some problems, a dynamic and

vibrant Catholicism— a faith with a diverse clergy that largely tended to the needs of the faithful. Religious pilgrimages remained very popular well into the 1530's. Ackroyd concurs, demonstrating how the Reformation preceded from the top down, "imposed upon an unwilling Church, which remained apprehensive and uncertain" (319). After presenting the machinations of Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell, Ackroyd concludes that "the 'reformation' was being imposed upon a nation with remained generally pious and devoted" to the Old Faith (358).

Scholars can also learn how to approach an old subject without redundancy. Ackroyd's clear prose eschews the fashionable jargon of many scholars today. He does not need to construct a shocking or outrageous Thomas More (in fact, his claims about character and motivation rely upon sound research and prudent examination of the evidence). We find no bits of Freudian pop-psychology, the "new historicist" fixation with power, or groundless conjectures about current-day preoccupations. Instead we find an honest assessment of voluminous material. Ackroyd readily acknowledges the worldly concerns of More and his, at times, overtly scatological language while examining More's anger directed toward heretics. In most cases, placing the controversial events in context (i.e., the tenor of his polemic writings against Luther and Tyndale) affords a plausible explanation. Many sixteenth-century writers used lan-

guage far more earthy than More.

Yet this book, like any book, leaves room for minor quibbles. Ackroyd's treatment of *Utopia* (More's most popular and tantalizing piece of writing) and the religious polemics (More's most passionate and dense writings) is perhaps less rigorous than More scholars would demand. In over 400 pages of prose, Ackroyd resorts to some inevitable generalizations. A comprehensive book about the entire corpus of More's work may not, in fact, be possible. It should be recalled that *The Complete Works of Thomas More* (Yale, 1963-1990) covers fifteen volumes.

Above all else, the story of Thomas More humbles us as we read of his sacrifice and fidelity. More died, it bears repeating, for his faith— not a legal matter, a scientific principle, or defending his country. Perhaps we no longer understand More's struggle or his absolute refusal to abjure his religious beliefs, regardless of the cost. We no longer live among religious martyrs. If we try, however, sympathetically to imagine More's dilemma in full bloom, we can hardly avoid a sense of awe. More's adherence to the notion of a catholic, universal Church inaugurated by Christ's command to Peter is still a desideratum for many today. Yet the case appeared "to almost everyone a foolish and futile struggle" during More's imprisonment (363). We can hardly avoid comparing the trials and temptations of Thomas More with those we face in our own century.

Finally, our world may need the story of Thomas More. We need to read and understand the brilliance and humility, the piety and the anger, the father and the servant. Unfortunately, our world needs Thomas More for all the wrong reasons. We need him—a man of utter courage and conviction—because we need heroes. As Catholics, we need him to provide an example of faith with humility and compliance with integrity. We need him to understand that humility does not equal weakness and that obedience can grant amazing freedom. We have a lot to learn from Thomas More; Peter Ackroyd makes those lessons more possible. ✠

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