



THE LIVING LIGHT

*An Interdisciplinary Review of Catholic Religious Education,
Catechesis, and Youth and Pastoral Ministry*

SUMMER 2004

Volume 40-Number 4

SPECIAL FEATURE—

Memory, Memorization, and Remembrance



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
USCCB Publishing

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Memory and Memories

BERARD L. MARTHALER

The identity of an individual, like the history of a nation, is an intricate web of memories. The Bible records memories of disparate tribes and heroic figures from two millennia of events and experiences that formed the Jewish people. Abraham's covenant with Yahweh, the stories of the Exodus, David's kingship, Solomon's Temple, the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, the Babylonian captivity, and the re-building of Jerusalem were all defining moments in Jewish history. Scattered through the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures are stories that recall religious experiences of individuals—Jacob's wrestling with the angel and the call of Samuel and the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

Although New Testament writings are of a different genre, salvation history continues in these stories. They too record memories—inspired memories that the earliest Christians handed on about Jesus of Nazareth. Central in them is the tradition that grew up about his suffering, death, and Resurrection (1 Cor 15:3-9). The Acts of the Apostles tell of defining

moments in the history of the nascent Church—Pentecost, the conversion of St. Paul, Paul's commission to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles, and the Council of Jerusalem.

Similarly, St. Augustine's outline of an introductory catechesis reviewed high points in salvation history. The narrative begins by recognizing that God made all things very good, and that salvation history continues into the present times of the Church (*De Catechizandis Rudibus* [*The First Catechetical Instruction*]). By Augustine's time, the Church had added to its corporate memory the stories of heroic bishops and ordinary men and women who suffered martyrdom. Augustine saw the persecutions as the fulfillment of predictions "made a long time previous" (*De Catechizandis Rudibus*, no. 45) and as omens of things yet to come. Brian Doyle's article in this issue of *The Living Light* explains how Augustine saw memory as a way of bringing the past into the



present and of anticipating the future. For Augustine, salvation history continues to unfold, and catechumens are instructed to make the Church's memories their own.

In the fifteen centuries that separate us from Augustine, the Church has continued to expand. It has grown more *catholic* as it interacts with peoples around the globe. In encountering a wide spectrum of cultures, Catholicism has developed a culture of its own—with its own language, ritual, values, and behaviors. While persecution persists and new names are added to the martyrology, the Church's corporate memory is a treasury of spiritual and cultural tradition that enriches individuals and society. Today's catechumens are introduced to countless saints (canonized and not) who have witnessed to the faith on every continent and in every walk of life. Catechumens learn of zealous missionaries who proclaimed the Gospel to "all the nations," of bishops who risked their lives in championing the spiritual over the temporal, and of hermits who fled the public eye. Today's Christians acquire their identity by appropriating memories of the Church's mystical, scholarly, and artistic traditions of times gone by.

Memorization may be a means to forming a Christian's memory, but as Michael Warren's article points out, a Christian's memory also is an embodied one. For pre-Vatican II Catholics, this memory may be captured in photographs of their First Communion or

in recollections of nuns in starched coifs, of Mass in Latin and with incense, and perhaps, of parochial school and the Baltimore Catechism. Postconciliar Catholics may recall the English liturgy, the documents of the Second Vatican Council, and their enrollment in the catechumenate. For all Christians, the journey of faith is associated with specific places and people. The place may be the family dinner table or a parish church; the people may be a loving grandmother or a sympathetic priest. Memories are not mere phantoms of the mind. The deeper they are embedded in one's senses—sights, hearing, smell, and touch—the more unforgettable they are. In time one's personal memories fuse with the corporate memory of the universal Church, becoming a part, however small, of the great drama of salvation history. The Church is inseparable from its memories.

Some months back, when the editors decided to make "Memory, Memorization, and Remembrance" the central theme of this issue of The Living Light, they did not anticipate how appropriate it would be for this final number of the journal. A review of articles that span the past four decades—in the journal's forty volumes, 160 issues—evoke memories of people (such as Sr. Maria de la Cruz Aymes, Gerard Sloyan, and Gabriel Moran) and places (such as Medellin, Rome, and Puebla) that are inseparable from the history of catechesis and pastoral ministry in the United States in the post-Vatican II years.

James Michael Lee IV (1931-2004)—R. I. P.

By EUGENE F. HEMRICK

When James Michael Lee IV died suddenly on July 15, 2004, at the age of 72, close acquaintances lost a dear friend, and religious educators in the United States lost a pioneering author, dedicated publisher, and avid supporter.

Born September 29, 1931, in Brooklyn, New York, Lee spent most of his professional life in academia. He taught first at Seton Hall University, in New Jersey, and then at the University of Notre Dame (in Indiana) where, at the age of 28, he became the youngest person to be named a full professor. In 1976 he moved to the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where he taught educational philosophy. One of the first Catholics invited to join the Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education, Lee was a member of the board of directors of the International Religious Education Association, and he lectured frequently to professional education groups throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia.

As one of Lee's graduate students at Notre Dame, I remember him as an educator who despised the ordinary. Forever seeking to raise students into the realm of creativity, he would say, "Education is not the handing on of information. It is a process in which a person is made over into an information seeker and a creative thinker. The educational environment should be such that it inspires imagination, and thinking outside the box." As a teacher, he was never dull. He loved to debate, and when he got into a debate, his eyes would light up and electricity seemed to course through the air from him.

When I once, in an oral examination, compared him to John Dewey, he looked at me as if to ask, “How could you say this after all these years of my trying to form you into an educator in my likeness?” Actually, I was trying to tell him that like Dewey—who had published a beautiful treatise on how experimentation requires special entrepreneurial thinking—he had instilled in me the desire to pursue those goals. Years later, thanks to Lee’s inspiration, I was able to establish a research department for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops based on this ideal.

At Notre Dame, Lee prided himself on attracting a teaching staff in which everyone was his or her own person, and even he found their creativity troublesome

He embraced religious education wholeheartedly and did everything in his power to make it creative and alive.

at times. Students enjoyed lectures from some of Europe’s and the United States’ finest teachers. They were also treated to theories on change strategies, new styles of management, and the intricacies of leadership. Analytical tools like Systems Analysis, Flanders Interaction Analysis, the LBDQ (Leadership Behavior Descriptive Questionnaire) analysis of leadership, and the value of the social sciences were strongly emphasized in the curriculum. For most religious educators at the time, these were all new tools. In many ways, he was speaking to us in a new language.

As an engaging lecturer and prolific author, Lee’s influence extended far beyond the classroom. Among his many books was a trilogy written early in his career—*Content of Religious Instruction*, *Flow of Religious Instruction*, and *Shape of Religious Instruction*—that helped to establish his reputation as a leading religious educator. Among his later works are such valuable volumes as *Forging a Better Religious Education in the Third Millennium*, *Handbook of Faith*, and *The Spirituality of the Religious Educator*.

Perhaps Lee’s greatest contribution to the field of religious education came through the Religious Education Press (REP), which he established in 1974. With Lee as editor-in-chief, the titles published by REP reflected his early emphasis on what he called a “social science approach to religious education,” as well as on an ecumenical approach to the field. The list of REP titles includes works and collections of essays by leading Protestant religious educators, as well as seven books by Lee himself. (For a complete list of REP titles, see www.bham.net/reeduc/.) At times, Lee seemed to keep REP alive

and publishing through his sheer will, determination, and commitment to the field; he certainly didn't do it for the money.

Once a seminarian, Lee was a priest at heart all his life, which is why he embraced religious education so wholeheartedly and did everything in his power to make it creative and alive. As tough as he could be on priests, religious, and the Church, he respected the vocation to religious life and was a devout Catholic.

All of us who crossed paths with him thank God for this special gift. We are thankful for his beautiful inspiration, energy, and the delightful person he was. Our lives are better because of him. 🌹

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Finding God in Memory:

ST. AUGUSTINE'S SEARCH

For Augustine, memory is both a way to explain God's Self-knowledge, and the central path in our search for God. In Augustine's writings, memory is more than a retrieval of the past and a way of holding on to the present; it also imagines the future—the eschaton.

By BRIAN M. DOYLE

How widely I have ranged through my memory seeking you, Lord, and I have not found you outside it; for I have discovered nothing about you that I did not remember from the time I learned to know you. From that time when I learned about you I have never forgotten you, because wherever I have found truth I have found my God who is absolute Truth, and once I had learned that I did not forget it. (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 24, no. 35)

I want to be happy. I want to find joy. We all want to be happy and find joy. The search for true joy is universal for humanity. For Christians, the search for happiness is, at its core, the search for God (see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 27). But where do we search to find this happiness? How do we name that for which we search? How will we know when we find it? St. Augustine found the answers to these questions in memory and its relationship to the mind and the will.

Besides being a professional teacher, presbyter, preacher, and spiritual guide, St. Augustine of Hippo was, first and foremost, a person searching for God. As early as 397 in his autobiography *The Confessions*, Augustine recognized the importance of memory to the life of all men and women. In his work

The Trinity, published in 420, Augustine was able to state the necessary role of memory in humans' search for and ultimate finding of God and therefore, of happiness. Augustine's work on memory is of great value to those entrusted with educating the faithful and guiding others in their search for God.

MEMORY DEFINED

Those who study any topic in the writings of Augustine must take care to recognize developments in his thought. Like St. Paul, Augustine's vision and thoughts developed over his career. In his early works, Augustine referred to the Platonic doctrine of the pre-existence of human souls. At that point, he believed almost all human experiences were actually the uncovering of lost memories.¹ By the time that he wrote *The Confessions*, Augustine had clearly abandoned that philosophy, relying now more on the witness of the Scriptures than the thought of Plato. He rejected the pre-existence of souls and located memory within the individual mind, recognizing in the mind the ability to recall and re-present thoughts and experiences of the individual person.

The Latin term *memoria* is translated into English as "memory." But within its early Latin usage, *memoria* was also used to describe the use of human imagination.² This link between remembering and re-imagining demonstrates a more dynamic and relational concept than current definitions of memory might suggest. At the time in which Augustine was writing, the written word was inaccessible to most people, and education was based primarily upon rote memorization. The frequent Scripture quotations and references to the Bible in Augustine's philosophical or theoretical arguments demonstrate both his intelligence and his ability to memorize the catechesis he received before and after

his conversion to Christianity.³ His use of Scripture also places much of his theology in its proper context.

Augustine's work on memory is of great value to those guiding others in their search for God.

For Augustine, memory was a "vast and unlimited inner chamber" of the mind that allowed him to speak of the mountains, waves, rivers, and stars he saw at the ocean.⁴

"The huge repository of the memory, with its secret and unimaginable caverns, welcomes and keeps all these things, to be recalled and brought out for use when needed; and as all of them have their particular ways into it, so all are put back again in their proper places" (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 10, no. 13). Augustine used the metaphor of a chamber

or cavern to illustrate the complexity he discovered in his analysis of memory. He recognized that, like the caves of Carthage that he remembered fondly, memory has different levels, depths, and uses—all of which are to be employed in one's search for God.

THREE LEVELS AND THE FUNCTION OF MEMORY

According to Augustine, the first level of memory is where sensual experiences are remembered. At this level, Augustine recalled the look of the ocean, the sound of his mother's voice, and the smell of freshly baked bread. However, as Augustine pointed out, this level of memory does not contain the actual thing remembered, but rather a sign of it. For instance, memory recalls the sound of a voice but does not contain the voice itself. When sensual experiences are recalled, they are not re-experienced. Thus, while I can remember the taste of cumin and recognize this spice when it is hidden in a dish, I cannot will the taste experience without the substance itself.

According to Augustine, the recollection of sense experiences—sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch—are only one level of memory. Memory also contains all the information learned in the study of the liberal arts. This level of memory actually contains the things remembered, not merely signs of them as in the memory of sense experiences. That is to say, we can retain in memory sounds and sights as well as the things that they signify. This second level of memory has a related attribute that contains the principles and laws of mathematics. These concepts are recalled by memory but were also learned by memory (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 12, no. 19). So when students learn the specific rules of mathematics they seem to already know them. Consider, for example, the rules of geometry. Upon first hearing the formula for the area of a triangle, I seemed to remember the concept and how to apply it.

Augustine's third level of memory is where the affections of the soul are held. Here we remember joy, sorrow, desire, and fear. However, we do not hold affections in themselves, but rather notions of them (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 14, nos. 21-22). We can remember joy without feeling joy. Moreover, we can recall sorrow at a time of joy and fear in a time of peace. Affections can be remembered but we cannot will ourselves to feel them again. Through fond memories, we can recall joyful moments, but we cannot will ourselves to be joyful, regardless of our efforts to do so.

Augustine attempted to explain the multi-faceted relationship of memory to the mind and will:

After all, I remember that I have memory and understanding and will, and I understand that I understand and will and remember, and I will that I will and remember and understand, and I remember my whole memory and understanding and will all together.⁵

He posited that memory is a function of the mind and the will (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 11, no. 18). Humans can will something into memory, that is, we can memorize. For Augustine, this capacity demonstrates that the will has some control over memory. Of course, we also know that no matter how fervently we struggle to remember something, our memory can fail us. And the mind can cause us to remember something in situations where this recollection is not willed. Thus there exists an independence of memory vis-à-vis the will. But the mind exercises some control over the memory. For example, we know that for the protection of the person, the mind can suppress memories as well as recall them.

In what seems to be a contradictory statement, Augustine argued that “mind and memory, however, are one and the same” (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 14, no. 21). This apparent confusion of the relationships of these concepts was mitigated later in his career in his work on the Trinity, where he posited that memory, mind, and will are an appropriate analogy of the three divine persons. That is, the divine persons are distinct and in relationship with each other but equal and one in their divinity. Entities of the mind and human nature can have mutual influence and independence. Here we see that Augustine recognized the complexities of the human person in its mystery. This he knows through his memory:

This faculty of memory is a great one, O my God, exceedingly great, a vast, infinite recess. Who can plumb its depth? This is a faculty of the mind, belonging to my nature, yet I cannot know myself, comprehend all that I am. Is the mind, then, too narrow to grasp itself, forcing us to ask where that part of it is which it is incapable of grasping? Is it outside the mind, not inside? How can the mind not compass it? Enormous wonder wells up within me when I think of this, and I am dumbfounded. (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 8, no. 15)

FORGETTING

Often, we do not consider our memory until it fails us. Forgetfulness is not simply failing to remember. When I forget someone’s name, I search my

memory for it. I may recite different names until one sounds correct. Strictly speaking, this is not the complete forgetting of the name because I remember the name exists. This is the inability to recall the name immediately; it is the remembering of forgetfulness (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 16, no. 24). Forgetfulness is held in memory and becomes present with memory when our will calls upon it. Complete forgetfulness would be the elimination of the thing from memory, not simply of the name that signifies that thing. If a thing is forgotten, it is completely wiped from memory.⁶ “If it has been entirely blotted out from the mind, we do not remember even when reminded. If we remember that we have forgotten something, we have not forgotten it entirely. But if we have forgotten altogether, we shall not be in a position to search for it” (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 19, no. 28). An important distinction can be made between one’s not being able to find something in the caverns of memory and that thing not being located in memory at all.

THE SEARCH FOR GOD

The Confessions tells the story of Augustine’s search for God. The book was not written for Augustine—who already knew of his search—nor for God, with whom he had already shared this journey. The book was written for the Christians in the diocese of Hippo, to which Augustine had just been assigned as bishop. He was a young bishop and needed to demonstrate his theological and spiritual maturity in order to truly lead the faithful. *The Confessions* was motivated by prayer and love for God in ways that the more academic texts were not. In light of the context, this book demonstrates the centrality of memory to the life and teaching of all Christians.

Augustine’s search for God began in the created world outside of himself. Within creation, he found a reflection of the creator. He noted that while humanity was created in the image and likeness of God, all of creation reflects its creator in the way that art reflects the artist.⁷ But the created world does not contain God. Quickly Augustine realized that God could not be found in creation. As he recognized this, he wrote,

And what is this?
I put my question to the earth, and it replied, “I am not he”;
I questioned everything it held, and they confessed the same.
I questioned the sea and the great deep,
And the teeming live creatures that crawl,
And they replied,

“We are not God; seek higher.”

I questioned the gusty winds,

And every breeze with all its flying creatures told me,

“Anaximenes [Stoic philosopher] was wrong: I am not God.”

To the sky I put my question, to sun, moon, stars,

But they denied me: “We are not the God you seek.”

And to all the things which stood around the portals of my flesh I said,

“Tell me of my God.

You are not he, but tell me something of him.”

They lifted up their mighty voices and cried,

“He made us.”

My questioning was my attentive spirit,

And their reply, their beauty. (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 6, no. 9)

Augustine’s search, then, moved inward. But this move caused him to question the entire search for God. Why did he search for God? How would he know if he were to find him? He equated this search for God with the search for happiness. “How then am I to seek you, Lord? When I seek you, my God, what I am seeking is a life of happiness” (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 20, no. 29). One cannot search for an affection one has never had; an

experience of it has to be in memory. One can only look for happiness if he or she were once happy.

All hopes and dreams are possessed by the mind at the level of memory.

True happiness is described by the *Catechism* (no. 1718) as a beatitude. The *Catechism* quotes *The Confessions*, book X, in its discussion of the influence of the

experience of joy. This memory of joy drives us to experience it again. So how is it that all humans search for happiness, for God? There must be a universal experience of happiness in God, but how is this to be understood? The concept of pre-existent souls residing with God before birth would explain it, but Augustine was questioning the reliability of this Platonic thought by the time he wrote *The Confessions*. He pointed more directly to the experience of the man and the woman in the Garden of Eden before the fall: Sin disfigures our memory so that we are no longer able to experience the intimacy with God available to the first humans (see Augustine’s *Trinity*, bk. XIV, chap. 8). But through them humanity has experienced true happiness in God. This memory motivates our search for him, who should permeate our lives. “Now

the happy life is joy in the truth; and that means joy in you, who are Truth, O God who shed the light of salvation on my face, my God” (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 23, no. 33).

MEMORY AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE

Memory is the aspect of human nature that grants significance to time. All knowledge is past knowledge, present knowledge, or future knowledge. Knowledge is bound by time. But memory is what holds onto the past, makes it present, and interprets the future. Time exists only in human memory, not in the timeless God (*The Confessions*, bk. XI). Memory’s role concerning the past and the present is clear, but Augustine made an interesting point concerning memory of the future.⁸ Memory is the hermeneutic of reality, the lens through which we establish a worldview. We only understand the future as a coming development of the past and present. Our Christian hopes for the future are a return to the past, a return to the happiness of being one with God. The promise of Christ’s salvation is the return to the paradise of the Garden of Eden. The future is our past. The future is in our memory. All hopes and dreams are possessed by the mind at the level of memory.

Within the context of the memory of the future *eschaton*, the concept of memory arises again in Augustine’s later work *Trinity* (*De Trinitate*). This work is more of a theological treatise than is *The Confessions*. The earlier books of *Trinity* investigate the nature of the three-in-one God. The later books IX-XIV present analogies of the Persons of the Trinity to support Christian instruction on faith in the Trinity. Based upon (1) the logic that anything created must resemble that which creates it and (2) the revelation that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God (Gn 1:26), Augustine looked to the human soul for a reflection of the creator. “If God is a Trinity, then the soul must resemble that which it images and that to which it seeks to return.”⁹

In book VIII of *Trinity*, Augustine presented an exterior analogy for the Trinity: lover, beloved, and the bond of love. The analogy is beautiful and important, but even Augustine recognized that it ultimately fails to convey appropriately the divine. Augustine next presented several other analogies of the triune God, concluding with the interior images of the mind, its knowledge, and the love of self (bk. IX), as well as the analogy of memory, understanding, and will (bk. X).

Much has been written on the importance and influence of Augustine’s interior analogies for the divine, but in the present context, it is important to

recognize that Augustine's search for God led him inside himself. Augustine's interior search led him to an image of the divine (*Trinity*, bk. XIV, 8). Human nature contains an imprint of our divine creator. Thus we can learn about God and God's nature through an examination of ourselves and our own human nature.

Augustine believed that catechesis should follow this same pattern of searching the exterior world for God, which would, ultimately, lead searchers inward to the memory of God's love.¹⁰ God's triune Self stands as the end and goal of the activities of the mind, will, and memory for all searches for happiness. "Perhaps then the mind sees some excellent end, that is its own security and happiness, through some obscure memory which has not deserted it

*His memory found
the love that is the
triune God.*

on its travels to far countries and it believes it can only reach this end by knowing itself" (*Trinity*, bk. X, chap. 5).

Augustine did not view the search for God as toil. He rejoiced in the fact that God had seen fit to allow him to experience him.

"You have honored my memory by making it your dwelling-place, but I am wondering in what region of it you dwell" (*The Confessions*, bk. X, chap. 25, no. 36). This search of his inner being allowed Augustine to be more fully present and therefore more fully open to the revelation of God. "And so it [the mind] must be looking for what is still missing" (*Trinity*, bk. X, chap. 6). Our memory presents our mind and our very self as mystery. Within book X of *The Confessions*, most of which wrestles with the issue of memory, the author seems overcome in several instances by the profundity of God's presence and providence. He is amazed that God would see fit to dwell in his memory and to permit him not only to search for him, but also to find him. In the midst of his investigation of the search for God in memory, Augustine wrote one of the most beautiful and moving prayers of Christian spirituality, "Late have I loved you." We search for God because God has searched for us, and thus we are found.

In the discussion of memory, Augustine's theology and personal history converge. Upon his return to the Scriptures, with a mind to find God, he was moved to be baptized. His catechetical experience was the memorization of Scripture in the pursuit of finding God in his memory. Finally, within his mind, his very being, his memory found the love that is the triune God: "But when we believe to be true what we hold in thought and love what we ought

to love, we then live in accord with the trinity of the inner man” (*Trinity*, bk. XIII, chap. 26). Memory can be seen as the key to finding our selves, true happiness, and our ultimate future—God. ❧

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1. Cf. Augustine’s *On Free Choice of the Will* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1993), bk. 1, chap. 12, no. 24; Roland Teske, “Augustine’s Philosophy of Memory,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. E. Stump and N. Kretzmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 150.
2. Bruce Bubacz, *St. Augustine’s Theory of Knowledge: A Contemporary Analysis* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984), 24.
3. Harold Coward, “Memory and Scripture in the Conversion of Augustine,” in *Grace, Politics, and Desire: Essays on Augustine*, ed. H. Meynell (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1990), 23.
4. Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding, OSB (New York: New City Press, 1997), bk. X, chap. 8, no. 15. Subsequent references are given in the text.
5. Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill, OP (New York: New City Press, 1991), bk. X, chap. 18. Subsequent references are given in the text.
6. Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Mystery of Continuity: Time and History, Memory and Eternity in the Thought of St. Augustine* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1986), 19.
7. The theological concept of the vestiges of the Trinity derives from Augustine’s theory, though further examination of this point is not appropriate here.
8. Teske, “Augustine’s Philosophy of Memory,” 154.
9. Catherine LaCugna, *God for Us* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1973), 93.
10. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1958), bk. I, no. 24.

Towards an Anamnestic Catechesis

The use of memory is essential to handing on tradition and, when it is properly nurtured, is the basis for “unforgettable” catechesis. Embodied memory is closely associated with the Eucharistic anamnesis. More than an act of the mind, it is an effective re-presentation of reality.

By MICHAEL WARREN

Psychologist Shoshana Felman makes an interesting point about knowing that might be applied to memory and the place of memory in catechesis. Felman notes that all learning situations are marked by two contradictory desires. One is the desire to know; the other is the desire not to know.¹ The first desire is obvious. When the learners have not been shoved into the so-called “learning situation” but have entered it willingly, they bring interests about what they want to know. They may well have selected the learning situation specifically because of their interests. The second desire is more complex. The desire not to know may be active while at the same time unrecognized and unconscious. In a learning situation, any of us could find ourselves, on occasion, desperately resisting things we dare not let ourselves know or remember. Catechists are not exceptions to those who have had this experience.

This article will identify several forms of memory with special emphasis on embodied memory, ecstatic memory, and rote memory. Each in its own way, when nurtured and developed, contributes to “unforgettable” catechesis.

EMBODIED MEMORY

People often encode and carry forward in their lives behaviors and habits that shape their attitudes and ways of living. We might call these “embodied memories.” This concept was illustrated for me by a restaurateur in Fiji who sought to explain to me why tips were not the custom in that part of the South Pacific. For his people, hospitality is a fundamental value. A customer’s leaving a tip for service might actually be taken as an insult by the restaurant server. As the restaurateur told me, “The food you eat and the upkeep of this restaurant are things I must pay for, and so I must charge you accordingly for this food. But hospitality is not for sale. That is something between you and me as human persons. It is basically a gift we are able to offer one another. You do not charge for gifts; they are free.”

Catechists who are aware of the importance of embodied memories will be better able to understand and use the cluster of embodied memories that is the parish. From a catechetical and sacramental point of view, embodied memory should be a central matter of concern. For better or worse, the history and tradition of parish life shapes the attitudes and beliefs of present parishioners.

Although specific nuances might be lacking in Edward Schillebeeckx’s groundbreaking 1960 book *Christ: The Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, its enduring importance cannot be denied. According to Schillebeeckx, the man Jesus embodied God’s imagination of what it means to be human.² The second part of Schillebeeckx’s thesis—that the Church is (or is meant to be) the sacrament of the encounter with the Spirit of Jesus—remains the ever-present challenge to local churches. How can the local church be a means of encounter with the Spirit of Jesus here in our midst? Certainly the answer is not for churches to use slogans and claims unsupported by evidence. The corporate way of life of a congregation represents not a “kind of” lived catechesis, but rather the dominant form of a catechesis that sticks. Unfortunately, too few sermons allude to the lifestyles of the community as evidence of the congregation’s struggle to remain faithful to the Gospel.

This lack can have unfortunate consequences. Parish life may belie most of the messages communicated in sessions of explicit catechesis. Those being formally catechized do not always immediately “get” the disconnect between a particular verbal catechesis and the lived catechesis of the community—if it in fact exists—but many eventually do. In teaching undergraduates about the Catholic tradition of peace and nonviolence, I have been asked by students why, in their many years of Catholic schooling and/or catechesis, they never

before heard of the Gospel-based tradition of nonviolence. My answer is this: “Maybe your teachers could not afford for you to hear it, or maybe they themselves had never heard it. There may have been too many parishioners with military backgrounds or with investments in the weapons industries for the parish priest to preach about it.”

ECSTATIC MEMORY/ANAMNESIS

“Ecstatic memory” is a term I use to name the things we cannot forget even though we have made no conscious attempt to memorize them. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann describe the procedures and conditions under which new realities can be effectively reproduced.³ The process needs deep emotional contexts for it to be successful. Thought and understanding alone are insufficient. In a similar vein, Emmanuel Levinas explains why, in Jewish thinking, reflection alone on the meanings of the oral and written tradition is insufficient for handing them on. The Jewish practices of *Halakhah* and *Haggadah* are ways of dealing with the religious tradition that demand reflection on actual practices and a struggle with the meanings in the here and now. The meanings need to be “worried” the way a dog worries a bone.⁴

Another term for ecstatic memory is *anamnesis*. Literally, it means “without forgetting.” But its connotation includes a sense that what is being remembered is “unforgettable.” In its religious use, anamnesis also seems to connote a hint of ecstasy, i.e., the things one could not possibly forget because they made all the difference in one’s life. The religious meaning of anamnesis is set out well by Karl Rahner. He opts for the biblical sense of anamnesis, which is not only an act of the remembering mind, but more an effective presence of one reality (say a past event or action) in a new situation where it becomes real again in the here and now. The specific “here and now” Rahner cites as creating this possibility is liturgical worship. For Rahner, the Eucharist is no ho-hum matter. The danger of distortive analogy notwithstanding, one might think of a crowd of enthusiastic sports fans hoping for and then actually seeing unfold before their eyes a miraculous victory in the ninth inning of the seventh game of the World Series or Doug Flutie’s famous “Hail Mary” pass that clutches victory from defeat as time expires in a football game.

Still anamnesis is not to be understood as some form of ecstasy or as standing outside of bodily experience. It is the opposite: it stands fully within a community, a long tradition, and a set of meanings that are being actualized in the here and now.⁵

For clarification, Rahner points to the writings of the Church's Fathers, where *eucharistia* means basically the same thing as anamnesis. That is, flooding the celebration of a current Eucharist with loving memory makes present the unifying *agape* meal that Jesus celebrated with his disciples the night before he died. Under these conditions the Eucharist becomes a reality: (1) a community is attuned to the significance of what it does; (2) it is able to enter into the ritual prayer and actions; (3) it does the ritual out of its own truth as a loving gathering of disciples; and (4) it offers itself the way Jesus offered himself. Many kinds of events, including secular ones, can create analogous kinds of "making-real-again-here-and-now" reality.

I once visited St. Michael's Church in New York City late one afternoon. Dim light was streaming through the church, which was empty except for me, kneeling in the back, and a Hispanic man who was walking the Stations of the Cross. As he moved from station to station, he whispered in Spanish to his young son the meaning of each station. If I could invent a term to describe this moving moment, I would call it "anamnetic catechesis"—remembering something in such a reverent way that it cannot be easily forgotten.

ANAMNETIC CATECHESIS

If anamnesis is a possibility, its opposite is also a possibility: perfunctory, mindless repetition of formulas that have lost significance for the individual. Under certain conditions the Eucharist could be celebrated so as to suppress its character of anamnesis. For many in the assembly, the ritual seems to have become a boring, ho-hum event of minimal significance. Someone has proposed that in some assemblies what is being ritualized is a consumerist bargain with God: "I'll give you my fifty minutes, but you stay off my back the rest of the week, and make sure nothing bad happens to me or the people I love." Such an attitude would make anamnesis impossible.

The question of whether parishes should provide "catechesis for the Eucharist" is one that needs attention today. Instead of providing such catechesis in school or classroom settings, what may be needed is a communal catechesis of the assembly. Too often, speech about the Eucharist is formulaic and even stunted, almost as if people are preoccupied with the use of proper language rather than fully appreciative of the many-faceted realities of the Eucharist—sacrifice, meal, memorial, pledge of future glory, and so forth. The Gloria and various Prefaces are examples of quasi-ecstatic speech, a claim perhaps easily dismissed until one hears the Glorias composed by Bach,

Vivaldi, or Mozart. These artists could not have composed what they did without letting themselves enter into the ecstasy of these texts. The Gloria, like the Preface, encodes the core of the Gospel in a deep way. In its first sentence, the Gloria seems to say that the glory of God manifests itself as peace among human beings. That peace is God's glory, or at least a manifestation of it, among human beings. The Preface says our vocation is "always and everywhere" to live a life of thanks to God for God's gifts. What a radical challenge to the consumerist ethos!

Liturgists, on liturgical and theological grounds, can easily scorn Ronald Knox's 1950s book *The Mass in Slow Motion* without themselves seeking, as Knox did, credible ways to help people enter into the Eucharist as anamnesis, and not by rote memory. The opening prayers of the Eucharist, especially the Gloria and the Creed, are filled with stunning claims accessible only through anamnesis, yet people often seem to rattle them off as rote formulas free from any emotional entanglements. Such statements of faith are properly recited out of deep love and gratitude made accessible through anamnesis. Anamnesis is like a father's going each morning to his infant daughter's crib and lifting her up in a joyful and playful embrace that will define for her, at some level, who she is.

If there is such a thing as anamnestic catechesis, then we have to find a place for anamnestic speech, which is a natural way of talking about the wonders worked by God. I have met people who speak this way, and they have impressed me greatly. An example is Peig Sayers, an Irish peasant woman and gifted storyteller whose ordinary speech was transcribed and then published in several books. Either of her two books—*An Old Woman's Reflections* or her spoken autobiography—will provide countless examples of anamnestic speech.⁶

If poetry is a process of finding words to say what seems impossible to express, then there are forms of religious speech that do the same. They break out of ordinary speech and cannot be measured by it. Poetic speech falls back on metaphors and figures of speech to capture the aura of mystery that eludes definition. This aspect of speech is often lost on censors and academics whose priority is more often exactitude than it is effective communication. They fail to appreciate the fact that the task of catechesis is, in the spirit of St Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*, not only to instruct but also to persuade and to please. In opting for word-for-word correctness, we risk squeezing the life out of religious insight.

The best explanation I have ever heard of the phenomenon of speaking in tongues was given to me by a sixteen-year-old girl who mentioned that she had had that experience. She said, "I was filled with a kind of joy that made

me want to speak but I didn't know what to say or how to say it, but then words flowed from my mouth. They felt like the right words, and I was pleased to speak them." At that moment, I remembered that Hindu children come to be regarded as religious adults when they are able to come up with their very own name for God.

This is not to say that there is no place for rote memory in catechesis. All forms of memory have their place in life. The acting profession relies on accurate, even vivid memory, and training for this profession uses sophisticated techniques for fostering elaborate feats of memory. I learned the proper cases following various Latin prepositions by means of a rote chant. While there are good reasons for children to commit prayers and even biblical texts to memory, as a teacher I have progressively moved away from requiring any sort of rote memorization by my undergraduate and graduate students. When one's educational goal is understanding, the emphasis is placed on asking questions, on explanation and reflection, and on strategies better suited for understanding than for memory. This approach can be a stumbling block for those who have mastered the skills of writing down and reproducing the "insights" of professors. A different sort of task is to come to one's own original words about issues examined in courses in a way that shows the influence of readings and research on those issues. My plea to students is this: "Never quote Warren. A pox on you if you do. Make anything you found important your own by speaking of it in your own voice and in your own name, fearlessly using your first-person 'I.'"

FINDING COMFORT IN THE *CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH*

When the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) was first proposed by Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston at the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, some catechists questioned how it would be used. These questions seemed to be resolved by the statement that the *Catechism* would be used as a reference tool—a guide to the authentic Catholic presentation of tradition and the Gospel's message—and not as a textbook in classrooms of children. In his essay about the CCC, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, chairman of the commission that oversaw the writing of the text, explained the bishops' purpose in publishing it:

We agreed that the book should be aimed above all at the persons who have responsibility for holding together the whole overall catechetical structure—

the bishops. It was to be first and foremost a tool for them and for their helpers, a means of assisting them in the task of consolidating the work of catechesis in the various local churches.⁷

This purpose was underscored by Pope John Paul II, in his apostolic constitution *Fidei Depositum: On the Publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, issued in 1992. “This catechism is given to them that it may be a sure and authentic *reference text* [emphasis added] for teaching Catholic doctrine and particularly for preparing local catechisms.”⁸

The statements by John Paul II and Ratzinger gave comfort to catechists who wished to see catechesis flourish. Their words opened the door to the search for ever-better ways of inviting youth and adults into the circle of discourse, so we could all take comfort at finding the Word of God on the lips of the people—not just in scripted phrases but also in original forms, in new “catechetical poetry,” if I might use such a term. Unless I have misread the documents that accompanied the CCC, it was never intended to introduce a new era of *ipse verbum*. In fact, it seemed to have the opposite purpose: to let the Word of God flourish.

In the light of the many positive statements from the pope and prelates about the purposes and uses of the CCC, I find it disheartening that some people in the field of catechesis would use the book as a cudgel for beating down creative catechetical efforts. To make verbatim quotes bolstered by numerous footnoted references to the text of the CCC the norm for catechesis seems to undermine the very purpose of the publication as outlined by John Paul II and Ratzinger. Their writings had reassured some highly trained, professional catechetical leaders who had been concerned that the norms of orthodoxy could be replaced by norms of “orthophony”: the right *sounds* in the right order. Anamnesis would then be replaced by memorization.

UNREMEMBERING

Writing this article has put me in touch with a fact I had never before considered about my own theological journey. That is, a fair amount of my adult theological study was working against what I had learned as rote definitions. I remember the day of my Confirmation at age twelve in St. Joseph’s Church in Somerville, Massachusetts. I knew the day was important, but I was unsure exactly why. As I looked around me at my fellow confirmands, most of whom appeared distracted, it seemed that most of us considered the

experience to be some sort of a party, but we did not really know why we were there or what we were celebrating. Something “magic” was happening to us. We were about to become “strong and perfect Christian soldiers of Jesus Christ.” I remember believing that the event had to do with the Holy Spirit, a mysterious reality one had to believe in but which nobody seemed to understand. The Holy Spirit was going to make us somehow better.

It took me many years of study before I “got” the deepest truth of that moment: The grace of the confirming Spirit of Jesus is not communicated all in one magic moment. It is mediated through the Spirit-filled family and parish to which you belong. Or the opposite can be mediated through the same family and parish: a self-serving sense of superiority layered over a deep religious sense of uncertainty. Confirmation, like all the Church’s sacraments, is a community sacrament. This reality was effectively hidden from me by the well-rehearsed rote distortion “strong and perfect Christian soldiers of Jesus Christ.”

Those of us whose main ministry is catechesis meet many people, who, by misunderstanding doctrine, are shackled in dogmatic chains that keep them from flourishing in faith. An old woman once told me how she had not been able to receive Communion for over fifty

Catechesis is actually a smiling invitation to join the Gospel’s dance.

years because she did not believe that Jesus was physically present in the Eucharist. She used the “shackled” metaphor for herself, saying that a brief conversation with Br. Cosmas Rubencamp, CFX, removed her chains. Rubencamp told her she was right to refuse to believe that Jesus is physically present in the Eucharist. He told her (obviously influenced by Piet Schoonenberg), “That is heresy. Jesus is not physically present in the Eucharist. He is sacramentally present there, and we know more about what sacramental presence is not, than we do about what it is.” She said, “He unshackled me and I began to flourish.” Unfortunately, too little is written about the positive side of “unremembering.”

The wider catechetical field needs the active work of creative people gifted with the kind of mental suppleness needed to enter the Eucharist in a deep way. They would be capable of seeing the relation of all to all that is buried deep in liturgical ritual: the relation of the present and past, of the seen and unseen, of the bread and the congregation, of the assembly and the Spirit of Jesus, of the here-and-now and the not-yet, and of the presence and the absence of the Spirit of Jesus. Humorlessness is a condition that negates any

lively catechesis. Catechesis is actually a smiling invitation to join the Gospel's dance, a dance not of one's arrival but of one's way forward, toward the unnamable and unforgettable.

We must consider the possibility that catechists and teachers of catechists do not want to know the full implications of the knowledge they are imparting to the learners. For that matter, we must ask, Is it possible for a teacher, even a catechist, to reduce the material or the issues needing attention to dry, uninteresting concepts, seemingly disconnected from anything real? The answer is, "Of course." ❧

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1. Shoshana Felman, "Psychoanalysis and Education: Teaching Terminable and Interminable," *Yale French Studies* 63 (1982): 21-44.
2. Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ: The Sacrament of the Encounter of God* (New York: Crossroad, 1983).
3. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1966). See especially in Part III the section "Internalization and Social Structure, 163-183.
4. Emmanuel Levinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994), 3-11. Juan Luis Segundo gives a compelling description of the struggle and achievement of insight in the first chapter of his *The Liberation of Dogma* (Orbis, 1992), entitled "A Foreword That Isn't," 1-15.
5. Here and below, I am following Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler, *Theological Dictionary*, ed. Cornelius Ernst, OP, trans. Richard Strachan (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), 19-20; and Karl Rahner, SJ, et al., eds., "Eucharist," in *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology 2* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), 260 and 261-262.
6. Peig Sayers, *An Old Woman's Reflections* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962) or *Peig* (Talbot Press, 1974).
7. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, "The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Optimism of the Redeemed," in M. Warren, *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics 2* (Winona, MN: St. Mary's Press, 1997), 258-277.
8. Pope John Paul II, *Fidei Depositum: On the Publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Vatican City: 1992), IV, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_19921011_fidei-depositum_en.html (accessed in August 2004).
9. Those interested in "unremembering" may find helpful Brian Mahan's wonderful book *Forgetting Ourselves on Purpose: Vocation and the Ethics of Ambition* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

Remembering the Faithful Departed

*Memory is the key way we relate to the faithful departed.
While they live in our memories only for a moment,
they live forever in God's memory.*

By MATTHEW SPAHR

Our capacity for memory is one of the most fascinating parts of being human—even when our memory fails us. My mother, who is suffering from dementia and thus has a damaged memory, often asks me, “Where’s Daddy?” (referring to my father). I respond, “Daddy died,” to which she usually says, “Yes, I guess I knew that.” Then she never fails to add, “Where do you think he is?”

I guess the answer to that question is at the heart of the Church’s doctrine on praying for the dead. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) states, “From the beginning the Church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic sacrifice, so that, thus purified, they may attain the beatific vision of God” (no. 1032). From the heart of this belief, the Church gives us each year the feast that commemorates all the faithful departed: All Souls.

COMMEMORATION—REMEMBERING

Memory is not unique to human beings. Experts explain that animals have memories, but whether their memories do for them what our memories do for us is unknown. Certainly, the human faculty of memory is attached somehow to our personhood. St. Augustine says in *The Confessions*, “I am my memory,” arguing the point that memory is an essential aspect of one’s personhood and

individuality (bk. X). Memory helps us to integrate all that has happened in our lives, to assimilate it, and to carry through it all a consistent identity.

To remember an event can bring delight. Some memories have the power to lift us out of the humdrum of our everyday lives and transport us to places where we long to dwell. In the same way, memories can be so painful that even years after the remembered event, the sting of what happened can still sober us. Our memories are precious because they are our links to the events that have made us who we are.

On the feast of All Souls, the Church invites us to remember all those who have come before us and to give thanks to God for them. So we remember names of people we hold dear, recall their faces, and remember them

*In each memory is an
unrepeatable story of
human existence.*

warmly in our hearts. In each memory is an unrepeatable story of human existence. Here in memory are parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, beloved children. Here represented are those who passed on to us our most basic lessons of life—how to walk and to

talk, to love and to have faith. Here are our loves and our friends. Here are our children whose deaths remain a mystery.

Each of us has special memories that come to symbolize our relationships: a moment, a glance, an embrace that captures who we are. Every picture in memory is a story of a life lived, of someone who loved and was loved and who then passed into the great weave of lives that make up the human family that God loves so dearly.

“Where do you think he is?” my mom will ask. Perhaps our memories are the key to an answer. If in our memories the dead live on, then in God’s memory they live eternally. Jesus told the skeptical Sadducees that the God of Israel is the God of the living, not of the dead (Mt 22:32). Our God remembers. He remembers Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, and because he remembers, they live. We believe that he remembers in a special way all of us (and those we love) who were consecrated to him in Baptism and united to him in Eucharist.

And so, the Church asks us to pray for those who have gone before us in faith. We pray that whatever was left unfinished for them in their journey to God in this life might be accomplished. That is what is meant by the phrase “the state of purgatory.” We might understand it as when God in his mercy

allows us to finish what needs to be finished in order for us to come to peace and fullness of life.

We also ask those who have gone to God before us to intercede with God on our behalf. We can ask them to pray for us because we fervently believe that the bonds of love that knit us together do not unravel with death, but rather continue to the day of God's Kingdom—that love is never given and received in vain.

“Where do you think he is?” my mom asks. When I answer my mom, I am grateful for the consolation Paul gave the Thessalonians who asked the same question (1 Thess 4:13). We do not know many things about those “who have fallen asleep,” but one thing we do know is that they are with the Lord.

One of the most pervasive images of heaven presented in the Scriptures is that of the banquet where we all shall be reunited as we gather in joy in God's presence. The Eucharist is a foretaste of that heavenly banquet. How appropriate it is that in the liturgy we pray that the Lord will remember “those who have died and have gone before us with the sign of faith” (Eucharistic Prayer I). We are together in the Communion of Saints (CCC, no. 958), and they are with us every time we celebrate the Eucharist—every celebration when we take time to remember and give thanks. 🍷

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Engraving the Faith in Our Hearts

Memory—learning the faith by writing it on one’s heart—and not rote memorization has played an important role in catechesis from the earliest days of the Church.

By CATHERINE DOOLEY, OP

In workshops with adults of a certain age, I sometimes find it useful to introduce a theological topic by beginning with a question from the Baltimore Catechism. Invariably, the answer will resound throughout the room immediately. Answers memorized many years ago by these Catholic adults are still within their easy recall. With the development of religion programs and the movement away from an exclusive use of the Baltimore Catechism in the 1950s and 1960s, the methodology of memorizing the questions and answers of the Baltimore Catechism fell into disuse. The rationale for this change was that children were being made to learn questions and answers without understanding the words that they were reciting. Moreover, the language used in the Catechism came from theological manuals written for seminary training, and every doctrine was presented as being of equal importance.

In an autobiographical essay reflecting on his own experience of religious education, the distinguished catechist Johannes Hofinger noted that the catechism-memorization method “afforded a one-sided religious knowledge and did not pay sufficient attention to the formation of will and emotion. The importance of religious experience in the whole process of religious education was overlooked.”¹

Far too often, one’s “knowledge of the faith” was measured by one’s ability to recite catechism questions and answers from memory. Despite efforts on the part of some educators to enable understanding before memorization,

religious education soon became equated with rote learning. With these criticisms as a backdrop, the research on children's religious thinking by such gurus as Ronald Goldman, the British psychologist of religion, solidified the case against memorization.² Goldman's slogans "We teach too much too soon" and "the Bible is not a children's book" resonated with many catechists and educators and generally helped render the practice of memorization obsolete.

Yet memorization has not always received such bad press. In the medieval universities, memorization was used to establish a basis for further thought that led to the deepening of culture and civilized life. It was not used simply as a method for remembering facts. The instructors in medieval universities often used the visual aspects of manuscripts and architecture to enhance thought and meditation. More than just a way to recall what happened in the past, memory was the way to live into the future. Through the process of memorization, the student learned information "by heart" so that they would understand it, relate it to life situations, and retain it for future reference.

Yet for those adults mentioned above who recall the Baltimore Catechism, is memorization itself the problem or is it that many generations never had an opportunity as adults to parse those formulas and make them meaningful in relation to other beliefs and in the context of their own lives? Certainly, one cannot blame yesterday for not being today, but one can learn from the past.

The use of memory has been a constitutive aspect of the pedagogy of the faith in the Christian tradition since the beginning of Christianity (*General Directory for Catechesis* [GDC], no. 154).³ For the great mystagogues, however, memorization was never thought of as rote learning. As St. Cyril of Jerusalem instructed the elect in the mid-fourth century (Sermon V, 11), they were to memorize the Creed and to keep the traditions that "you now receive and write them in bold letters within your hearts." They were not to inscribe the Creed on parchment, but to engrave it by memory in their hearts.⁴

St. Augustine in *The Confessions* (bk. X, chap. 12, no. 14) compares memory to fields and vast mansions "where treasured innumerable images are brought in there from objects of every conceivable kind perceived by the senses." For Augustine, thinking entailed walks through the infinite space of memory and through chambers and corridors in which each door, room, and image allowed him to "evoke future actions, occurrences or hopes, and on all these as well I can mediate as though they were present to me."⁵

Before the invention of the printing press, studies at the universities involved memorizing all that was to be learned. Medieval students developed

and passed on a number of memorization techniques—such as the use of acronyms, acrostics, rhymes, pictures, and other devices—that enabled them to memorize vast quantities of material. Today’s mnemonic strategies are found in catch phrases such as “fall back and spring forward” (a reminder to change the clocks to and from Daylight Saving Time) or in rhymes that help us to figure out the length of each month such as this one:

Thirty days hath September, April, June and November;
All the rest have thirty one
Excepting February alone:
Which hath but twenty-eight, in fine,
Till Leap year gives it twenty nine.

Perhaps the most contemporary example of the use of mnemonics are computer icons. They not only help us to remember certain codes, but they also offer passage into labyrinths of information stored in memory.

Were the ancient scholars still alive, they would be pleased to learn that research in the social sciences on cognitive processes now clearly supports their methods of memorization. But they might be surprised by what Paul Philibert calls “the present day merchants of memory improvement systems,”⁶ of which there are a legion.

Amazon.com advertises “millions of titles” on mnemonics that reflect various approaches to memorization. Now and then, in reading and grading the infamous “blue books” of academe, I find a series of alphabet letters lining the margins of pages, obviously written there by students as memory aids. The students, intent upon passing their exams, are possibly unaware that they are using a centuries-old mnemonic device. The GDC (no. 154) suggests that mnemonic devices be harmoniously inserted into the different functions of learning (reaction and reflection, dialogue and silence, oral and written work) as a means of thwarting a mechanical memorization.

The resurgence of mnemonics, the research of neuroscientists into the workings of the brain, recent developments in educational theory on multiple intelligences, and the relationship of imagination and memory and of metaphor and story have led educationists to reaffirm the value of the human faculty of memory.⁷ While acknowledging the disadvantages of memorization, Pope John Paul II asks, Should not religious educators “attempt to put this faculty back into use in an intelligent and even an original way in catechesis, all the more since the celebration or ‘memorial’ of the great events of the history of salvation require a precise knowledge of them?”⁸

MEMORIZATION IN CONTEXT

The GDC offers an understanding of catechesis as memory, presenting catechesis as a “living awareness” that makes known the saving history of the past to enable the Church, in the presence of the Spirit of God, to interpret present events of human history and to await in faith Christ’s coming again (no. 107). The notion of catechesis as memory echoes the Synod of Bishops in 1977 who identified⁹ three aspects of catechesis as word, memory, and witness. In *word*, the Church proclaims the mysteries of faith: Jesus Christ is the focal point and foundation of our faith and source of our life (no. 7). In *memory*, the community enters into a living tradition of words and actions which unite us to the Christ and manifest his presence in our lives today. In *witness*, we share and foster community through solidarity and service with others. Each of these aspects leads to worship and prayer and is, in turn, sustained by worship and prayer.

Catechesis is an ecclesial and pastoral activity directed to believers within the context of a believing community. A primary aspect of the action of the Church is anamnesis: to recall a past event that is celebrated in the present and that leads to the future. Catechesis as anamnesis means that we enter into a living tradition that is made present now and will be carried on by people of faith into the future. What the community believes at this moment is built upon the foundations left by many preceding generations of believers; the faith is handed down from age to age. From within this communal memory individuals and communities are empowered to act. Catechesis gives persons a sense of belonging or identity through their identification with the collective memory of the community. Individuals, in turn, contribute to that memory by their own lives. “Part of this remembering is memorization . . . memorization makes sense only when it is seen within the total context of anamnesis, only when it is at the service of lived experience, only when it serves to concretize and enrich that Christian experience.”¹⁰ Memory linked to identity is the heart of the matter.

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WHAT SHOULD BE MEMORIZED?

If memorization is to foster a sense of belonging and identity, then knowledge of God’s Self-revelation in the great events of the history of salvation—and

ultimately, in the Person, words, and works of Jesus Christ—is essential. Prayers integral to the Christian tradition, such as the Apostles Creed, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory to the Father, as well as the prayers and responses of the liturgy, are foundational for Catholic life and worship and need to be memorized.

In the 1979 apostolic exhortation *On Catechesis in Our Time*, Pope John Paul II suggests that people also need to memorize certain words of Jesus, important Bible passages, the Ten Commandments, the creeds, and essential parts of liturgical texts, prayers, and key doctrines. “We must be realists,” he says. “The blossoms, if we may call them that, of faith and piety do not grow in the desert places of a memory-less catechesis” (*On Catechesis in Our Time*, no. 55). However, the pope clearly says that this memorization also needs to be assimilated and gradually understood in depth in order for it to be the source of Christian life both personally and communally.

What is to be “engraved on the heart” is to be rooted in the Christian tradition, but it is also to be actualized by the believer. In the great figures of the Old Testament and in the stories of Jesus, what are the words that will touch our hearts and call us to conversion? What is the language that leads to praise and thanksgiving for God’s presence in our lives? What are the invocations of the Scriptures that evoke a response to God in particular circumstances? The psalms “provide a powerful and startlingly clear expression of various facets of our relationship with God. Moreover, their poetic depth strikes a chord which prompts a further reflection and opens the person to a deeper appreciation of God’s action within an individual and the community.”¹¹

What we have memorized often will come spontaneously to our minds: a child who was awed by the beauty of creation on a glorious day in June was heard to say these words of Psalm 8: “Why are you mindful of us, O God.” He had used this prayer in a religion classroom some months before, and the words were there when he needed them. Or consider the catechumen who was continually belittled at her workplace but who continued to work there because she needed the job. She was heard to pray over and over again the words from Isaiah 43:1, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine.” When asked, she explained that in repeating those words, she affirmed her own worth in God’s sight.

The GDC (nos. 107-108) says that the historical character of the Christian message requires that the mighty deeds of God in the great acts of saving history in the Old Testament—what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls the “stages of revelation”—are a fundamental reference for a biblical catechesis. These are the origins described in the creation account of God’s

power and human responsibility; of the basic symbols of light and darkness; of creation and re-creation; and of the Covenant with Noah, the call of Abraham, the story of the Exodus liberation, and the establishment of the Covenant so that in the Law the people would know and serve the One living and true God. The formation of the people continues to take place through the prophets in the “expectation of a new and everlasting Covenant intended for all, to be written on their hearts” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 64). What is to be engraved on our hearts is rooted in a sense of identity as a member of the faith community past and present. We commit to memory God’s Self-revelation; the stories of ancestors in faith; the events of Christ’s life culminating in his death, Resurrection, and glorification; and through the Holy Spirit, Christ’s presence among us. This whole story is summarized in the creeds, highlighted in teachings of the Church, and celebrated in the liturgy, all of which have one purpose: to illumine the “today.”

THE ENDURING VALUE OF MEMORIZATION

If memorization is to have value in catechesis today, it needs to be understood in the broader context of Christian identity that is found in the creeds, the Scriptures, the liturgical rituals, and the witness of Christian women and men throughout the ages. Learning formulas word for word, repeating them without properly understanding and actualizing them, is of little value. Learners need an explanation and an opportunity to articulate and discuss what they have learned and to explore the meaning for their own lives.

Perhaps a basic value of memorization is that it highlights the importance of what is learned. If something is committed to memory, engraved on the heart, it allows the person to grow into that tradition until that whole conceptual framework becomes a lens through which one looks at life and lives out one’s life in charity and justice.

Faith, both of the individual and the community of faith, finds expression in beliefs and is supported by belief. Statements of belief, words that come from a living tradition, offer a vocabulary to approach the mystery of God. Such words provide a way to respond in a variety of ways to the God who has first loved us. “Personal response is correct and mature which fully respects the datum of faith and shows an understanding of the language used to express it (*biblical, liturgical, doctrinal*)” (GDC, no. 155). A core vocabulary is necessary in order for us to be free to grow in understanding and response. All that we learn leads us into future learning and appropriation. Memorizing, at any

age, includes a measure of intellectual understanding, but the meanings of creedal professions, liturgical texts, basic prayers, and important scriptural passages that are memorized expand and deepen in the future as the individual and the faith of the individual matures. Memorization allows us to enter into the tradition that is a link with the past and a heritage to be handed on. ❧

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1. Johannes Hofinger, "Looking Backward and Forward: Journey of Catechesis," *The Living Light* 20:4 (Summer 1984): 348-357.
2. Ronald Goldman, *Readiness for Religion* (New York: Seabury Press, 1968) *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (New York: Seabury Press, 1968).
3. Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* (Washington, DC: Libreria Editrice Vaticana—United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1997). Hereafter cited as GDC.
4. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Gregory Nazianzen, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church VII* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1983).
5. John Rotelle, ed., *The Works of St. Augustine 1, The Confessions* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1997): 244-246.
6. Paul J. Philibert, "The Promise and Perils of Memorization," *The Living Light* 17, no. 4 (1980): 308. See K. L. Higbee, "Recent Research on visual Mnemonics: Historical roots and Educational Fruits," *Review of Educational Research* 49, no. 5 (Fall 1979): 611-629, and also Mary J. Carruther, *Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990), for historical background on the use of mnemonics.
7. See M. A. Mastropieri and T. E. Scruggs, *Teaching Students Ways to Remember: Strategies for Learning Mnemonically* (Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books, 1991). Helpful and less technical books include Jerry Larsen's *Religious Education and the Brain: A Practical Resource for Understanding How We Learn about God* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000) and Eric Jensen's *Teaching with the Brain in Mind* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1998).
8. John Paul II, "On Catechesis in Our Time," no. 55, in *The Catechetical Documents: A Parish Resource* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1996), 402.
9. "Message to the People of God," *The Living Light* 15:1 (Fall 1978): 86-97.
10. Una O'Neill, "Memorization in Catechesis," *The Living Light* 16:2 (Summer 1979): 212.
11. O'Neill, 214.

The Living Light:

IN MEMORIAM

Despite financial constraints, The Living Light was a forum for the exchange of ideas and a chronicle of change. Its history records the story of renewal in religious education and pastoral ministry in the post-Vatican II years.

By BERARD L. MARTHALER

Over the years *The Living Light* has carried obituaries of a number of prominent individuals who made significant contributions to the catechetical ministry in the United States. With this final issue, the time has come to print an obituary for *The Living Light* itself.

The plan for a religious education journal was hatched some forty years ago in the National Center for Religious Education–CCD, a semi-autonomous agency within the old National Catholic Welfare Conference (now the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). The Center’s staff, then headed by Msgr. Russell J. Neighbor and ably assisted by Fr. Joseph Collins, saw a need for a journal modeled on *Lumen Vitae*, the quarterly publication of the international center for religious education studies in Brussels of the same name. The new journal’s purpose would be to give the catechetical movement in the United States a forum in which scholars and the people in the field could exchange ideas. Biblical scholars, liturgical specialists, theologians, and education experts would inform and challenge catechists and teachers of religion who, in turn, would explore and report on programs and methods for teaching that were successful.

The first issue of *The Living Light* was published in the spring of 1964 by the National Center of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD). As the publication’s name suggests, the founders intended the review “to help its

readers lead those entrusted to them to the Living Light which is Christ.” The rather austere cover design of the first nine years was intended to evoke the image of “the Light of Christ dawning on our modern world” (1:1 [Spring 1964]: 5). The subscription price for the first year (four issues) was \$6; a single issue then cost \$1.75. (In 2004, individual subscriptions cost \$29.95 for four issues a year; a single issue costs \$8.95.)

Although the title page listed Msgr. Neighbor as editor, the implementation of the editorial policy set by the Center was in the hands of the executive editor, Mary Perkins Ryan. She solicited manuscripts, screened them, and edited the text. For the first fourteen years, each issue ran 160 pages. The first article in the first issue was written by Fr. Gerard S. Sloyan and entitled “The Responsibility of the Catechist to the Constitution on the Liturgy.” During that first year, articles were published from such distinguished catechists and theologians as Sr. Marie de la Cruz Aymes, HHS; Mary Perkins Ryan; Fr. Bernard Cooke, SJ; F. J. Sheed; Fr. Bernard Haring, CSSR; Fr. Eugene Walsh, SS; Fr. John McKenzie, SJ; Sr. Mary Corita, IHM; Fr. Eugene Maly; Fr. Walter Burghardt, SJ; Fr. S. T. Balasuriya, OMI; Fr. Frank Norris, SS; Fr. Charles Keating; and Anne Carr. The work of some writers, such as Sr. Maria de la Cruz, Gabriel Moran, and Michael Warren, appeared in the first volume and has continued to appear in the journal’s pages until the very end now.

The introduction to the first issue stated the following:

- The Church’s mission “is not simply to state truths to believers and non-believers, but to proclaim the Good News of Christ in such a way that men can effectively hear it as both good and new.” Her mission is “to ‘make disciples’—persons eager to be close to Christ, to learn from Him, to know Him, by sharing His life through the sacraments and observing all His commandments of love.”
- Catechists need a “living grasp of Christian truth as centered in Christ and the personal experience of the Christian life as life in Christ which will enable us truly to proclaim Christ to others.” But because the “great majority of those actually engaged in the work of religious instruction and formation are not in a position to keep up with” recent developments, and because there was “no substantial publication designed to serve American catechists’ needs” where “theoretical and practical problems could be thrashed out,” *The Living Light* was started by the episcopal committee and the

board overseeing the National Center to provide this practical service to the field.

OSV TO THE RESCUE

For the journal to be financially viable, the National Center figured it needed ten thousand paid subscribers. Although *The Living Light* once had more than twelve thousand subscribers, that number did not last long (subscriptions declined throughout the years: by 1999 the numbers of subscribers fell as low as 850). The publication of such magazines as *Religion Teacher's Journal* and *Catechist* eroded *The Living Light's* subscriber base, so much so that by 1969 the National Center announced that it would cease publication of *The Living Light*. Cancellation notices had been sent to *The Living Light* subscribers when Fr. Albert Nevins, then publisher of Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. (OSV), came to the rescue. Leaving editorial policy in the hands of the National Center, OSV underwrote the editorial costs, including Mary Ryan's salary, and took over the production, printing, and distribution of the journal.

Although the circulation of *The Living Light* held steady for the next couple of years, OSV began to have second thoughts about its arrangement with the National Center. Meanwhile Msgr. Neighbor resigned from the National Center, and Charles "Mickey" McDonald succeeded him as director. McDonald asked me to reexamine the purpose and editorial contents of the magazine, and to explore its future. After I presented my "findings" to McDonald, OSV agreed to continue to subsidize the journal for another three years if there were a change of executive editors, which subsequently occurred. (OSV apparently was critical of Ryan's copyediting style and ability to keep deadlines; ideology and politics may also have played a part—Ryan's book *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?* was controversial with some in the Catholic community.) At that point I became the executive editor for *The Living Light*, and the editorial office was moved onto the campus of The Catholic University of America. (Whatever else may be said of the change in editors, I was no more prompt than Ryan in meeting deadlines!)

This change in leadership also brought changes to *The Living Light*. We gave the cover a new look and changed the masthead to read "An Interdisciplinary Review of Christian Education." We established an editorial advisory board made up of a cross section of catechetical leaders. The annual meeting of the board was also the occasion for an informal gathering of catechetical leaders in the greater Washington, D.C., area. They reported on developments that they

had observed as they traveled about the country, identified individuals and books that were making an impact on the field, and generally exchanged ideas with the editorial board. A shift in editorial policy also took place. The editors did not think that a quarterly like *The Living Light* could or should compete with popular publications like *Catechist*, *Religion Teacher's Journal*, and other monthlies that were more “how to” and “hands-on” in their approaches.

The Living Light focused on the catechetical mission of the Church as it came later to be broadly defined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (nos. 4-7). It sought to keep the readers abreast of developments in liturgy, biblical studies, and pastoral theology that had a particular bearing on the catechetical ministry. It highlighted the constitutions, decrees, and declarations of the Second Vatican Council. It featured documents published by the Holy See and the Synod of Bishops, e.g., *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (*On Evangelization in the Modern World*; 1975) and *Catechesi Tradendae* (*On Catechesis in Our Time*; 1979). It gave entire issues over to the General Directories and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It publicized pastoral letters of the U.S. bishops' conference on social justice and promoted their statements on ministry to adolescents, young adults, and others. It worked closely with the U.S. bishops' Department of Interreligious and Ecumenical Affairs in publicizing ecumenical endeavors and guidelines for dealing with non-Christian religions, especially Judaism. Over the years, it regularly published articles on education and training and credentialing and networking of catechists and religious educators. It also served as a journal of record that, from time to time, reviewed past achievements. For example, some twenty years ago, *The Living Light* carried a piece on “The Place of the NCDD in the Catechetical Movement.” More recently, it marked the one-hundredth anniversary of the CCD in the United States.

SADLIER AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In 1974 the National Center—CCD was merged into the Department of Education of the United States Catholic Conference (USCC; now the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). My contact person there for *The Living Light* was the executive secretary of the National Conference of Diocesan Directors: first Tom Kramer, then Bob Stamschor, and later Dave Beebee. Their solid involvement and support notwithstanding, *The Living Light* continued to be in danger of being snuffed out for financial reasons. In 1978 *Our Sunday Visitor* notified the USCC that it would no longer subsidize the journal. After several months of uncertainty, Stamschor persuaded

W. H. Sadlier, Inc., to underwrite the journal's publication. The transition occasioned more self-study and a renewed commitment to maintain *The Living Light* as a professional journal and continue its interdisciplinary approach to religious education. From the self-study came a clearer articulation of the journal's goal to highlight the common interest and concerns of everyone engaged in the pastoral ministry.

With the demise of the National Center, the USCC's Department of Education began to assimilate *The Living Light* into its plans and programs. Msgr. Thomas G. Gallagher, the executive secretary of the USCC's Department of Education, became the chairman of the editorial board, and the directors of various "desks" at the department became contributing editors. The Department of Education continued to set editorial policy while Sadlier underwrote the expenses of the executive editor's office as well as production and distribution costs, much as OSV had done previously. To make the journal more visually appealing, Sadlier commissioned a new format. A burning flame became the logo, and taglines describing the table of contents appeared on the cover. While the number of pages in each issue was reduced to ninety-six, the page size was enlarged. The masthead now read, "An Interdisciplinary Review of Catholic Education, Catechesis, and Pastoral Ministry."

During the transition from OSV to Sadlier, *The Living Light's* circulation numbers took a severe plunge from which the journal never recovered. Not knowing who would be handling subscriptions in the future, renewal notices were not sent! Sadlier made a serious (and costly) effort to rebuild *The Living Light's* subscriber base, but had little success. In 1985, Sadlier notified the USCC that it could no longer subsidize the journal and would discontinue its support for it. Once again, circulation number dropped when renewal notices were not sent to subscribers.

The next three years were the most difficult in the journal's history. The Department of Education contracted with Mercer University Press to print and distribute the journal. The journal's only income came from subscriptions and an occasional paid advertisement. Expenses were cut to the bare bones. The Catholic University of America, at no charge, warehoused cartons of back issues. It was no longer possible to offer even a modest honorarium to authors. The Department of Education handled the billing during this period.

In 1988 the Department of Education handed over responsibility for production, distribution, and billing to the USCC's Office for Publishing and Promotional Services (OPPS; now USCCB Publishing). OPPS addressed *The Living Light's* precarious finances by increasing the cost of a subscription by

more than double the previous price. Unfortunately, many subscribers responded to the price increase by letting their subscriptions lapse.

The Living Light survived the next sixteen years in spite of its financial losses, because of the strong backing it received from the Department of Education's succession of executive secretaries: Msgr. Gallagher; Sr. Lourdes Sheehan, RSM; Msgr. Thomas McDade; and Sr. Glenn Anne McPhee, OP. Each of these men and women recognized the unique place that *The Living Light* held in the Church's catechetical ministry, and they were willing to keep it going as long as possible. Recognizing that economic realities would sooner or later snuff out the flame of the journal, they each made efforts to increase circulation and to lower costs, with limited success. Budget realities finally dictated the decision to cease publication, much to the regret of all involved in its publication.

LOYAL READERSHIP AND COMPETITION

In the fall of 1991, OPPS and the Department of Education commissioned Stratton Publishing & Marketing, Inc., of Arlington, Virginia, to conduct a readership survey. About a third of the 1200 subscribers who received the questionnaire responded. The typical reader was a 48-year-old female holding a graduate degree who worked as a director of religious education in a parish setting. The Stratton Report found that *The Living Light* was a well-read publication: nearly 60 percent of the respondents read articles in every issue, about 22 percent read three out of four yearly issues. Nearly 65 percent read half or more of each issue, and one-fourth read all or almost all. Even though about 10 percent of the subscriptions at the time were mailed to libraries—many of these abroad—they were not included in the survey. Nor were the readers asked about the number of articles they copied for use in classes.

Why could *The Living Light* not survive financially? Its readers were loyal (87% of the respondents to the Stratton questionnaire rated its content and readability as good to excellent), but they were not numerous. As the readers of 1991 grew older, many retired. Evidence exists that many of their replacements lack the professional training of past directors of religious education. Another development in the field—overall positive—was the growth of pastoral ministries into such organizations and associations as the National Catholic Educational Association, the National Conference of Catechetical Leadership, and the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry who

looked to publications that cater more to their specialized interests. *The Bible Today* and a host of high-quality liturgical publications, including *Pastoral Musician*, appeal to a segment of readers who once were served only by *The Living Light*. The downside of specialization is a certain fragmentation that fails to present the pastoral ministry in general and religious education in particular as a unified and collaborative effort. The interdisciplinary approach of *The Living Light*—of which the editors are proud—was to foster cooperation and exchange of ideas.

Other factors that contributed to *The Living Light*'s financial woes were economic and administrative. One has already been mentioned. When renewal notices were not sent out or sent out tardily, there was a sizeable drop in the number of subscribers—the first instance occurred when the National Center in 1969 informed readers that *The Living Light* would cease publication, the second after Our Sunday Visitor withdrew its subsidy and before Sadlier obtained the subscription list, and the third time after Sadlier did not renew its contract with the USCC's Department of Education. A factor that has not been mentioned is the lack of paid advertising. This was due in part because of government restrictions on the kind of advertising a non-profit publication can accept, and in part because there was no sustained effort to persuade publishers who could have advertised that it was in their best interest to support *The Living Light*. Over the years Benziger and Paulist Press ran occasional ads, and for a long period Religious Education Press regularly advertised their books on the back cover. (The lament of REP's founder James Michael Lee that "Catholics don't read" may help to explain *The Living Light*'s low circulation numbers.) Other publishers, however, regarded it (wrongly, I believe) as a house organ of either OSV, Sadlier, or the bishops' conference, or as a competitor to their own periodicals (which it certainly could have been).

While an obituary is in order, *The Living Light* does not need a tombstone. The forty years of copies filling shelves of libraries and religious education centers in the United States, Ireland, Belgium, Zimbabwe, the Philippines, England, Australia, and elsewhere stand as the only memorial it needs. A few individuals also own all forty volumes and value them highly. *The Living Light* will continue to live on in footnotes and in references to the articles and reports that appeared in its pages. No one will be able to write a history of Catholic religious education—or even pastoral ministry in general—in the United States during the post-Vatican II years without consulting its pages. The journal accomplished what it set out to do: for forty years

it served as a “substantial publication designed to serve American catechists’ needs” where “theoretical and practical problems could be thrashed out.” And now it is finished. ❧

BERARD L. MARTHALER, OFM Conv, is the executive editor of *The Living Light*, a position he has held for more than thirty years.

POSTSCRIPT

The Living Light has served the catechetical community well throughout its history. All of us within the department have been proud of the journal, and we have recognized its importance to the entire catechetical community—Catholic schools and parishes—throughout the English-speaking Catholic world. We have done everything within our power over the last four years to raise the number of subscribers and to cut expenses so that we could continue to publish *The Living Light*, but all of our efforts proved inadequate. We simply could no longer continue to subsidize the journal at the level it required.

Although *The Living Light* will cease to exist as a quarterly subscription journal, the USCCB Department of Education does not intend to stop producing substantial resources for the Catholic catechetical community. The Department, in cooperation with USCCB Publishing, has already produced a book on adolescent catechesis taken from articles that appeared first in *The Living Light*. Other books that mine back issues of the journal are being considered, as are other resources that would support the catechetical community.

We continue to look for ways to help catechists throughout the country to proclaim the Good News of Christ in such a way that men and women can effectively hear it as both good and new. The ministry of catechesis needs a forum where substantial articles can be read and discussed, where theoretical and practical problems can be addressed, and where practitioners can learn from each other. We will look for ways to continue to provide this service for them.

We say farewell to *The Living Light* with much regret. We look with hope to the future of catechetical ministry alive in the Living Light that is Christ.

—USCCB Department of Education Staff

Forty Volumes of *The Living Light*:

HIGHLIGHTS AND SPECIAL FEATURES

With the goal of keeping readers informed about the important developments and significant events in pastoral ministry, *The Living Light* has published articles on a wide variety of subjects. Most, though not all, of the contributing authors have been Catholics, and many of them, especially in the journal's early years, were not American. *The Living Light* has reported on major events of special interest to religious educators: International Catechetical Weeks, religious education congresses, and the publication of significant catechetical documents. *The Living Light* has reviewed the catechetical contributions of such organizations as the Fraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) and the National Conference of Diocesan Directors [of Religious Education] (NCDD).

Upon the deaths of influential leaders in religious education, including several contributors to *The Living Light*, the journal has memorialized their unique accomplishments. Retrospective articles like "Women in Religious Education: The Cause of Cornelia Connelly" (27:3; Spring 1991) and "Catholic Foremothers in American Catechesis" (37:1; Fall 2000), as well as obituaries of prominent figures like the following outline the recent history of the catechetical movement in the United States.

Philip Murnion, Prophet and Teacher (1938-2003) (40:1; Fall 2003)

Ellamay Horan and the *Journal of Religious Instruction* (40:1; Fall 2003)

Marion F. Gurney: From Settlement House to CCD (39:4; Summer 2003)

Miriam Marks: The CCD's Unsung Heroine (39:4; Summer 2003)

Verona Spellmire: The CCD's Number-One Bushwhacker (39:4; Summer 2003)

In Memoriam: Mary Charles Bryce, OSB (38:4; Summer 2002)

- Ivan Illich: Yesterday's Prophet (34:3; Spring 1998)
- Carrol StuhlmueLLer, CP (1923-1994) (31:1; Fall 1995)
- Mary Perkins Ryan (1912-1993) (30:3; Spring 1994)
- John Francis Whealon (1921-1991). *In Memoriam* (28:2; Winter 1991)
- Christiane Brusselmans (1930-1991) (28:3; Spring 1992)
- Joseph Stedman, Adult Catechist (27:3; Spring 1991)
- William C. Smith, Publisher and Pioneer (25:3; June 1989)
- Cardinal John F. Deardon: Teacher (25:3; June 1989)
- Mary Reed Newland: Author, Lecturer, Parent (25:3; June 1989)
- Bill Reedy, Catechist: A Personal Reminiscence (24:2; March 1988)
- Johannes Hofinger, Remembered: 1905-1984 (20:3; June 1984)
- In Memoriam*: Rosalia Walsh, MSHS (19:4; Winter 1982)
- Eugene H. Maly, Scholar and Educator—1921-1980 (17:4; Winter 1980)
- J. A. Jungmann (1889-1975): *In Memoriam* (13:3; Fall 1976)
- In Memoriam*: Joseph B. Collins (1897-1975) (12:1; Spring 1975)

At the end of each of its first thirty-nine volumes, *The Living Light* has published an index of the articles, authors, and book reviews in the previous year's four issues. (Note: Quarterly issues of *The Living Light* since volume 26 have been dated by season, but in some early years, they were dated by month.) In lieu of the annual index for the fortieth volume or of a cumulative index for all forty volumes, the editors have compiled below a listing of topics and issues that have received more than passing notice in the journal. A more detailed analytic index would show that *The Living Light* has reported significant developments and has reflected shifting priorities in the field of religious education and in pastoral ministry in general.

Volume 1 (1965)

Teaching the faith at various grade levels; lesson plans included. Three-part history of catechetics into medieval times. Report on the Pan-African Study Week (*Katigondo*).

Volume 2 (1965-1966)

History of catechetics—Part IV, 1600-1750; Part V, years since 1800. Sex education in the family. Relevance in religious education. Liturgical formation in Catholic high schools. Salvation history: essential principles. An adult religious education program. The insecure religion teacher. Catechetics and social structures.

Volume 3 (1966-1967)

Approaches and structures for the religious education of children, the involvement of parents, and the role of the catechist. Adolescent formation and high school projects, including lessons to be learned from the United Church of Christ and Roman Catholic–Lutheran dialogue.

Volume 4 (1967-1968)

Progress in faith. Sociological factors in adolescent catechesis. Family catechetics. Teacher training. Integrated parish catechetics. Christian priesthood. The meaning of sin and salvation. Adult education. “The New Morality.” An experimental program in an experimental parish.

Volume 5 (1968-1969)

The future of catechetics. Adolescents’ philosophy of life. Team teaching. “Theology of Hope.” Group dynamics. Education for change. Identity crisis of religious educators. “All that Glitters Is Not Goldman.”

Volume 6 (1969)

The organizing of teacher training and catechist formation. The use of art and media, and a report on the San Antonio International Study Week. Conclusions of the Medellin Congress.

Volume 7 (1970)

Catechetical programs and approaches and some reflections on adult religious education. The charter statement of the NCDD–CCD.

Volume 8 (1971)

The parish as a place to learn and pray. Role playing and simulation games. Questions posed by women’s liberation. Black theology and catechesis. Report on the 1971 International Catechetical Congress in Rome.

Volume 9 (1973)

The community as educator, celebrant, and context of catechetical activity. The Christian educator as professional and the role of the parish director of religious education (DRE). The origin, purpose, and contents of the *General Catechetical Directory*. Religious education programs for retarded children.

Volume 10 (1973)

An editor’s foreword by Charles C. McDonald, then-director of the National Center of Religious Education–CCD, announces changes in policy

and personnel for *The Living Light*, including the appointment of Fr. Berard L. Marthaler as executive editor. While continuing to publish articles on a broad range of pastoral concerns, *The Living Light* introduces a “Special Feature” with articles that focus on issues and practices of particular interest to religious educators. (The Special Feature becomes a hallmark of *The Living Light* for most of the journal’s history.) Special Features in volume 10 address the following topics: catechists’ ministry and status (Spring); the U.S. bishops on religious education (Summer); first Confession and First Communion (Fall); and religion and public education (Winter).

Volume 11 (1974)

A look to the future: religious education from 1974-1984; examples of regional and specialized religious education centers (Spring). Papers commissioned by the NCDD: “Family Religious Education” and “Total Religious Education: A Blueprint for a Learning Society” (Summer). Project Rainbow: progress report on the *National Catechetical Directory* (Fall). What should be included in the “content” in religious education (Winter).

Volume 12 (1975)

Towards Christian Jewish dialogue (Spring). NCDD papers on religious education and spirituality (Summer). Women in religious education: profiles of Jane Marie Murray, Mary Perkins Ryan, Iris V. Cully, Sara Little, Maria de la Cruz Aymes, and Mariella Frye (Summer). Liturgy for young Christians (Fall). Religious education in an electronic world (Winter).

Volume 13 (1976)

Towards an American catechesis and approaches to adult religious education. NCDD papers on catechesis, pastoral ministry, and motivating adults for religious education (Summer). Text of the working paper (*lineamenta*) for the 1977 Synod of Bishops; “Catechetics in Our Time” (Fall). Ministry to separated, divorced, and remarried Catholics (Winter).

Volume 14 (1977)

The role of the artist, guru, counselor, and music director in religious education. A cross-cultural approach to catechesis among Native Americans (Winter). Catechesis for children; the National Conference of Catholic Bishops’ report on the state of catechesis in the United States, and a list of “action statements” that were drawn up by a symposium sponsored by the United States Catholic Conference and were sent to the general secretariat of the

Synod of Bishops (Fall). NCDD papers on the role of the parish priest in catechetics and the sacraments in the formation of faith (Summer).

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The Professional Religious Educator and the Official Church:

PERSPECTIVES ON WHAT IS AND WHAT MIGHT BE

The role of the DRE began to take shape in the Catholic community in the 1960s. It embodied aspects of the Second Vatican Council's vision of the Church and influenced the development of lay ministries in the United States.

By ZENI FOX

In the decades since the Second Vatican Council, the professional religious educator has acquired a recognized place in the Catholic Church in the United States. Although not officially “institutionalized” like the ministries of the lector and acolyte, the role of the director of religious education (DRE) has become a fixture in Catholic dioceses and parishes. The way the DRE has shaped religious education and lay ministry in the Church seems worth examining because this development raises questions about what we may expect in the future. In this article, before tracing the way the DRE embodies the Second Vatican Council’s vision of ministry, I place the Catholic community’s experience with professional religious educators in the broader context of the Protestant community’s experience with the same. I then outline the impact of the DRE on the development of additional and diverse ministries in Catholic parishes and discuss responses of the Church in the United States to these realities. Finally, I sketch some aspects of an agenda for the future.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The role of the professional religious educator has a much longer history in Protestant churches than in the Roman Catholic community.¹ Dorothy Furnish's *DRE/DCE: The History of a Profession* tells these religious educators' story, which begins in the early 1900s and which parallels the later emergence of the DRE in Catholic parishes. The context is one of significant societal and ecclesial changes. At the turn of the last century, as people moved from farms to cities, increased urbanization created social dislocation and weakened traditional values and morality. The expansion of compulsory school attendance to secondary school students in effect lengthened the "unstable" period of adolescence. At this time, great concern arose about moral decline among the young. In the field of education, John Dewey's theories were having an impact; through George Albert Coe, Dewey's concepts came into religious education. The idea of a scientific way to approach problems of learning, character building, and institutional organization began to shape new initiatives. The field of psychology was also emerging. This discipline stressed that children were not "little adults" and therefore needed to be treated differently than adults; further, a new stage of life was named: adolescence. These developments would impact religious education.²

During this early period, the Sunday school was a strong institution in Protestant communities. Its leadership was lay, and voluntary, with a distinct separation from the other activities of the church. Protestant Sunday schools were at the heart of the revival movement, which emphasized conversion and Christian living. But the revival movement began to lose influence to the emphasis on scientific education, which called into question the old transmissive methods of teaching. Instead of

attempting to pour pre-selected content into the minds of pupils, teachers were challenged to discover subjects of interest to students, help them to engage in activities related to that interest, and then guide them as they reflected on their experiences.³

In this cultural and ecclesial context, the Religious Education Association (REA) was born in 1903. Members of REA included professors of the New Testament, church history, psychology, and education. The president of the University of Chicago also was an REA member. The REA aimed to inspire educational forces with religious ideals and to inspire religious forces

with educational ideals. In 1906, the REA launched the journal *Religious Education*. In its pages, various contributing writers advocated for trained persons to direct Sunday schools.

The “director of Christian education” (DCE) was to be a specialist in education, not a pastor specializing in ministry. The DCE would draw on educational theory and biblical studies to develop curriculum and organizational structures. Furnish concludes her account of this early history by saying that the role of the DCE was “called into being as a response to the urgent pleas of the academic religious community and was encouraged by forward-looking

Gradually the role of DRE became widely accepted in Catholic parishes throughout the country.

local churches which made places on their staffs for members of this new profession.”⁴

Early DCEs evidently possessed a strong sense of mission and confidence. However, accounts show that churches were not sure precisely what these new staff members would do. Some seemed to have expected miracle workers; others, a secretary. Nonetheless, in the following decades,

the numbers of DCEs increased exponentially: from forty in 1912, to four hundred in 1921, to eight hundred in 1926. The financial market crash of 1929 brought a decline in the numbers, so that by 1946, there were only one thousand DCEs in the country. The increase in DCEs also reflects the changing role of women in churches during those years: whereas in 1926 there were nearly equal numbers of men and women serving as DCEs, by 1946 three-fourths of DCEs were women. DCEs faced various difficulties. While they were trained professionals, they often lacked practical skills and sometimes could not get along with other ministers, clergy, and volunteers. The churches were often not prepared for change or for the slow growth of new endeavors.⁵

As early as 1913, DCEs began to set standards for their position, stressing that professional training in religious education was essential. Interestingly, while some DCEs were ordained, someone who was ordained but who lacked the proper training in religious education was not considered a DCE. However, the standards were not taken seriously by the Protestant denominations until these standards were connected to the certification process that was required of someone wishing to be considered a qualified DCE. The first directors were not certified until 1948. Throughout this period of development, there were disagreements about the correct job title to be used.

Gradually, as DCEs and churches became clearer about their identity, consensus emerged. The formation of professional organizations, both denominational and interdenominational, helped clarify the role and title. DCEs gained mutual support and intellectual stimulation by gathering with their peers through such organizations. In about half a century, the role of DCE gained clarity and wide acceptance.⁶

EMERGENCE OF THE ROLE OF DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In the Catholic community, the role of the DRE dates from the late 1960s.⁷ Many parallels exist in the development of the roles of the DRE and DCE. The 1960s were a time of significant societal and ecclesial change. The war in Vietnam was causing social upheaval in the United States; some youths were turning to alternative lifestyles as “flower children,” sometimes in communes; pop culture was newly ascendant. Catholics were moving out of the cities, where they had often lived in ethnic enclaves, and into suburbs, where they interacted daily with those of other faiths. One consequence was that many parents began to choose public schools for their children. Economically, Catholics moved into the middle class and became part of the mainstream of American culture. The election of John F. Kennedy as President symbolically represented the changed status of Catholics in the United States.

This time of social change coincided with the end of the Second Vatican Council and the rapid dissemination of some of the Council’s central ideas among church leaders in the communities. The central theme of the *Decree on the Sacred Liturgy*, “full, conscious and active participation of all the faithful,” impacted liturgy and the whole life of the Church. This consciousness gave rise to new ministerial roles, such as that of the DRE. DREs, in turn, drew others into ministry out of this vision. The *Constitution on the Church* helped Catholics understand the centrality of Baptism and led them to proclaim “we are the church” and to call forth and accept new roles for the laity. The *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* proclaimed, “the Spirit of the Lord fills the whole world,” inviting Catholics to a new relationship with the world that emphasized dialogue and service to those in need. Such an understanding contributed to the dynamic that was moving Catholics into the mainstream of U.S. culture.

The vision of the Council was enthusiastically received by many who wished, in turn, to share it with others. Many priests, sisters religious, and new

DREs desired to communicate the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and to foster an active, interiorized faith among all Catholics. New parish programs in adult education were begun. New formats for sharing the faith were developed, such as youth retreats, sacrament preparation and celebration days, family religious education programs, and service education to complement classroom study. Parish religious-education programs expanded significantly to meet the needs of the many students now enrolled in public schools. Increasingly, pastors hired DREs. However, the lack of clarity about the role and the changes initiated by the DREs at times made the work very challenging to parish leaders—sometimes even unacceptable to clergy and parishioners alike.

The DRE profession began stabilizing in the 1970s, with the growth of professional organizations. In 1969 the meeting of diocesan superintendents of religious education sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) issued *The Metairie Statement*, which recognized the need for professional organizations of religious educators. In many dioceses where associations of DREs were formed, usually by the members themselves, questions about who could be a member helped clarify the role and the identity of the DRE. In 1972 the NCEA established the National Forum for Religious Educations that later became the NCEA Department of Religious Education, which then gave birth to the National Association of Parish Coordinators–Directors of Religious Education (NPCD).⁸

In 1980 the National Conference of Diocesan Directors (NCDD), housed in the headquarters of the United States Catholic Conference (now United States Conference of Catholic Bishops), issued a statement on DREs that explained their role and stressed the importance of competent and qualified persons to provide needed leadership. The NCDD stated, “the most important reason for the emergence of DREs is the increased awareness of the importance of the parish’s responsibility to provide a comprehensive, integrated and total approach to religious education.”⁹ The NCDD eventually welcomed DREs as full members in the late 1990s, after the organization had morphed into the National Conference of Catechetical Leadership (NCCL).

Gradually the role of DRE became widely accepted in Catholic parishes throughout the country. Two aspects of this development are notable. First, it marked an expansion of parish staffs to include vowed religious and lay persons, not just clergy, and it introduced both a lay dimension and a feminine dimension to parish ministry.⁸ Second, it marked a specialization in ministry by calling for practitioners to have particular knowledge and skills, in contrast to the generalist approach to ministerial leadership that previously had been the norm.

Beyond the mid-1970s, parish staffs gained other specialists in ministry, including youth, liturgical, pastoral, and social concerns ministers. Although at times a priest would hold one or more of these roles, the great majority of these new ministers were sisters religious and lay persons, and most were women. Beyond parishes, too, an expansion occurred in such roles as prison minister, campus minister, spiritual director, and chaplain, and these positions were often held by lay persons. Although some feared that the growing number of professional lay persons involved in ministry would diminish the number of volunteers in each ministry, the *Notre Dame Study of Catholic Parish Life* reported differently.

The more effective paid staff . . . consider it their direct responsibility to recruit and motivate, train and direct volunteer members who actually carry out most of the dozen or more programs in their parish, and launch new ones. Our study findings as a whole show that since Vatican II, parish staffs (other than priests) have greatly increased, and they in turn have multiplied programs which involve many more volunteer leaders.¹⁰

Begun when visionary pastors first hired DREs, the significant expansion of this ministry comprising volunteers and professional lay ministers continues today.

STABILIZATION OF THE DRE'S ROLE

The emergence of the DRE was a grassroots phenomenon: a few pastors hired individuals for the position; other pastors took note and did likewise. Aspiring DREs prepared for a role in ministry, often without being clear about what they would do when they finished their studies. Contrast this development with that of the role of the permanent deacon, which began with official authorization and a designated path for recruitment, training, and designation. The first official recognition by the bishops of the growing numbers of DREs, as well as of other lay ministers on parish staffs, was in 1980. They wrote,

Growing numbers of lay women and men are also preparing themselves professionally to work in the Church. . . . [These] ecclesial ministers represent a new development. We welcome this as a gift to the Church.¹¹

The bishops next responded to the DRE phenomenon in a 1986 survey of the programs that were preparing laity for ministry. The survey reported that 123 dioceses had 164 such programs lasting two or more years, and that

the vast majority of these programs had begun after the Council.¹² The early concern about adequate preparation for ministry is still central today.

In 1989 the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pastoral Practices initiated discussion with several other committees of the Conference about the growing number of ecclesial ministers in the Church in the United States. As a result of this discussion, the committee authorized Fr. Philip Murnion to conduct a national study. Among significant findings of this study, (1) pastors and parishioners had a high level of satisfaction with the new ministers, and (2) the ministers themselves were satisfied with their work. Fr. Murnion also identified areas that needed further attention, such as personnel policies and procedures and preparation of pastors and staffs for collaborative ministry.¹³

In 1994 the bishops' Committee on the Laity addressed the issues raised in the initial report by appointing a Subcommittee on Lay Ministry. In 1996 this subcommittee (with funding from the Lilly Foundation) began a project called "Leadership for Lay Ecclesial Ministry." The extensive consultations held by the subcommittee shaped the document produced out of this effort: discussions were held with lay leaders of associations and organization (two day-long dialogues), theologians (a two-and-a-half-day colloquium), representatives of ethnic communities (a day-and-a-half gathering) and bishops from South America and Canada (a two-day symposium, simultaneously translated in three languages). The report of this study, *Lay Ecclesial Ministry: The State of the Questions*, published in 1999, outlined the conclusions of the Subcommittee. Notably, the report describes who is a lay ecclesial minister and clearly affirms that lay ecclesial ministers are a gift to the Church. The report also conveys the understanding that "lay ecclesial ministry can be understood as a response to a call from God to work alongside ordained ministers in the service of and within the ecclesial community," along with other key concepts toward a theology of lay ecclesial ministry. It concluded with several proposals that provide for continuing reflection on and responses to the new developments in ministry.¹⁴

At the same time that the bishops were doing this work, the ministers themselves, through their associations, were working toward greater clarity and professionalization of their roles. The National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministers developed standards for youth ministers in 1990 and revised them in 1996. The National Association for Lay Ministry developed standards for parish ministers, pastoral associates, and parish life coordinators in

1995, and NCCL developed standards for DREs in 1996. These three organizations have collaborated in developing common competency goals to respond, at least in part, to the need expressed by leaders of ministry formation programs for a more focused way to develop curriculum.¹⁵

As this overview shows, the stabilization of the DRE's role is closely tied with that of other professional roles in parish ministry. Because the bishops have focused on the more inclusive title "lay ecclesial minister" (LEM), any formal authorization for ministry will probably be developed under this rubric. Furthermore, the professional organizations themselves have recognized the wisdom in utilizing a more inclusive framework, even as they also emphasize the particular role of the DRE. The tension here between the idea of specialization in ministry and a more generalist focus, is important for the field of religious education. Ways to maintain a healthy balance need to be continually sought.

PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS

The present context differs in many ways from that at the time the role of DRE emerged. Catholics are now highly aware of the significant decline in the number of vowed religious and of priests. Whereas calling lay people into ministry in the Church once seemed clearly desirable, today some in the Church ask whether the fostering of DREs and LEMs contributes to a decline in more traditional vocations. Others ask whether present developments represent a "clericalization of the laity," or whether such involvement in church ministry by lay persons diverts them from their proper role "in the world." Another development that impacts the DRE is the emergence of the role of pastoral life coordinator, the person responsible for a parish's pastoral leadership in the absence of a resident priest. Some Catholics celebrate the growing number of pastoral life coordinators as a triumph for lay ministry, seeing that role as the epitome among lay positions. Others resist the expansion of all lay roles in ministry as they mourn the replacement of priests by pastoral coordinators.

Confusion underlies these responses. The pastoral life coordinators fill a role that is proper to a priest, which is not true of the role of the DRE. The coordinators serve "by reason of supply" (as Pope John Paul II has phrased it), whereas DREs serve because of the expansion in ministry. If there were enough priests, the role of the pastoral life coordinator would disappear. However, when considering lay ministry, Cardinal Roger Mahony and the priests of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles said:

It must be recognized that lay ministry rooted in the priesthood of the baptized is not a stopgap measure. Even if seminaries were once again filled to overflowing . . . there would still remain the need for cultivating, developing and sustaining the full flourishing of ministries that we have witnessed in the Church since the Second Vatican Council.¹⁶

Also notable is the fact that whereas at one time the role of the DRE was virtually the only professional parish position filled by lay people, the proportion of DREs to other professional positions on parish staffs is declining. Between 1992 and 1997 (the dates of the two major studies done), the number of religious educators (DREs, coordinators of religious education, and adult education directors) declined from 41.7 percent to 36.3 percent of the total. “There is greater interest in some of the specializations—liturgy, youth, catechumenate—and proportionately somewhat less use of both general pastoral ministers and religious education ministers.”¹⁷ These developments impact many individuals’ sense of ministerial identity as DREs as well as their morale.

At the same time, individual bishops are taking initiatives that support and affirm professional lay ministers, though not DREs per se. In Oakland, California, a lay ecclesial ministry council has been formed. The group is parallel to the presbyteral and diaconal councils, which relate with and serve in an advisory capacity to the bishop. In Fort Worth, Texas, the bishop has called into being a *ministerium*, a gathering of all those on parish staffs. They meet for extensive dialogue and continuing education twice a year. In Chicago, the cardinal archbishop has begun a program for formally recognizing lay ecclesial ministers: they are certified by the archdiocese after a review of their education and formation; they are called by the bishop; and then they are commissioned to a specific role by a letter from the bishop to the pastor. For the lay ministers in these dioceses, these actions represent official recognition and affirmation, which they consider very helpful for themselves and their ministry. The Subcommittee on Lay Ministry has continued its work with a particular focus on the issues of a theology of lay ecclesial ministry and guidelines for the education and preparation of lay ministers. The goal is to have a document that would be presented to the full body of bishops for their consideration at their November meeting in 2005.

THE FUTURE

The continued stabilization of the DRE’s role depends on ongoing work from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and from

DREs themselves. The following section presents some current considerations of the Subcommittee on Lay Ministry and anticipates some future actions that represent my own sense of a desirable scenario.

The Role of the Bishops

- A more fully articulated theology of lay ecclesial ministry is needed. The situating of new developments in the life of the Christian community within the context of the history of the Church (its story, its teachings) is characteristic of Catholic communities. We seek continuity with our past, even as we honor the continued work of the Spirit that makes all things new. In September 2003, the bishops' Subcommittee convened a dialogue involving eight theologians, each of whom had written a preparatory paper. The goal of their work was to identify points central to a theology of lay ecclesial ministry. This work will be used by the Subcommittee in developing their future document, which promises to be a significant contribution to the field of lay ministry.
- In the report *State of the Questions*, the bishops affirm that lay ecclesial ministers speak of their call or vocation to ministry. They conclude that "this call or vocation is worthy of respect and sustained attention." Yet traditionally, vocations have been discerned communally and then publicly recognized. In seminaries and novitiates, the process is slow and deliberate; various rituals conclude steps in discernment (e.g., receiving a habit, being installed as an acolyte). Leadership (e.g., the superior of the community, the bishop) has a central role in this process. For the most part, we do not have mechanisms for communal discernment and official recognition of those who are lay ministers. Questions of how responsibility for these functions will be delineated among schools of ministry and dioceses need to be addressed.
- Since the Council of Trent, which mandated the establishment of seminaries, the Catholic community has had a formal structure and guidelines for the formation of men for priestly ministry. Since the Second Vatican Council, a plethora of programs for preparing lay persons for ministry have flourished. Dioceses, colleges, seminaries, and even independent organizations have developed ways to meet the new need in the Church. In recent years, representatives from these institutions have convened in various groupings, sharing their experiences and

their wisdom. The Subcommittee has been part of some of these conversations; indeed, it has convened groups such as this for consultations. The forthcoming document will offer guidelines for formation, including the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral aspects.

- Many DREs have taken part in a ritual of blessing or commissioning for their ministry. For the most part, these ceremonies have been at the end of their studies and were prepared by the school, diocese, or the graduates themselves. Considering the Church's strong sense of ritual and communal prayer, Catholic communities' creation of such celebrations is not a surprising development, and it speaks to the strong desire of lay ministers for a commissioning to ministry by the community. The role of the diocese and the parish in developing an official ritual needs to be explored. This would significantly influence the sense of the DRE's identity as a minister of the Church on the parts of the DRE and those served.
- Fr. Murnion's studies of LEMs show that the group is disproportionately Caucasian. Many factors contribute to this, some economic (e.g., higher education is expensive), some cultural (e.g., the dominant culture emphasizes credentials; minority cultures often emphasize charismatic leadership). As the Church in the United States becomes increasingly diverse, the question of diverse ministerial leadership will be increasingly pressing. How leaders from all communities will be recruited, credentialed, and designated is a concern for all, especially bishops.
- Human resource issues related to lay ecclesial ministry need attention—and these concerns are not only about salaries and benefits. The shift from a celibate male leadership committed to one diocese (and from vowed religious sisters' making corporate commitments to a diocese) to varied patterns of leadership involving ordained, vowed, and lay, has many implications. Lay people—men and women—are usually married and often have children, so they have obligations to family as well as to the ministry. Since they are not invited to make a commitment to a diocese, they are mobile (in a highly mobile society) and free to move. Such issues as diocesan plans for future staffing and portability of pensions need to be explored.

The Role of the Professional Religious Educators

Just as the bishops have significant tasks to accomplish relative to the stabilization of the DRE's role (work in which, for the most part, they are already engaging), so too do DREs have tasks before them, many which are already being addressed.

- I believe the primary task before DREs is engaging in the dialogue initiated by the bishops and the professional associations of religious educators. The process of reflecting on experience, and of seeking to discern God's call within it, requires patience and humility, and this process often requires one to put aside fear. DREs should actively seek venues for contributing to the dialogue.

- DREs have affirmed that they think they have been called to their work in the Church. But the discernment of a calling has multiple phases. Initially, one discerns a call to be a lay person committed to church ministry. (For many individuals, this process is slow and "foggy"—in the spirit of John Henry Newman's *Lead Kindly Light*, "one step enough for me.") Discernment as to what role to fill—youth minister? DRE? Catholic school principal?—is necessary, possibly several times through the years. And one must also discern daily how to use time and energy. Toward this end or that? In this way or another? Questions in this discernment could be, Am I called to be a specialist in religious education or a generalist? A pastoral minister or a religious educator? The needs of the Church are many, and God's calls are diverse, so ongoing discernment is necessary.

DREs need to support one another—and also priests and other ministers who are seeking to strengthen communion.

- Some are ambivalent about viewing ministry as a profession. However, if a profession is understood as being based in a body of knowledge from which a specialized competence flows that is oriented toward service, seeing the religious educator as a professional has value. The growing professionalism of the field, demonstrated by the identification of competencies and development of standards, is an invitation to DREs to grow professionally—to grow intellectually, spiritually, and pastorally

so as to be more effective in service. The growing professionalism is also an invitation for religious educators to gather with other professionals and other ministers, lay and ordained, to share perspectives and wisdom.

- In recent years, we have struggled as a Church with disagreements between the right and the left, between those in one field of ministry and those in another. But we are called to be one Body, to be in communion with one another, to be engaged in mutual ministry. Two days before he died, Fr. Murnion sent to all the bishops of the country a letter with a plea for attention to communion and for efforts to maintain unity. In his final column in *Church*, he invited priests to work to strengthen the corporate character of the priesthood. But he concluded, “Although I have addressed priests here, lay people in ministry, too, must develop ways of supporting each other.”¹⁸ DREs need to support one another—and also priests and other ministers who are seeking to strengthen communion.
- Finally, DREs must strive to continue in hope. When the number of tasks is high, resistance great, and obstacles to growth in faith seemingly insurmountable, the virtue of hope must be prayed for and rested in. The DRE, after all, is but the sower. Another gives the soil, sends the rain, and bestows the sunshine. The promise has been given: “For just as from the heavens / the rain and snow come down / And do not return there / till they have watered the earth, / making it fertile and fruitful, / Giving seed to him who sows / and bread to him who eats, / So shall my word be / that goes forth from my mouth; / It shall not return to me void, / but shall do my will, / achieving the end for which I sent it” (Is 55:10-11). ❧

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1. Although the title preferred in the early period was “director of religious education,” here “director of Christian education” (which was also previously used in Catholic communities) is used to differentiate developments in the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities.
2. Nashville, TN: Christian Fellowship of the United Methodist Church, 1976, 15-17.
3. *Ibid.*, 17.
4. *Ibid.*, 19-20.
5. *Ibid.*, 25-30.
6. *Ibid.*, 30-47.
7. Maria Harris, *The D.R.E. Book: Questions and Strategies for Parish Personnel* (New York: Paulist, 1976), 1; Clarice Flagel, *The DRE Ministry* (Dubuque: IA: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1983), 11.
8. Fr. Philip J. Murnion summarized his ground-breaking research on professional lay ministers by noting six major themes, of which these were two. *New Parish Ministers: Laity and Religious on Parish Staffs* (New York: National Pastoral Life Center, 1992), 10-12.
9. Alfred McBride, “Religious Education,” in *One Hundred Years of Catholic Education*, ed. J. Augenstein, C. J. Kauffman, and R. J. Wister (Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association, 2003); 114, 118-119.
10. The statement was published in *The Living Light* 17:3 (Winter 1980): 247-249.
11. Report No. 15, ed. David C. Leege and Joseph Gremillion (June 1989), 6.
12. *Called and Gifted: The American Catholic Laity* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1980), 4.
13. *Preparing Laity for Ministry*, ed. Suzanne Elsesser (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1986).
14. Murnion, vii, 78-86, 97-103.
15. A Report of the Subcommittee on Lay Ministry (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1999), 8, 14-21, and 61-63.
16. *Common Formation Goals for Ministry*, ed. Joseph T. Merkt (Washington, DC: NALM, NCCL, and NFCYM, 2000).
17. *As I Have Done for You: A Pastoral Letter on Ministry* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2000), 15-16.
18. Murnion and David DeLambo, *Parishes and Parish Ministers: A Study of Parish Lay Ministry* (New York: National Pastoral Life Center, 1999), 45-46.
19. *Church* (Fall 2003): 2.

Christian Faith in the Context of a Multicultural World

Globalization has led to more frequent encounters with world religions and the need to ask the questions, Can salvation come through other religions? and How do other world religions relate to Christ?

BY DERMOT A. LANE

Religious educators at all levels, school teachers of religion, and parish catechists are frequently asked such questions as, Can salvation come through other religions? If so, how is it mediated? What is the relationship of Christianity to other religions? Religious educators will know that the Second Vatican Council opened up this debate—but left many questions unanswered. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* notes in its discussion of the necessity of Baptism that “God has bound salvation to the sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments” (no. 1257, emphasis in original).

In this article, I outline some of the significant developments in Catholic theology concerning interreligious dialogue that have occurred since the Second Vatican Council, up to the present. I then indicate the impact of these developments on the shape of Christian faith today in a multicultural world.

In the last twenty years, questions about interfaith dialogue and the relationship between the Christian faith and other religions have become central in religious education. They evidently will remain at center-stage for years to come. Supporting this claim are two recent developments in secular society that raise searching interfaith questions: globalization and international terrorism.

GLOBALIZATION

The ambiguous but unavoidable phenomenon of globalization has been brought about largely by the revolution in information and communication technologies. The world has become a global village, bringing diverse peoples and cultures into a new kind of contact and conversation. This development requires, among other things, a new capacity to understand the other, to appreciate differences, and to respect local cultures. As we move into a post-modern global culture, we will have to give more attention to the interaction between the concrete and the ultimate, the historical and the universal, the particular and the absolute.

Equally important in this context is new awareness that if the planet Earth is to survive, a new kind of conversation and praxis will be necessary among not only cultures but also religions of the world. Globalization is not simply a debate about dependence versus independence, nor about the relationship between the local and the global. Ultimately, globalization is a recognition that the real issue between people, cultures, and religion today is about the unavoidable interdependence, interrelatedness, and interconnectedness of the whole human family.

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

A second development highlighting the urgency of interfaith dialogue is the emergence in recent years of the threat of international terrorism. Whether we like to admit it or not, the traumatic events of September 11, 2001 (also known as “9/11”), represented more than a clash of civilizations. A close reading of the final instructions to the hijackers reveals that these events in the United States, though clearly political, were also deeply motivated and driven by religious convictions. To suggest that 9/11 and subsequent events have nothing to do with religion is a misrepresentation and a dangerous deception for both politics and religion.¹

If religion is a part of the problem of international terrorism, then it must also be a part of the solution. The prophetic words Hans Küng wrote some fifteen years ago are as valid today as they were then: “There can be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There can be no peace among religions without dialogue between religions. There can be no dialogue between religions without research into theological foundations.”² The privatization of religions over the last couple of hundred years since the Enlightenment in the West and the sacralization of society by Islam in the Arab world

both represent extremes that lie behind the current wave of international terrorism. Both need to be overcome if interreligious dialogue is to succeed.

THREE RECENT PARADIGMS CONCERNING INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

In the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, with the Church's new openness to other faiths, a variety of theological positions emerged and developed into different paradigms. The dominant view into the mid-1960s could be called ecclesiocentrism, which held that salvation was only available in and through the Church of Christ—a position held by both Catholics and Protestants. This view gave way to a new form of Christocentrism, which put the person of Christ at the center of salvation. Jesus Christ was seen as the unique mediator between God and humanity and as the source of salvation. This particular view, understood by most commentators to represent the mind of the Second Vatican Council, was followed by a more radical view known as theocentrism, which held that God alone is the source of salvation.

These three positions—ecclesiocentrism, Christocentrism, and theocentrism—are often described in terms of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. Exclusivism argues that membership in the Church of Christ is necessary for salvation. Inclusivism puts the Person of Christ at the center of salvation. Pluralism suggests that salvation is available through diverse religious paths that are all equally valid and effective.

Pluralism is usually associated with John Hick, who has argued consistently for this view since the mid-1970s. The shift from inclusivism to pluralism was described by Hick as “a Copernican revolution in the theology of religions,” and he invited others to follow him in what he called a “crossing of the Rubicon.” For Hick, all religions, including Christianity, are “co-equal and co-valid” ways of salvation. Further, according to Hick, we as humans cannot know God, the Ultimate Reality, and therefore, no one religion is superior.³

Another way of describing these three paradigms has been put forward more recently by Paul Knitter in *Introducing Theologies of Religions*. Knitter describes a replacement model, a fulfillment model, and a mutuality model. The replacement model holds that Christianity supersedes all other religions and that therefore, there is only one true religion. In the fulfillment model, all religions find their fulfillment in Christianity; this position is summed up in the slogan “the one fulfills the many.” In the mutuality model, a number of complementary relationships exist between all religions, and all religions exist

on the same level playing field, so that there are many true religions called to dialogue. Knitter adds a fourth model that he calls the acceptance model. In this view, a great variety of religions exists, a position Knitter sums up with this rubric: “Many true religions: so be it.”⁴

Among the three paradigms, the one that has generated the most debate is the radical pluralism put forward by Hick. Commentators have pointed out that Hick’s view is heavily influenced and reliant upon Immanuel Kant’s distinction between the empirical phenomenal world and the invisible noumenal world. Acceptance of this distinction, which is really an unbridgeable separation between the empirical world and the invisible world, opens up a chasm between the human and the divine, between the secular and the sacred, between images and the ultimate religious reality.

In effect, if we follow Hick, religious images are turned into signs, empty signs that no longer have any symbolic content and that fail to participate in that which they symbolize. The concrete historical specifics of religion are disabled: rituals and symbols and gestures are emptied of all significance, and accordingly, are dislodged from their original cultural and historical context. In brief, icons become images, symbols become signs, and gestures become actions. The end result is that the mystery of God is reduced to passivity and inactivity and thereby removed from human experience.⁵ In the end, we arrive at a position of radical agnosticism. The analogy employed to describe the negative effect of this kind of pluralism on all religions is the image of one’s reducing an original work of art to the lifeless level of a mechanical reproduction that has lost all contact with the original experience that inspired its creation.

Theologians today have expressed the feeling that the threefold paradigm may have been helpful initially in getting the theology of religions off the ground, but that these paradigms have opened up little actual engagement between religions, and in effect, have promoted the status quo among religions. Pluralism and inclusivism, theologians point out, are (when scrutinized) expressions of an exclusivist position and therefore do not really promote dialogue.

MOVING BEYOND THE IMPASSE OF THE PARADIGMS

To move beyond this impasse in interfaith dialogue, some theologians suggest that the boundaries between exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism should not be drawn so rigidly and that the grains of truth contained in each paradigm should be recognized. In trying to move beyond this threefold

paradigm, some note that religious pluralism has been a reality for thousands of years. This form of pluralism is usually referred to as pluralism *de facto*, pluralism as a matter of fact. In addition, many now hold that this reality of religious pluralism is more than an accident of history, an outcome of human blindness to the message of Christianity, or the result of the failure of the Church to evangelize the nations. Instead, individuals suggest that the pluralism of religions is a part of God's plan of salvation for all and that, therefore, it should be seen as part of divine providence. This form of pluralism is known as pluralism *de iure*, meaning pluralism as a matter of principle.

This significant shift from pluralism *de facto* to *de iure* can be justified on philosophical and theological grounds. From a philosophical point of view, all knowledge is historically and socially conditioned; all knowledge is shaped by history and influenced by the sociocultural circumstances surrounding history. If this is the case, and there is abundant evidence to support this, then pluralism is not just an accident of history, but rather “a constitutive and intrinsic dimension of human knowing.”⁶ In other words, pluralism in knowledge that is a part of the human condition inevitably results in a pluralism of religions. There is no such thing as pure faith, pure theology, or pure religion. There is only faith, theology, and religion that are incarnate in history, are embedded in a social context, and are expressed in cultural forms.

The theological basis of religious pluralism is to be found in God's universal will for the salvation of all people (1 Tm 2:4, 4:10; Acts 10:34-35). The effect of this divine intention is found in the wide diversity of religious responses to God's universal call to salvation. In other words, the source and cause of religious pluralism is God's universal call to salvation.

In moving towards a pluralism that is not only *de facto* but also *de iure*—that is to say, pluralism in principle, as something that is part of divine providence—theologians are careful to distinguish this form of pluralism from the pluralism of Hick. In contrast to Hick's concept, pluralism in principle does not depend on the Kantian separation of the phenomenal world from the noumenal world. Instead pluralism in principle affirms that God is present in many and various ways to the people of the world. As the Second Vatican Council said, God is present in the world through the seeds of the Word, through the ray of Truth that enlightens all, through the elements of goodness and of truth that exist in other religions.⁷ As *Dominus Iesus: On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church* (quoting Pope John Paul II) says, “God does not fail to make himself present in many ways,

not only to individuals, but also to entire peoples through their spiritual riches, of which their religions are the main and essential expression.”⁸

This particular form of pluralism is called “inclusive pluralism”⁹ to distinguish it clearly from Hick’s form. Inclusive pluralism, as put forward by Jacques Dupuis, emphasizes that other religions contain “participated mediations” in the one mediation of Christ, a view also put forward by John Paul II in his encyclical *The Mission of the Redeemer* (*Redemptoris Missio*, 1990; no. 5).¹⁰

Clearly, there is potential for misunderstanding here between what Dupuis and others call “inclusive pluralism” and what Hick refers to as “religious pluralism.” For Hick, as we have seen, all religions are co-equal and co-valid ways of salvation without any reference to the uniqueness or universality of Christ. In contrast, Dupuis strongly affirms Christ as a unique mediator, savior, and decisive revelation of God without denying the presence of salvation and revelation of some form and degree in other religions.

This new form of inclusive pluralism helps us to go beyond the impasse of the three paradigms discussed above, and it brings together the elements of truth within those paradigms into a more unified vision. Such inclusive pluralism demands that we take seriously the reality of other religions and see them as vehicles of God’s gracious and saving communication to the people of the world. Furthermore, inclusive pluralism recognizes Christ as a unique mediator, decisive revelation of God to the world, and universal source of salvation for all, without prejudice about the existence of mediations, revelations, and salvation in other religions. Dupuis grounds this development of inclusive pluralism in his Trinitarian Christology, employing the doctrine of the Trinity as the basis of pluralism and Christology as the source of inclusivity. This appeal to a Trinitarian Christology, however, needs to be prefaced with an appeal to a sound anthropology, an informed hermeneutical theory, and a theology of grace.

AUTHENTIC DIALOGUE

At the level of anthropology, one of the key questions to ask is, What is the nature and character of human identity? We see with increasingly clarity that human identity is something that is radically dependent on the encounter with the other and that self-awareness is only available through interaction with others. “To be” is “to be in relation,” and “to exist” is to “co-exist.” Emmanuel Levinas, more than most philosophers, accords a primacy to the other and suggests that the encounter with the other contributes most to the

constitution of the human self. In a similar manner, Paul Ricoeur claims that the self is never quite as fixed or determined as we think. Rather the self is a composite of ongoing *sameness* within a process of continuous *development*, and interactions with the other shape and determine self-identity.¹¹ If this is how self-identity is developed, then something similar takes place concerning religious identity to bring together sameness and ongoing change. Encounter with the religious other, therefore, is something that will enrich and expand one's own sense of religious identity.

If there is to be a fruitful interreligious encounter that will give rise to new understanding, then we will need to promote “the cultivation of a hermeneutical sensibility—a willingness and ability to move beyond our limited horizons.”¹² As Hans-George Gadamer has pointed out, our understanding of another tradition or culture is like a good conversation in which “when we have discovered the other's standpoint, his ideals become intelligible without [our] necessarily agreeing with him.”¹³

The practice of authentic dialogue requires a reaching out to understand imaginatively what is other and different. When this happens—that is, when

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one is able to cross over to the other's point of view in openness—then one can come back to a better understanding of one's self, one's culture, and one's own religious identity. Within this fusion of my own limited horizon of understanding with the equally limited horizon of understanding of the other, a new understanding takes place, both for the self and the other. Authentic

dialogue, therefore, whether religious or otherwise, is not about pretending to be neutral or approaching the other without commitments. Nor is it an encounter of “empty heads.” Instead genuine dialogue is about allowing one's own conditioned commitments to be enriched or transformed by the equally conditioned commitments of the other. Interreligious dialogue, therefore, does not impose one's faith on the other, but rather allows the faith of the other to shake up one's own, often complacent, religious faith.

Further, the deeper a person's grasp of his or her own tradition, the more enriching the encounter with the other will be. Interreligious dialogue, therefore, does not “dumb down” one's own identity, establish the “lowest common denominator” among religions, or discover a non-descript “essence” of religion. To the contrary, interreligious dialogue digs deeper into

the quality of one's ongoing identity and personal commitments in and through the process of encountering the religious other.

RAHNER'S CONTRIBUTION TO INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

On the basis of this sketch of the anthropological and hermeneutical grounds of inclusive pluralism, we can now move towards an understanding of grace as the theological foundation for recognizing other religions as important in themselves and as significant for our own Christian understanding. The theologian who has done most in this regard is the German Jesuit Karl Rahner—who was born one hundred years ago this year—who died twenty years ago on March 31, 1984. Among Catholic theologians of the last century, Rahner contributed most significantly to interreligious dialogue, relocating the Christian faith within the dialogue that should necessarily take place with other religions.

In 1961 Rahner gave a lecture entitled “Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions.” This lecture had a profound influence, not only on Catholic involvement in interfaith dialogue, but also on the Second Vatican Council. About four years after Rahner's lecture, the Council published *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*.

In that seminal lecture, Rahner laid out the basis for the existence of all religions, including Christianity, located in what he called “a theology of the supernatural existential” and in what we today would call a theology of the universality of God's grace in the world. The background to the theology of supernatural existential was debated in the 1940s and 1950s. Discussion about the relationship between nature and grace was initiated by Henri de Lubac and taken up by Rahner. Rahner adopted a unified approach to the nature-grace debate, arguing in favor of the existence of a single supernatural existential (which he called a “graced-nature”) that exists within every human being and through which each one seeks to overcome the traditional dualism between the natural and the supernatural. Further, for Rahner, the relationship between nature and grace is not sequential or layered or dichotomous in any way, but rather is one *ab initio*.

This fundamental unity between nature and grace enabled Rahner to talk about elements of God's grace within other religions. “Every human being is really and truly exposed to the influence of divine, supernatural grace,” wrote Rahner, adding, “It is impossible to think that this offer of supernatural, divinizing grace made to all should remain ineffective.”¹⁴ This enabled Rahner

to say that “Grace can be found in other religions” and that “religions . . . must contain supernatural, gratuitous elements of God’s grace.”¹⁵ Because of this universality of God’s grace in the world, especially in the religions of the world, Christians must enter into dialogue with other religions.

Rahner developed his theology of the “anonymous Christian” based on his theology of the universality of God’s grace. Rahner argued that because non-Christians have been touched by the universal grace of God, they can be regarded as “Christians without the name.” Rahner’s theology of “the anonymous Christian” has been controversial and, for that reason, I do not wish to elaborate upon it here.

In his last public lecture given in 1984 just weeks before his death, Rahner returned to the question of other religions, pointing out once again that “God’s Grace—which in the final analysis is God’s very self communication—is really poured out on all humanity and not merely on the few who have been sealed by the sacraments.”¹⁶

Because of this generous theology of grace, Rahner was able to take what he described as an optimistic view of salvation, especially for those who exist outside Christianity, particularly those who belong to other religions. For Rahner, God’s grace is active in the other religions in varying degrees through their beliefs, practices, and rituals.¹⁷

This claim of Rahner’s is based on the underlying principle of Catholic theology that grace is always mediated and embodied, and that part of the mediation and embodiment of God’s grace in the world is to be found in other religions. Because the grace of God is mediated in this way, Rahner was able to point out that other religions can be “a positive means of gaining the right relationship to God and thus for the attaining of salvation, a means which is therefore positively included in God’s plan of salvation.”¹⁸

THE IMPACT OF INCLUSIVE PLURALISM ON CHRISTIAN FAITH

In the light of the above developments since the Second Vatican Council, a number of important questions arise in relation to the nature and character of Christian faith. What does the move from exclusivism to inclusivism do to the shape of Christian faith? In particular, what are the implications of the shift from the radical pluralism of Hick to the inclusive pluralism of Dupuis for the way we understand Christian faith today?

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has moved from a perspective that saw the Christian faith as exclusive, universal, and absolute

to one that is open to God's saving action being present in the world through other cultures and religions. This change in perspective has implications for the way we understand Catholic faith today. The developments in the Church's thinking since the Second Vatican Council, especially in the area of interreligious dialogue (summarized rather schematically above), provide an impetus to the Church as it attempts to reconfigure itself within this new context of a postmodern, pluralistic culture. Questions that the Church is being forced to face include, Can Christian faith survive the postmodern critique of culture and religion? and Can Christian faith engage creatively with other religions without losing its own substance?

Since the Council, the very least we can say about the Catholic Church's relationship to other religions is that the Catholic faith has become less introverted and more extroverted, less defensive and more outgoing. More important, the Catholic faith, in the light of the developments outlined here, must now move from being a closed to an open faith: that is, moving from an understanding of itself as confined within a closed system to one of being a faith that properly belongs to an open and developing narrative. The logic of developments at and since the Second Vatican Council challenge the Catholic faith to reconstruct itself in terms of an open narrative and reconfigure itself as a faith that is open to critical engagement with the world, culture, and other religions.

FROM AUTHENTIC DIALOGUE TO OPEN NARRATIVE

This move towards an open narrative is demanded by a variety of theological perspectives. First, a closed narrative of the Christian faith cuts itself off from contact with other religions. Such a view has serious consequences for the way the Catholic Church (and Christianity in general) understands itself. The most obvious example of a negative consequence arising out of the isolation of the Christian faith from other world faiths is the sad story of what has happened between Christianity and Judaism in the last nineteen hundred years.

We bear the disturbing memory of the Holocaust—and guilt as we recognize that Christian attitudes regarding the Jewish role in the death of Christ contributed to it—that now haunts Christian faith and identity. But we also suffer as Christians from the significant loss in how we understand God, covenant, and history because of Christianity's separation from Judaism. One suspects that the Christian faith has incurred equally significant losses in terms of the place of prayer because of our limited interaction

with Islam; in terms of self-enlightenment, because of our limited interaction with Buddhism's process of self-emptying; and in terms of an appreciation of the importance of mysticism to faith, because of our limited interaction with Hinduism. Isolation of the Christian faith is no longer viable in a globalized world. Nor, indeed, is such isolation a responsible course of action in a world afflicted by international terrorism.

Second, a closed narrative of the Christian faith is decidedly discontinuous and out of character with the original narrative of Christian faith as expressed in the New Testament. The earliest narrative of Christian faith is explicitly eschatological, and the narrative continued to be eschatological throughout the early centuries. Both the Pauline and Johannine theologies of Christian faith contain strong emphases on elements of the "not yet" of Christianity and the ongoing process of becoming within Christian existence. The Christian faith of the early Church explicitly understands itself as incomplete and unfinished. Consider, for example, the earliest form of Christian prayer that cries out "*Maranatha*," and the Our Father, which prays for the coming of the Reign of God. Likewise, think of the early Christian doctrine of the second coming of Christ (*Parousia*), which pervades a significant part of the New Testament narrative. In a recent interview, David Tracy pointed out that "the second coming of Christ now becomes a symbol as important as the symbols of Incarnation, cross and resurrection," and that when this happens, we can move "into a theological interpretation of Christianity in relationship to the other religions."¹⁹

Third, a closed narrative of the Christian faith neglects the *apophatic* tradition of negative theology, which was present in the patristic period, the medieval world of Meister Eckhart and Thomas Aquinas, and the Reformation period of Martin Luther, and which also is present for an increasing number of contemporary Catholic theologians. Catholic theology has held that there is always more to God: *Deus semper Major*. As Rahner cryptically remarked towards the end of his life, "a theology that wishes to answer all questions clearly and thoroughly is guaranteed to miss its proper 'object.'"²⁰ Most of all, the narrative of Christianity is one that professes that we now "see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known" (1 Cor 13:12).

Fourth, a closed narrative account of Christian faith is far too influenced by modernity with its pretence of offering master narratives, which, in retrospect, we now know forgets so many who live on the margins of life. The postmodern critique of all master narratives and the totalizing tendency of

modernity alert us to the impossibility of any one narrative's doing justice to the multiplicity of human experience and the irreducible nature of the otherness of ourselves and others. We would do well as Christians to remember that we are *viatores*, wayfarers, and not *comprehensores*, people who have arrived in possession of the whole truth.

This critique of the closed narrative suggests that we move towards the articulation of an open narrative as something that is constitutive of Christian faith. An open narrative of Christian faith is more in tune with the open perspectives within the historical ministry of Jesus. These perspectives include the teaching and praxis of Jesus concerning the coming Reign of God and the prophetic and apocalyptic eschatology operative within the life of the historical Jesus that was transformed by the Christ-event and by the outpouring of the Spirit and subsequently adopted by the early Church.

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church is open to God's saving action being present in the world through other cultures and religions.

Furthermore, an open narrative of Christian faith recognizes the ongoing character of human identity and Christian self-understanding. The human and Christian self is not fixed but developing, not static but constantly emerging.

In addition, an open narrative is able to take account of the new self-understanding that arises from encounters with other cultures and religions. An open narrative will have the capacity to absorb the demands of hermeneutical theory and praxis mentioned above. The narrative of Christianity must be able to live with continuous interpretation and reinterpretation of the Christian faith that arises out of encounter with difference and otherness.

Fifth, an open narrative is able to recognize the ongoing presence of the universality of God's grace in the world as found in other religions and outside other religions. God's grace is universal and is mediated through creation, history, and the religions of the world.

Finally, an open narrative is more mindful of its own limitation and the constant need for self-critique. Every narrative—that is, every religious narrative—is incomplete and unfinished, and therefore seeks a continuous process of the purification of its own painful memories and the ongoing need for conversion that this entails.

To conclude, here are some practical implications for the Christian faith from this move towards inclusive pluralism and the adoption of a more open narrative. To be religious in the present and the future will require that we be interreligious. Interreligious dialogue is no longer an optional extra, but rather an imperative arising out of the very nature of Christian faith itself. Further, the way of interreligious dialogue implies a new way of being Christian in the world and a new way of doing Christian theology. From now on there is, as it were, a new way of describing Christian faith and a new source for the performance of Christian theology, namely, the encounter with other religions.

Finally, if we are to deepen our grasp of Christian faith and Christian identity then we must be prepared to pass over to the religious point of view of others and return from that experience to a deepened appreciation of our own Christian faith. In brief, Christian faith in the context of a multicultural world has much to give as well as to gain though the encounter with other living faiths. ❧

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Capital Punishment and Roman Catholic Moral Tradition

by E. Christian Brugger

Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003

270 pages, hardcover, \$50.00.

The United States is the only Western, industrialized country still implementing the death penalty. Worldwide, the death penalty has been abolished in approximately eighty nations.

Despite centuries of consensus affirming the right of the state to execute criminals for grave offenses, since the 1970s bishops in the United States have joined many others in opposing the death penalty. In 1980, the U.S. bishops' conference, joining many other national conferences of Catholic bishops, issued their most comprehensive condemnation of the death penalty. In recent times, Pope John Paul II also has forcefully opposed capital punishment.

How can the pope and the bishops justify this development in Catholic teaching? Are they condemning the death penalty on the practical grounds that society can be protected from violent criminals by sentences of life in prison? Or is the opposition to the death penalty based on a new moral assessment of capital punishment as being wrong in principle and therefore never to be justly applied by the state? These and other questions form the subject matter of the book *Capital Punishment and Roman Catholic Moral Tradition*, a revised doctoral thesis by E. Christian Brugger, prepared under the direction of John Finnis at Oxford University in England.

Part One of the book offers a detailed scrutiny of the teaching on the death penalty found in the 1997 edition of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC). Brugger exegetes as if the CCC were Sacred Scripture and subject to the deference observed in the case of inspired writings. The CCC is a valuable and at times, authoritative teaching guide. But the weight of its teachings on moral issues is proportionate to the validity of the arguments on which the teaching is based.

Yet changes in the most recent editions of the CCC must be acknowledged. It may well be true, as Brugger argues, that the ground is being laid in the CCC for a condemnation of the death penalty in principle. Brugger contends that in the CCC, the argument that the death penalty is legitimate in principle but effectively illegitimate—because society can be protected and the common good can be safeguarded by the incarceration rather than death

of a criminal—is being set aside in favor of an emerging condemnation of the death penalty as being morally wrong.

According to Brugger, the stronger condemnation of the death penalty in the definitive text of the CCC is due to the incorporation of the teaching on the death penalty found in Pope John Paul's encyclicals *The Splendor of Truth* (*Veritatis Splendor*, 1993) and *The Gospel of Life* (*Evangelium Vitae*, 1995). Brugger does not see the new teaching as a different practical conclusion derived from applying the principle that civil authority has the right to kill malefactors for the sake of the common good in changing circumstances. Instead, he argues that the act of capital punishment, designed and performed to kill a human being, is never legitimate.

Brugger invokes a new moral paradigm: the death penalty should be evaluated in terms of an act of collective self-defense by a community against an internal threat. Its morality should be evaluated in terms analogous to personal self-defense, in which the death of the aggressor may never be directly intended, even though it may be foreseen according to the principle of “double effect.”

Some moralists use double-effect reasoning to distinguish between what is directly intended and what is foreseen (but only permitted in terms of evil consequences). Societal self-defense can be achieved by incarceration. Therefore, directly intended and inflicted capital punishment and its immorality are unnecessary. Brugger examines the traditional teaching of popes, church councils, and theologians on the death penalty. While the teachings were constant over almost two millennia, Brugger concludes that they were not infallible. Therefore, the new approach can be justified.

No concrete moral issue has ever been taught infallibly by a general church council or a pope's speaking *ex cathedra*. In principle, then, moral teachings are subject to revision and reformulation in contemporary circumstances. Brugger, however, does not draw that conclusion. At times, his formulations seem like attempts to preclude this conclusion, which undoubtedly John Paul II would strenuously oppose despite his laudable opposition to the death penalty.

If the theoretical foundation that Brugger finds in the CCC for the development of doctrine does lead to condemnation of the death penalty for being wrong in principle, then other moral positions defended by popes, bishops, and theologians throughout history may be subject to revision in a different direction. Where such revision is now being proposed by bishops, theologians, and the laity, however, it is denounced and sometimes severely punished—as in the cases of the use of birth control and the use of condoms for therapeutic but

noncontraceptive purposes by HIV-positive sexual partners. Other issues include admission to the Eucharist of people divorced and remarried without an annulment; admission of married men and women to the priesthood; and readmission of laicized, married priests to ministry. All of these issues are declared closed to reasonable argument and definitively settled by the pope and some members of the hierarchy. If, after centuries of the cumulative consensus that capital punishment is morally legitimate, we proceed to the view that it is wrong in principle, then why would it not be possible, after prayer and deliberation and in response to new circumstances, for moral proclamations to be substantially revised after each topic is considered on its merits?

This book is carefully written and thoroughly researched. It contains a wealth of material of value to graduate seminars. Because of the author's chosen focus, there is no discussion of the social causes of crime or of police sloppiness or malfeasance that placed many innocent persons on death row until evidence exonerated them. This book also does not discuss the disproportionate numbers of people who are poor, of color, mentally ill, or socially exploited who end up on death row and are executed after atrociously incompetent legal representation.

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En la Lucha/In the Struggle

by Ada María Isasi-Díaz
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004
248 pages, paper, \$18.00.

Recently, my husband Edward was a juror in a rape case where both defendant and victim were Hispanic. Neither could speak English, so their testimony had to be translated. Edward commented that through their testimony a new world was opened for the jurors, none of whom were participants in that world. *Mujerista* theologian Ada María Isasi-Díaz's writings take us into this world of "invisible invisibility" (196) where contacts with the dominant culture remain, for the most part, fraught with misunderstanding and injustice.

In the preface to her *Mujerista Theology* (1996), a collection of essays written during the previous decade, Isasi-Díaz writes of the challenge of her approach, which starts with "Latinas' everyday beliefs and religious practices" while using the "language of the academy" (4). This challenge is especially

evident in the new edition of *En la Lucha/In the Struggle*, which is her most consciously academic work. On a theoretical level, a definition of *mujerista* theology is situated in the broader discussion of what it means to be Hispanic/Latino(a). *Mestizaje* (mixing)/*mulatez* is the term designed to build bridges among the populations whom Isasi-Díaz wishes to serve. Both words refer to the mixing of races but emphasize mixing, rather than physical characteristics of a population of immense diversity. By the end of the book (chapter seven), it has become both the “symbol of Hispanic women’s moral truth-praxis” and a hermeneutical tool that “helps us interpret the complex and rich reality of our community.” It is also a paradigm, “a way of representing, of talking about, who we are as a community” (195).

Mujerista theology’s basic principles have psychological and social components: the desire for liberation, which grows out of the struggle to survive; an essentially communitarian outlook; and popular religiosity, as opposed to official doctrinal understanding of religious praxis. Furthermore, this theology is committed to the centrality of the Spanish language to the faith of Hispanics. This is reflected in the composition of the volume itself, which includes Spanish translations of the introduction and preface as well as comprehensive summaries of the chapters in Spanish.

When *En la Lucha/In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology* was first published in 1994, it followed the 1988 book *Hispanic Women: Prophetic Voices in the Church*, where, with Yolanda Tarango, Isasi-Díaz explores themes associated with systematic theology and spirituality: perception of God and prayer. In *En la Lucha*, she explores issues related to moral theology: decision making, conscience, and the relationship to community. The methodologies used in the interviewing process are elaborated in chapter three. The interviews were designed to give grassroot Latinas the opportunity to reflect on their decision-making processes and to become aware of their moral agency. In chapter four, readers hear the “voices” (compressed and translated) of Inés, Adela, Marta, Lupe, María Olivia, Margarita, Julieta, and Caridad. They respond first to theoretical questions: “What should a mother do who has no money to feed her child?” “If you had to turn over one of your two children to be killed what would you do?” Then they are asked, “What is the most important decision you ever have had to make and how did you go about making it?” This question elicits more spontaneity from the women than the more theoretical questions.

Chapter five reviews basic principles of freedom of conscience within Roman Catholicism and then expands them to include “conscientization” understood as development of conscience from a liberationist perspective.

Chapter six explores *mujerista* theology as praxis—as “political action which seeks to change the oppressive economic-sociocultural structures of society” (177). It takes as its basis the “preferential option” for the testimony and life understanding of grassroots Latinas as the epistemological lens through which theology is done. As such, it challenges the current definition of theology. “*Mujeristas*’ understanding of theology is indeed an attempt to deconstruct the normative, mainline, disciplinary method of theology in order to recognize that theological understandings play an important role in Latinas’ daily life” (181).

By reissuing Isasi-Díaz’s *En la Lucha/In the Struggle*, Fortress Press performs the service of making available this needed dialogue with members of a population that will soon be the majority of Catholics in the United States. Though there has been some updating from the 1994 edition, a more comprehensive updating of the bibliography would have been helpful. Furthermore, although two of the voices are new, the women interviewed are for the most part the same ones featured in *Hispanic Women, Prophetic Voices in the Church*. As engaging as they are, one would hope that in the future the interview process that is at the basis of *mujerista* theology would be expanded to include more women.

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Changing Lives: Transformational Ministry and Today’s Teens

by Lisa-Marie Calderone-Stewart

Dayton OH: Pflaum Publishing Group, 2004

144 pages, paper, \$21.95.

The Holy Spirit is not a one-time giver of gifts. The Spirit is a constant companion throughout the Acts of the Apostles as the Twelve formed communities, served the vulnerable, wrestled with new ideas and challenges, and reflected on the presence of God in their prayers.

Implicit throughout the book *Changing Lives* is the experience of the Apostles at Pentecost. Dr. Lisa-Marie Calderone-Stewart, an associate director of the Milwaukee Archdiocese’s Office for Schools, Child, and Youth Ministries, encourages youth ministers to consider the experiences that transform young people into ministers themselves. *Changing Lives* is written for persons who develop leadership in youth and young adult ministry, but it is written with a methodology that is adaptable in secular settings. The book is based on the

Archdiocese of Milwaukee's 1999-2002 youth ministry study *Tomorrow's Present*. As deliberately as the title's double meaning does, Calderone-Stewart emphasizes the gifts of young people to the Church and how these future leaders are capable of sharing their gifts with the Church community today.

The first chapter focuses on learning communities in which teenagers are free to voice opinions with adults in nonjudgmental environments. Youth are encouraged to think creatively to develop goals. With adult mentors and their peers as supports, young people can take ownership of tasks that put their ideas into practice. Learning from their successes and shortcomings, teenagers are able to reflect on their experiences through prayer and discussion.

This combination of lived experiences and supportive relationships is crucial for a transformative effect on teenagers, in which they go from being the passive recipients of adult ministry to active agents of the Gospel. After conveying a setting for effective youth ministry in learning communities, the author devotes the rest of the book to the cycle of transformational ministry." Calderone-Stewart emphasizes four core experiences—leadership, service, learning, and prayer—each with its own chapter. According to Calderone-Stewart, youth ministers will have much greater success in maintaining interest among teenagers and helping them find vocations if these experiences are understood to be cyclical rather than linear. Each chapter describes methods of making the core experiences real and valuable to teenagers through engagement, hands-on activities, intentional reflection, and actions. Anecdotes from actual youth ministry workshops and Scripture passages put the process in context and diminish abstraction.

Calderone-Stewart uses a detailed, four-color pie chart to highlight the purpose of each area and show how it is essential to the function of the other three. For instance, the area of service requires a direct immersion experience into the life of poverty to promote awareness to the needs of others. During the experience participants engage in analysis and exploration (a function of learning), reflection on the experience (prayer), and planning for the future (leadership). Underlying the success of each core experience and the entire transformational cycle is the foundation of peer-support groups and mentors, who provide perspective and who challenge teenagers to develop their potential.

Calderone-Stewart concludes by describing potential roadblocks to implementing the process, particularly in the area of support for youth ministers. She encourages church leaders to make the transformational cycle a model for their whole ministry, instead of adding yet another program to be carried out by an already overworked church employee or volunteer. In outlining the

research that went into *Tomorrow's Present*, the author notes that those workshops that taught the four core experiences were tested with a variety of age groups and parish settings.

Calderone-Stewart's optimism is contagious, a requirement for any youth minister. She admits that many of her ideas are not new and have been successfully practiced by youth ministers for years. But she holds that applying the connections between experiences and relationships to a specific ministry "in a deliberate, systematic way would be very new" (105). This book holds great promise not only for changing the lives of teenagers but also for rejuvenating the experience of those who minister to them.

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Liturgical Assembly, Liturgical Song

by Joseph Gelineau. Translated by Bernadette Gasslein and Paul Inwood
Portland OR: Pastoral Press, 2002
178 pages, paper, \$24.95.

To those who work and study in the areas of liturgy and liturgical music, Fr. Joseph Gelineau is a familiar and respected name. His contributions to the liturgical reform and its implementation have been influential in shaping pastoral practice and theological reflection for over fifty years. Originally published in French as two separate books, this latest offering by the renowned Jesuit composer, author, liturgist, and musicologist provides a fresh look at the liturgical renewal, this time from the point of view of the assembly.

Gelineau's interpretive key for understanding, evaluating, and implementing the reforms of the Second Vatican Council is article 14 of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium)*:

In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else, for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.

Bringing together a wealth of liturgical, historical, and musicological insight, Gelineau offers personal reflections on the current state of the liturgical reform in terms of how it assists the assembly in fully participating in

the celebration of the Eucharist. These personal reflections often include anecdotes about his own experience in France and mention specific French music. Such examples, however, do not detract from the value of the book for non-French readers. Rather, Gelineau's breadth of understanding of the underlying issues enables his discussion of the French experience to resonate potentially with a far wider audience. In addition, ample footnotes and other helpful explanatory notes are provided by the editor and translators that offer English and/or American counterparts to the French examples.

The first book in this work is subtitled "Reflections on Renewal." Through an examination of evidence from the New Testament and the early Church, Gelineau sets forth an understanding of the Church and an understanding of the liturgical assembly as constitutive of the Church. He relates these notions to the insight of the Church as sacrament, which is expressed by the Second Vatican Council's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)*. A renewed understanding both of the Church and of Baptism inform Gelineau's appreciation of the role and ministry of the liturgical assembly. The first section also includes an insightful chapter on the importance of bodiliness and on the indispensability of inculturation. Another entire chapter is devoted to an analysis of the Eucharistic Prayer as the action of the assembled Church. Here Gelineau's understanding of the musical and lyric elements of ritual provide a helpful critique of the Eucharistic Prayer as oral communication.

While one chapter in the first book is devoted to singing and instrumental music, the second book, subtitled "Ritual Roots of the Sung Parts of the Mass," is entirely devoted to how music assists the gathered assembly in fulfilling its role in worship. The second book includes musicological analysis of the various genres of music used in the liturgy not only today but throughout church history. Gelineau moves easily between a discussion of ancient musical practice and a discourse on how today it might be appropriated in new ways. While the discussion sometimes includes technical musical terminology, it is written in a style that is generally accessible to the nonmusician. The primary focus is always on issues of broader concern to all who participate in worship or help in its planning or execution. Gelineau's ability to bring together liturgical history, theology, and music, as well as his pastoral insights and experience, make this material both valuable and engaging.

An interesting notion that Gelineau mentions and returns to frequently is "verbo-melodism." The term is used in the 1988 *Universa Laus* document *Music and Liturgy* (a document to which Gelineau was one of the major contributors). Verbomelodism refers to the type of song in which both word and

music are equal partners. Gregorian chant could be considered a prime example of this relationship. Gelineau also examines the wide variety of musical genres and how they serve particular ritual actions. Other chapters return to the topics of music in the Eucharistic Prayer and the importance of the assembly's self-inculturation.

Gelineau's style of personal reflection—sometimes rambling and anecdotal—may appear deceptively simple. Nevertheless, he addresses critical issues regarding the celebration of the liturgy from a genuine concern for enabling the prayer of the gathered assembly rather than from a point of view that champions law or rubrics for their own sake. This book is the fruit of a lifetime of study, writing, making music, and presiding at Eucharist. It does not read like a textbook; reading it is more like sitting at the feet of a great thinker. It can be an invaluable pastoral and scholarly resource for anyone interested in deepening their understanding of the assembly's role in worship and of how liturgical music enhances that role. This book is highly recommended for music directors, musicians, liturgists, presiders, and parish study groups.

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Who Is Jesus?: An Introduction to Christology

by Thomas P. Rausch

Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier Press, 2003

217 pages, paper, \$23.95.

Christology books, especially those directed toward adults and college students, have become quite popular. Rausch's book combines recent biblical scholarship, theological works of Christology, and the experience of the Christian faithful in an articulation of the breadth and depth of contemporary Christology. Rausch is an academic theologian who has mastered the ability to write in a manner that is accessible to wider audiences—a rare quality.

The search for the historical Jesus has consisted of three phases or quests. We are in the midst of the third quest, which employs both traditional criticism and social criticism. It has been marked by works of Catholics such as Daniel Harrington, John Meier, and Raymond Brown. This text is enhanced by the inclusion of Christological and biblical works by Evangelical Christian theologians such as N.T. Wright and Ben Witherington. Furthermore, Rausch

grounds his present work historically, which is necessary, given the plethora of recent work.

While Rausch's text notes the contribution of Evangelical Christian theology, it is fundamentally Catholic. This is demonstrated by his presentation and analysis of the development of biblical criticism within the Church. Specifically, he addresses the Second Vatican Council's *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum)* and the Pontifical Biblical Commission's *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*. Rausch notes that the driving force of Christology must be the faith of the Church, and that the conclusions of this theology must be consistent with this same faith.

Only after investigating the historical, biblical, social, and methodological resources of Christology does this text address the person of Jesus Christ. Rausch uses the work of others while he offers astute analysis and a few unique contributions of his own. He deserves to be complimented for the seriousness he grants to those with whom he does not agree. Theories about the sayings of Jesus, the scope of his preaching and ministry, and the historicity of biblical accounts—especially regarding the miracles—are presented and assessed fully and respectfully by Rausch.

The chapter that wrestles with the death of Jesus recognizes the biblical and historical questions that pervade Christian theology and apologetics. It recognizes that the theological role of the death of Jesus must be distinguished from the role it has played historically. In this way, the cross is appropriately presented as the culmination of Jesus' historical life redeemed in the Resurrection. Moreover, the soteriological significance of Christ's life, death, and Resurrection is examined as a unit of theology, not as separate events of history.

One area of concern for readers of any introductory text on Christology is the depth of its examination of post-biblical theological development. This text, like so many others, presents that development from the New Testament to the ecumenical council at Chalcedon, with brief analyses of the ecumenical councils' responses to heresies. The brevity of this section stands in stark contrast to the length of the presentation of biblical material. Contemporary theology needs to recognize that the biblical witness to the person of Jesus Christ cannot overshadow the Church's struggle to articulate its faith in the God-Man. The recent emphasis on biblical criticism has resulted in the marginalization of the Church's history. The development of the creedal formulae must be a necessary emphasis of modern Christology. Moreover, through this theological development, the Church comes to fully

recognize and give language to the triune nature of God. The Trinity can play a larger role in a Christology, which is biblically based.

The strength of Rausch's text is the section (final two chapters) on soteriology. The significance of Jesus Christ is his salvific role for humanity and all of creation. His historical life, the development of the theology of his person, and contemporary faith in him is all directed toward the coming of the Kingdom, which he initiates. That is to say that Christ, by making God present, is the Revelation of who God is. Rausch presents Christ within his soteriological role. In this way, he legitimizes his own work and that of many other works of Christology. All of the questions addressed are of the greatest significance if they relate to our future life with God.

Rausch also addresses recent developments in soteriology, especially the work of Roger Haight. He presents the material well and raises critical questions where appropriate. Lacking from this chapter is material linking the soteriological significance of the historical Jesus to the eschatology of the Church. That said, this is an excellent book that has many uses and that is a necessity for those who teach about the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ.

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Christly Gestures: Learning to Be Members of the Body of Christ

by Brett P. Webb-Mitchell

Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2003

264 pages, paper, \$34.00.

Brett P. Webb-Mitchell, author and assistant professor at Duke University Divinity School, examines the place and purpose of education in the church in his recently published *Christly Gestures*. Following St. Paul, Webb-Mitchell understands the Church as Christ's mystical Body on earth, assembled in and infused with the Holy Spirit (Rom 12:4-5). Webb-Mitchell believes that the most fundamental ministry in the Church is education. Through all of its activities—worship services, pastoral and youth ministries, musical performances, Bible studies, and meals—the Church is a school of Christian discipleship. According to Webb-Mitchell, the Church's educational mission is threefold: (1) members learn about Jesus Christ; (2) they

learn how to be followers of Jesus Christ; and most important, (3) they learn to be more Christ-like in their everyday openness to one another.

Webb-Mitchell's insights into Christian education concern the grace-filled value of "Christly gestures," actions performed by members of the Church that serve as instruments of God's gift of grace. By understanding Christian education in a more holistic sense of personal transformation—rather than simply as doctrinal instruction directed at the mind or as charismatic experience directed to the spirit—Webb-Mitchell believes the educational ministry of the Church should address body, mind, and spirit, toward the broader goal of building the Body of Christ. *Christly Gestures* seeks to recover the pedagogical value of those bodily gestures that embody and communicate the Gospel in the life of the Church. Of those grace-infused gestures that are central to the life of the Church, Webb-Mitchell insists that none are more important than Christian hospitality (inviting others into the graced life of the Church), and the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.

In the second part of *Christly Gestures*, Webb-Mitchell explores the importance of story, particularly the retelling of the Christian story, as a gesture that informs and nourishes the Body of Christ. When a community continually returns to the original witness to God's involvement in the world, Scripture is "performed" and the retelling of those stories—e.g., of creation, of the Jewish people's exodus, of the prophets, and of the life of Jesus Christ—serves as a symbol that builds the character of the community. Webb-Mitchell explains how certain Benedictine communities celebrate the anniversaries of the deaths of their sisters and brothers by telling the stories of their lives and contributions to the community. Storytelling as a gesture, acted out by a community, also addresses the body, mind, and spirit of that community and becomes an indispensable tool for its growth.

In the third part of his book, Webb-Mitchell develops a catechesis for Christly gestures. He suggests that the catechetical process itself is a lifelong pilgrimage involving all the members of a community as they witness to Christ's Spirit within them (Gal 2:20). Webb-Mitchell recalls how in their everyday lives, members of the primitive Church witnessed to the expectations of the Christian way of life. Consequently, catechumens are nurtured formally and informally in the gestures and activities that express the community's story. In such simple gestures within liturgical celebrations as kneeling and crossing oneself or serving at meals, members of the Church continue to express to one another what it means to live in Jesus Christ.

In *Christly Gestures*, Webb-Mitchell demonstrates that he is an effective pastoral theologian. His chapters alternate between informed theological reflection and catechetical insights. He also goes to great lengths to remind the reader that the Christian life is always a life in Christ. Christians' prayers, ministries, Christly gestures, and the faith itself are always entirely gifts of the grace of God.

While Webb-Mitchell clearly has demonstrated his competence in Christian inculturation, he appears to favor a monastic model of Christian community. His work might benefit from an exploration of the role of Christly gestures in the context of marriage and parenting, in the local community, and in the broader social and educational ministry of the Church.

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Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today, Second Edition

by James F. White; foreword by Nathan Mitchell

Liturgical Press, 2003, \$23.95.

This is a revised and updated version of a text originally published in 1995. White explores the history of Roman Catholic worship during the four hundred years between the Council of Trent and the Second Vatican Council. Through his scholarship, he challenges the persistent myth that little happened during these four centuries and shows how what did occur laid the foundation for the liturgical reforms that have arisen since the Second Vatican Council. The text addresses the legacy of Trent, the Baroque age, the Enlightenment, the Romantic era, the modern liturgical movement, the Second Vatican Council, the post-Vatican II era, and the future of Roman Catholic worship. The text includes White's analysis of recent church documents such as *Built of Living Stones*, *Liturgiam Authenticam* (on the translation of liturgical texts), and *Varietates Legitimize* (on liturgy and inculturation).

Readings for Effective Catechetical Leaders

National Catholic Educational Association, 2004.

This little book is a collection of “the best of the best” articles previously published in the quarterly newsletter of the National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors (NPCD). The articles are short and practical pieces that touch on questions and topics relevant to the challenges for catechetical leaders today. Topics include the formation of catechists and volunteers, adult and intergenerational faith formation, the management of stress and change, and worship and young adults. The contributors are Matthew Hayes, John Roberto, Peter Ries, Jan Kayser, Joseph Shadle, John Reid, Edward Lewandowski, and Marlene LeFever.

Holy Human: Stories of Extraordinary Catholics

by Dick Ryan

Catholic Book Publishing/Resurrection Press, 2004, \$9.95.

In this volume, Ryan tells stories about Catholics who are extraordinary, though not necessarily famous. He met and interviewed the people during the course of decades of work as a journalist and writer. The forty or so people profiled, in Ryan's words, “have the character and instincts that reflect an awareness of the presence of God in their work and in their lives” yet “they are all very human in the way that each of them lives in a knock-around world and recognizes some of the grime and grizzle . . . that are part of life but that are also the only available path to a higher and better place” (10).

Reconciling Catholicism and Feminism?: Personal Reflection on Tradition and Change

Edited by Sally Barr Ebest and Ron Ebest

University of Notre Dame Press, 2003, \$25.00.

In this collection of twenty essays, writers, teachers, historians, theologians, and feminists share thoughts about their personal experiences with the Catholic Church and address whether one can be both a faithful Catholic and a progressive, independent, even feminist thinker. Their responses reflect a spectrum of views and philosophies. The collection gives readers insight into the thoughts of those passionately committed to participating in the life of the Church, those who have left the Church, and those whose commitment falls somewhere in between. Contributors include Rosemary Radford Ruether, Jean McGarvey, Flavia Alaya, Kathleen M. Joyce, Nancy Mairs, Brad Peters, Madeleine Blais, Mary Kenny, Jean Molesky-Poz, and Kathleen A. Tobin.

Living the Lectionary: Links to Life and Literature—Year C

by Geoff Wood

Liturgy Training Publications, 2003, \$16.00.

These reflections make connections between the Lectionary readings, classic Western poetry and prose, and the daily experience of God's presence. In the foreword, Virginia Sloyan states that "the book is for everybody—for those who crave good images and good stories; for those who find their identity in baptism and eucharist and cannot imagine a life without the warmth of good worship; for those who need to laugh, especially at themselves; and, above all, for those who want to wrap themselves in the word, Sunday after Sunday." This book will interest homilists, catechists, RCIA leaders, and all who are in a position to help others break open the Word.

Gathered and Sent: Documents of the Synod of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles 2003

by Cardinal Roger Mahoney and the People of God of the Archdiocese

Liturgy Training Publications, 2003, \$10.00.

In 2000, Cardinal Roger Mahoney convoked the Archdiocese of Los Angeles's ninth synod, the first since 1961. The purpose of the synod, which involved wide consultation, was to establish pastoral priorities and to chart a course of action for meeting the ever-changing needs of the people in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The process culminated in 2003 with two synod sessions that embraced six pastoral initiatives, nine pastoral priorities, and fourteen pastoral strategies—described in this text. The text also includes a historical synopsis and chronology of the synod, a list of the members of the synod bodies, a statement from interfaith observers, a glossary, and a description of items that reached the synod from among hundreds of possibilities but were not adopted as part of the final work. A Spanish translation of all documents is included.

—Maura Thompson Hagarty

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ISSN: 0024-5275 ISBN: 1-57455-616-9

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Excerpts from "The Works of Saint Augustine" (vol. I/1, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding, OSB [New York: New City Press, 1997] and vol. I/5, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill, OP [New York: New City Press, 1991]) are reprinted with the kind permission of the Augustinian Heritage Institute, Villanova, Pennsylvania.

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Application to mail at periodical postage rates is approved and assigned #10-946 at Washington, D.C. Executive Editor: Rev. Berard L. Marthaler; Editorial Assistant: Brian M. Doyle; Managing Editor: Christine Schaefer; Advertising Manager: Patrick Markey; Circulation Manager: Carl A. Talbert; Permissions Manager: Mary Sperry. Phone: 202-541-3090.

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Articles in *The Living Light* are indexed in *The Catholic Periodical and Literature Index*. Back issues of *The Living Light* can be read at *The Living Light* website at www.usccb.org/education/catechetics/livinglt.htm.