

Children of the revolution

So, it's finally happening. The thing all loyal Catholics have feared for many years, the thing that many feared would happen during the post-war years under Communist direction, has come to pass. The enemy is now in plain sight, arrogant and self-righteous in its anger against God and His Church. The secular humanist opponents of the Church have targeted the Pope himself under the guise of a movement for justice for those who have suffered at the hands of paedophile priests.

The enemy without is being aided and abetted by some within the Church who call themselves "good Catholics". They claim (very plausibly) to be scandalised by the way the Church has mishandled the paedophile issue, but, in their striving for justice, they have pitted themselves against the Church itself. They appear to have adopted the agenda of the secularists: to turn the Church into the handmaid of liberal secularism, a spiritual United Nations and social welfare organisation to advance the humanist agenda of the New World Order.

Sackcloth & ashes

Let us make it clear. We abhor the crimes that have been committed by some Catholic clergy against vulnerable and innocent children. The bishops and priests in the US, Ireland, Australia and in Europe, who hid these crimes, protected the perpetrators and ignored the victims, need publicly to

beg God and the Catholic people for forgiveness. The sight of bishops in sackcloth and ashes, publicly doing penance in cathedrals and churches across the western world, would be a powerful acknowledgement to their fellow Catholics, and to the non-Catholic world, that they recognize the gravity of these sins and of the immense harm done to the Church. It would also be a potent message to the secular world: that sin is real and that man, even the most exalted, needs to seek God's forgiveness.

What we are witnessing in the recent attacks on Pope Benedict XVI and the Church over paedophilia scandals in Europe and America has, however, nothing to do with seeking God's forgiveness or with pursuing reconciliation within the Church. On the contrary, it has everything to do with attacking the foundations of the Catholic Faith: the authority of the Pope and the sacramental nature of the priesthood. And, by attacking these, an alliance of nominal Catholics and explicit anti-Catholics hopes to destroy the Church's influence in an increasingly secular, post-Christian world. The enemies of the Church see this current crisis as a grand opportunity to eliminate, once and for all, the Church's influence in schools, hospitals and political parties, and to eradicate Christian moral principles from our laws and public institutions. This is what the attack on the Pope is all about. Destroy his credibility, and you destroy the Church's influence everywhere.

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Catholics and Islam

Sir,

I was very surprised to read Dr. McGavan's criticism of Fr. Webb's article, 'The Cross and the Crescent' in the August-October edition of *Oriens*. In his article, Father Webb simply makes explicit, in a very clear, concise manner, Pope John Paul II's statement that, 'For this reason not only the Theology but also the Anthropology of Islam is very distant from Christianity.' (Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 1994)

Father Webb made it abundantly clear, by quoting directly from the Koran, that 'those who claim that Christianity and Islam share the same faith, or that ultimately we worship and confess the same God, are manifestly in error'. Fr. Webb was simply stating facts; he was not impugning the sincerity of genuine belief in the followers of Islam. Nor was he imputing error to the Holy Father, Pope Benedict.

It was difficult to follow Dr McGavan's logic: 'if something is untrue, it is not simply untrue'. And, while stating that 'any action of worship that is not directed by Christ is imperfect'.... and, 'where worship is imperfect it is not simply "not worship,"' he then states, having made that claim, that he will not speak about worship of man or of evil spirits. Why not? If 'imperfect' worship is still worship, then according to that premise, worship of Satan is still worship?

The unfortunate logical conclusion that we are asked to draw from the sixth paragraph is that the writer of the criticism himself denies the Cross and the Trinity when he enters a Mosque, by hiding his cross inside his clothing. That I do not believe for a moment is his intention - it was simply an unfortunate conclusion drawn from a rather confused example. It is similar when he is quoting holy Scripture. The real question to ask is why did St Paul, in Corinth, bother to proclaim only Christ and Him crucified if it did not really matter whether they believed in the Trinity and the Incarnation with its corollary - the Crucifixion and Resurrection? One could well ask why did our Lord bother to give His final command to the Church if it was irrelevant:

'All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go therefore, teach you all nations; baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...' Mt.28:18-20

Of course there are elements of Truth in every religion; that is not questioned it is so obvious. Similarly there are very good people sincerely believing in something which is, indeed, false. The Church urges us to respect the sincerity of genuine believers even if they are enmeshed in error, but as followers of Christ we are forbidden to do homage to falsehood, or to act in any way that would suggest that we acknowledge falsehood as Truth. Indeed, we dare not, or we have denied Christ. Likewise this respect for others who are in error should not blind us to the errors and the dangers therein to our holy Faith. That attitude only leads to indifferentism.

The Catholic world is reeling in a whirlwind of confusion and ambiguity where Truth seems to have become the casualty of our age. We have an obligation before God not to add to the confusion.

Father A. Brennan

We have seen evidence of this secularist, anti-Catholic push in recent times here in Australia, in the national capital Canberra, with moves to sell off Calvary Catholic hospital to the ACT government so that the “full range of services” (i.e. abortion) can be provided to the locals. We have seen it in desperate attempts by radical feminists and liberal activists in the US to support federal government funding for abortion, including in Catholic hospitals, under Obama’s health care legislation. We have seen it in recent attempts by the European Court of Human Rights to outlaw religious symbols in Italian schools.

But the Church finds itself ill equipped to counter the secular forces ranged against Her. Many clergy in the West remain in a time-warp, where it is always 1969, where the post-Vatican II reform of the Church is still in full-swing and where we can all look forward to a new “springtime” in the Catholic Faith. As we know, however, this springtime never occurred. The liberal and progressive ideas that infected the Church in the wake of Vatican II have left spiritual emptiness and confusion in the hearts of many Catholics. Rather than revitalising the Faith, the Second Vatican Council’s “spirit” was hijacked by modernists, within the Church, who replaced traditional Catholic doctrine and spirituality in the minds of millions with a thin liberal humanist gloss on the teaching of Christ. The result: Catholics disconnected from the Church and profoundly disorientated left to wander in an anti-Christian cultural wilderness.

60s Revolution

This transformation was part of a wider civilisational upheaval that took place in western society during the 1960s. The so-called “Cultural Revolution” talked the talk of social justice and humanist compassion, but

was mostly about personal liberation and radical individualism. Selfishness became normative – gratification of individual desires, whether settled passions or whims of the moment, now became the measure of the good. This revolution in sensibility took the form of a broad attack on all forms of authority, whether that of the state, the family, the military, or, of course, that of the Christian churches – especially that of the Catholic Church. This rebellion against everything that was considered normal hitherto, attacked any and all restrictions on personal sexual expression. The sexual act, which had formerly been considered as something proper to married life, and intended primarily for procreation, was now considered a vital part of the lives of all individuals, deserving of the fullest expression. To deny anyone the right to engage their sexuality was considered an attack on the very

giving raunchy advice that hinted of something more than a detached professional knowledge.

Pleasure market

Then there is the new liturgy dominated, in its most common interpretations, by the pleasure principle. Pleasure is given to the community – or rather to favoured groups within it – by rewarding the assumption of “lay roles” in the liturgy with the satisfactions of personal acceptance and public recognition. Presiding over, and distributing, these pleasurable gifts, is the host of the liturgical show: the “presider-priest”. Liturgy of this kind descends into being a marketplace for mutual gratifications of a social kind. As such, liturgy becomes a closed circle orientated upon itself and closing out God. As others have remarked, a liturgy that declines to draw its participants out of

We are not dealing here with history, law, just judgment, or rational argument. We are dealing with “powers and principalities.”

foundations of individual liberty and human rights; and, of course, the Catholic Church and her sexual code were depicted as Public Enemy No. 1 of human authenticity thus defined.

Not least affected by the radical selfishness of the 60s counter-culture was the Catholic priesthood. It is not surprising that most of the substantiated cases of child abuse have occurred since the 1960s; and it was in the post-Vatican II era that a highly sexualized clerical sub-culture sprang up. A window into that world was the confessional where a certain cut of priest gave the nod to “the pill”, belittled the struggles of penitents with sexual temptations, and was not above

themselves, and to turn them toward the good, the true, and the beautiful at their source in God, is autoeroticism in ritual form. It is little wonder, then, that a certain minority of the clergy, their dispositions “affirmed” by hedonistic liturgical styles, have been seduced by pleasures more palpably physical than a Christian liturgy can offer.

This culture of decadence has provided a happy hunting ground for the enemies of the Church. Some of these have long planned to use the sexual abuse scandals as a way of attacking the Pope directly by bringing the Vatican – or the Pope in person – to trial, in some national

or international court, for alleged complicity in the deeds of corrupt priests and incompetent bishops.

In the USA the charge has been led by lawyer Jeff Andersen who has specialized since 1983 in the work of defending the victims of sexual abuse and seeking compensation on their behalf. In the process Andersen has become a multi-millionaire – according to *The Washington Post*, he takes between 25 and 40 per cent of the compensation payouts won for his clients. Rich enough to lease a private jet, this sleepless man is now totally free to pursue only those cases that, he believes, will lead him one day to realize his dream of personally confronting the Pope in the dock.

In 2005 Anderson filed a suit in a Texas court against the Vatican, but it was quashed by the intervention of then President George W. Bush whose legal representative in the court pleaded successfully that the Vatican was a sovereign state entitled to immunity. Anderson this year, however, has taken a case to the US Supreme Court to determine the question of whether the Vatican is, in fact, a sovereign state beyond the reach of US courts.

We made them

Given the way these events have snowballed, it would be foolish to dismiss Anderson's Supreme Court gambit as the folly of a man obsessed. It has been the vices of priests and bishops – and not only theirs - that have raised up the Jeff Andersons of this world, made them successful, rich, and powerful, and turned them into full-time, politically credible enemies of the Church. There is no use declaiming, as some have done already, that Anderson is "anti-Christ". We have helped to create him and his kind, and they are unlikely to be defeated whether by the facts of the case, or by the nature of the laws, that

can be marshalled to the side of the Pope. We are not dealing here with history, law, just judgment, or rational argument. We are dealing with "powers and principalities", and these can only be defeated with spiritual weapons ... and, at the end of the day, only by Christ himself.

If we only consider the politics of the campaign currently being waged, we see that it has been internationalized. In Britain people like Geoffrey Roberston and Richard Dawkins have called for the arrest of Pope Benedict during his planned visit to Great Britain in September this year on charges of "crimes against humanity". Offering a nuanced chorus of support is that worthless trio of British politics Gordon Brown, David Cameron and Nick Clegg. During a recent TV debate hosted by Sky TV, they lined up to attack the Pope over a wide range of issues. While sugaring their remarks with diplomatic courtesies – the Pope, of course, would be a welcome official visitor to Britain - all three played to the godless Anglo gallery by attacking the Pope and the Church over abortion, contraception, so-called "gay rights", human embryo experimentation, and the alleged Roman cover-up of the sexual abuse scandals.

Across the Channel from "perfidious Albion", the Paris newspaper *Le Monde* carried a cartoon during Holy Week by the notoriously anti-Christian *Plantu* which depicted the Pope attempting to sodomise a small boy – this from a newspaper that declined to publish, for fear of offending Moslems, the 2005 *Jyllands-Posten* cartoons which caricatured Mohammed.

In Germany, meantime, an outpouring of public anger over recent sex abuse revelations in that country has been stoked by a bitterly anti-Catholic and anti-papal media. Add to this another politician highly attuned to the passions and hysteria of the

crowd: the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel. She has been a public critic of Benedict XVI ever since he lifted the excommunications against the SSPX and set-off the ambush of the Williamson affair.

Here in Australia the ABC published in its on-line news magazine "The Drum" an attack upon Church and Pope by wild man Bob Ellis. In an article of 9 April, under the sham appearance of a critique of the "war on terror", he essayed a root and branch destruction of the Church. If, he asked, the West can dish it out to *Al Qaida* and Osama bin Laden, then why not, for the sake of consistency, should it not close down the Catholic Church, bomb the Vatican and gun down the Pope? While one might shrug this off as just another extravagance from a writer whose colourful enmities have made him a figure of fun, the fact remains that our national, publicly-funded broadcasting corporation has chosen to make room on its website for hatred against our Church, our Pope, and ourselves.

Things to come

Anyone surprised?

At least to the editors of this journal, it was clear, as early as September 12, 2001, the day after the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York, that there would be a "War on Terror" and that, under the cover of it, a war would also be launched in the West against the Catholic Church.

The moment that we are experiencing now is not a summer storm that will pass away as suddenly as it appeared. It is a settled strategy and concerted attack, and it will not end until the either the Church is destroyed or Western secularism triggers its self-destruct mechanism in the attempt.

Paris meets Bribbaree

This story is set in Paris. But it begins far away across the other side of the world in an unknown place among an unheard of people in a country village of not much more than 200 souls.

The place is Bribbaree in southwestern New South Wales. Bribbaree has not much to say for itself: a pub, wheat silos, a railway line, a sprawling truck depot-cum-junk yard; in summer it's heat, dust and flies. In other words, Bribbaree, if not exactly nowhere, is nowhere worth knowing to the great of this world.

Yet the place has its relevance. Lying just outside the town of Bribbaree is a simple wooden Catholic church and beside it a once grand, now ramshackle house that is (or was) the presbytery. It was between these two buildings that two people met and fell into conversation: one the local priest, the other a farmer's wife and devout parishioner. The conversation went something like this:

Bribbaree moment

"What's that 'two' thing you're always talking about, Father?"

"That what?"

"You know, Father, that 'two' thing you're always talking about in your sermons."

"That 'two' thing? ... Ah! You mean, I think, Vatican II, the Second Vatican Council."

"Oh, and what was that?"

Back in Paris, and nearly 20 years later, its Cardinal Archbishop – also President of the French Bishops' Conference – André Armand Vingt-Trois and his episcopal colleagues who appear to have had their own Bribbaree moments.

In September last year Vingt-Trois told the English Catholic journal *The Tablet* that the French church was planning a campaign in preparation for the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962 designed to re-familiarise French Catholics with the teachings of the Council.

"In the 1970s, we thought it was enough just to apply the conclusions of the Council. Now we see [that] the Council is a fundamental part of the life of the Church but ... We now have a majority of Catholics who weren't born, or were just born, at the time of the Council."

Absolutely. And some of those under-fifty French Catholics must also have wondered, like the lady from Bribbaree, what that "two thing" was all about. Given that Vingt-Trois cuts the kind of figure which literally shouts "Vatican II made me!", he has a more than ordinary interest in wising up the ignorant faithful and getting them right on-board the Vatican II project *a la française* – in which, and let's get this quite clear, there is no room for the traditional liturgy of the West, Benedict XVI and his genuinely liberal liturgical policies notwithstanding.

The problem for Cardinal Vingt-Trois, however, is that there aren't a lot of Catholics left in France to reconnect with the Cardinal's kind of church. Most left long ago, and the few still standing in the pews don't really believe in it either. Indeed, there is every reason to believe that the "model of church" which so inspires the imagination of the Cardinal of Paris

actually killed off French Catholicism, already critically sick when Vatican II began in 1962.

André Armand Vingt-Trois was born on 7 November 1942 in Paris. In the year the Council opened, he entered the Sulpician seminary in the Paris suburb of Issy-les-Moulineaux; took time out to do his military service in 1964-65; returned to his seminary studies, and was ordained a priest by Cardinal Francois Marty, Archbishop of Paris, in 1969.

After eleven years of parish work, Vingt-Trois was appointed rector of his old seminary which he ran from 1981 to 1988. Then in 1989 he was appointed by John Paul II an auxiliary Bishop of Paris, then Archbishop of Tours in 1999 and finally, upon the retirement of Cardinal Lustiger, his patron, succeeded to the see of Paris in 2005.

The disappeared

Vingt-Trois and his episcopal brethren preside over a disappearing church. In 1965, when Vatican II ended, there were about 41,000 priests in France. Today there are half that number, perhaps half of whom are fully active. The remainder are either too decrepit to be of much pastoral use, or simply retired and only too glad to be so. Late last year the French daily newspaper *Le Figaro* reported on the meeting of the French Episcopal Conference held in Lourdes during the first week of November. It should have been billed the "Conference of Lamentations".

Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, Archbishop of Lyons, reported: “While I ordain two priests a year, I bury twenty.”

And for Bishop Roland Minnerath of Dijon, “Forty per cent of donors to church contributions are over 80 years old.”

Subsequently, the French Catholic newspaper *La Croix* published the results of a survey commissioned from the IFOP Institute. The results suggest that there is no-one out there who wants to plug into the Church over which Vingt-Trois and his hapless colleagues preside.

- Back in 1965, 81% of French identified themselves as Catholic: today 64%.

- Back in '65, 27% of the French went to Mass at least once a week: today 4.5%.

As for 4.5% of French who go to Mass on Sundays,

- 65% believe all religions are the same;

- 75% want to “update” Church teaching on contraception;

- 68% want to “update” Church teaching on abortion;

- 69% want to change Church teaching against the remarriage of divorcees; and

- 48% want to “modernise” Church teaching on homosexuality.

See no evil

Now that’s a smash up. And yet, undeterred by the failure of the post-conciliar experiment to stem the tide of disaster in France, Cardinal Vingt-Trois wants more of the same. Not only that, he is prepared to call in the “secular arm” to ensure that his answer to the Bribbaree question prevails.

The problem for the Cardinal is that the handful of remaining committed

Catholics in France is dominated by a vigorous neo-traditionalist movement eager to provide different answers to questions about Vatican II – and this group has been fired up by Pope Benedict’s XVI’s decision to rehabilitate the traditional Mass.

In France, Papa Ratzinger’s *motu proprio* on the old liturgy – *Summorum Pontificum* (SP: 7 July 2007) – has “empowered” precisely that section of the Catholic laity that the French clergy have worked a lifetime to “marginalise”



Cardinal Andre Armand Vingt-Trois

and to blackguard – “Maurassiens”, as the Cardinal thinks of them, happy as he is to lump together those who want the old Mass back with supporters of the controversial Charles Maurras (d. 1952) and his monarchist *Action Francaise* movement. This is a hoary old bogeyman made authoritative in the eyes of an otherwise Gallican episcopacy by Pius XI’s 1926 condemnation of *Action Francaise*.

To be sure, there would be some quite conservative (even reactionary) people in the ranks of those who in France have critiqued Vatican II and

the new liturgy. Quite apart, however, from the consideration that to reject French Republicanism involves neither a breach of Catholic Faith nor a failure of the critical faculties, the fact is that the backbone of French “traditionalism” is now a post-Maurras and post-Conciliar generation which cleaves, nevertheless, to an idea appalling to many French churchmen and secular politicians: that to be a Catholic - and a traditional one at that – is part of what it means to be French.

Add to this feisty “traditionalist” *ambience* Benedict’s green light on the old liturgy, and you have a nightmare for the French bishops and for the chairman of their episcopal conference, the Cardinal of Paris. Organisations and blogs have sprung into being: *Groupe de Réflexion Entre Catholiques* (or *Le Grec*), *Paix Liturgique*, *Soutien-a-Thiberville*, *Periscopos*, *Le Salon Beige*, to name but a few. Informal lay committees have formed to write petitions for the old Mass. The bishops are being peppered from the blogosphere with criticism for their tardiness in responding to SP and to the lay petitioners. Alarmed, a magazine of the Catholic establishment, *Golias*, headlined its 4 February 2010 edition “*L’offensive Tradi*” (The Traddy Offensive).

(Amusingly, *Golias* depicted *Les Tradis* on its front cover as mediaeval knights clanking along in chain mail and blinkered by their helmet visors.)

In Paris, the Cardinal has dug in his heels. Nothing needs to be done, he believes. Most legitimate applications for the old Mass had already been met prior to SP – in any case, the Cardinal has been reported as saying, these congregations are packed with opponents of Vatican II right thinking.

Thus, while the Cardinal has received some 30 requests for Sunday celebrations of the traditional Mass since 2007, he has responded only to

two. In one case a Sunday Mass was conceded at 12:15pm, in another at 6:00pm on three Sundays in four. These measures were taken immediately after SP came into force. Subsequently, all other petitions have failed. As for the prospect of a personal parish devoted exclusively to the traditional Mass (specifically envisaged in SP) the Cardinal wrote to his parish priests in July 2007 ruling out the need for such things in the inclusive Archdiocese of Paris.

As months passed Vingt-Trois made his policy clearer. In a September 2008 interview, he defined what kind of petitions would be treated favorably and what not:

“If they’re only small isolated groups returning home, we have to treat them with respect ... But if they looking to proselytize to the detriment of the rite of Paul VI, that’s different.”

Translation: if you’re a Lefebvrist wanting to be assured of your communion with the Church, that’s tolerable. But if you’re already in communion with the Pope and the bishops, then “Stiff bikkies!”

And as for the need of bishops to heed the authority of papal legislation on the point:

“The communiqués of the Pope with the bishops weren’t communiqués from the boss to the employees ...”

And, finally, just in case the Catholics of France did not understand the point, the Cardinal had a punch line in store.

On 25 January this year *LExpress* carried a story about events that took place two days earlier. It began in April 2008 when a group of parishioners from the Immaculate Conception parish in the twelfth *arrondissement* of Paris petitioned to have the traditional Mass celebrated in their church. Their efforts, which included a meeting with the Cardinal, came to nothing.

Subsequently 90 families petitioned him, but silence was all they got.

Then a group calling itself DALE (Right to the Extraordinary Form of the Liturgy), founded by young Catholic activists, appears to have formed a “branch” within the parish and, on Saturday 23 January, a party of DALE members trooped off to confront the parish priest while others stayed in the church to pray.

Punch Line

Eventually, the sacristan arrived to tell the rosary group that the church would be closed. The group declined to budge and continued praying. Not long afterwards, three police cars arrived and an officer, according to *LExpress*, announced “The priest has requested the assistance of the police” to evict the group.

The petitioners stood their ground and continued their prayers. When they were finally done, the DALE members left the Church peacefully. As they went an officer told them, “We have express authorization from Cardinal Vingt-Trois, archbishop of Paris, to take you outside.”

Shortly afterward, it is alleged, Cardinal Vingt-Trois appeared in Rome in his capacity as chairman of the French Episcopal Conference. There he demand that Cardinal Levada, Prefect of the “Holy Office” (and now also IC traditionalist affairs) should issue a condemnation of these troublesome “demanders” who, as the Cardinal had said elsewhere, were harassing priests, running “commando operations”, and dragging bishops through the mud.

It’s suddenly tough being a failure and a bishop in France.

By Gary Scarrabelotti



ARCANA

They have no wine, you said:

Meaning that this is a good place to start

That this is how it’s going to be

That great designs would sometimes have to wait

Not just for life and death, but just for life

That it isn’t all written: you can appeal

That families, domestic matters matter

- That in the end, no-one is quite alone

That rites should be observed,

Celebrations not done by halves

That rejection of the world

Was a good not meant for all

That flesh and its fulfilments were not cause for shame

- But women meant more than that

And that a yes in a garden

Had not been ordained

Despite that singular figure in the wings.

- Lyle Dunne

Confraternity confers in Rome

Rev. Gregory Jordan, S.J. recently visited Rome for an international clergy conference.

An important conference was held in the Vatican 4–8 January 2010 for English-speaking clergy to mark the Year of the Priest. This was not done with a retreat or a pilgrimage, important though these are, but by Liturgy and Lectures offered by a stellar cast of celebrants and speakers.

The conference was a joint Australian–US collaboration of the Confraternity of Catholic Clergy in each country. Our Australian Confraternity founded in 1987, is a “voluntary and fraternal association”. It aims to glorify God, sanctify its members and support the bishops. The language of our Aims is forthright and uncompromising in its fidelity to the Church and Pope. Its motto says it all: *Ubi Petrus, Ibi Ecclesia*.

The Rome Conference was a first, all previous conferences being national. The Chairman of the American Confraternity of Catholic Clergy, Fr John Trigilio, co-author of *Catholicism for Dummies*, graciously acknowledged that this first international conference was the initiative of the Australians and organised by them, chiefly by our Chairman Fr John Walshe and Fr Glen Tattersall of Melbourne, but especially by Rome-based Fr Mark Withoos of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. In Ireland and the UK there is no equivalent body, but many priests from those parts attended and were inspired to initiate the founding of such a body for the British Isles.

The Conference was so successful that participants agreed to meet again in 2015. Meanwhile all were encouraged to attend any brother conference if

travelling abroad. Plainly the Spirit is lifting to a global level the good things experienced on the national level. What is it that draws them? It is the great joy of being amongst fellow-priests whose loyalty to God, to the Church, to the Holy Father and the Magisterium is beyond question. Often they have been dismayed by the open or the casual disloyalty of confreres, to say nothing of the scandalous revelations of abuse. Here they celebrate their priesthood and their mission to the modern world. Here they are certainly spared coffee-table liturgies and the carping criticisms of the disaffected.

Memorable

The Rome Conference was unforgettable for its liturgies and its lectures. We attended three Solemn Pontifical Masses (Ordinary Form: two in St Peter’s) and one in the Extraordinary Form. Celebrants included Cardinals Castrillon Hoyos and Llovera, and Archbishop Raymond Burke of the *Segnatura Apostolica*, but for the Epiphany we attended the Papal Mass in St Peter’s and saw at first hand the high standards Pope Benedict XVI has achieved by his teaching and his example. Liturgically it was the high point of the conference – yet unsurprisingly all the celebrations were exemplary. Throughout, we were treated to a feast of liturgical music by Dublin’s Lassus Scholars Choir. Their trip to Rome was funded by Cardinal George Pell and the Knights of Malta.

These Masses – along with Solemn Vespers and Benediction – were celebrated in St John Lateran or Santa Maria in Trastevere, or in Santa Trinita dei Pellegrini, the Rome parish

of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter. They were interwoven with lectures by outstanding speakers on topics specially selected for priests in the Year of the Priest, and all was cemented by the conviviality engendered by such gatherings.

It is impossible to do justice to all the lectures given over the four days. But one lecture was most significant. Just as the Papal Mass was the high point of our liturgies, the one lecture that was reported worldwide was that of Mons. Guido Marini, Papal Master of Liturgical Ceremonies. It was not a speech from the throne, but could scarcely have been closer. His subject was ‘Introduction to the Spirit of the Liturgy’.

This of course was the title of the Holy Father’s book on the subject, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, as it had been of Romano Guardini’s book published in 1918, which exerted a great influence on the young Joseph Ratzinger for whom it was foundational.

Marini’s lecture traversed familiar territory in summary form – all the controversial *loci* of the liturgical upheaval and debates since Vatican II – or rather 1969, when we were given the *Novus Ordo Missae* – but he did so in a nuanced way, not that of a polemicist, of a scholar and key practitioner in the liturgical field, soberly appraising certain central issues in the liturgy.

Plainly he is aligned with those who embrace the “hermeneutic of continuity” as opposed to that of rupture when evaluating Vatican II. This is only to be expected as he is as close to the Papal Throne as a priest can

be, and close to the Holy Father in his thinking. He frequently used the word 'authentic' when evaluating aspect of the liturgy, such as community or active participation, implying that all too often what we are given is not the genuine article. He insisted from the start that there is an urgent need to reaffirm the "authentic spirit of the liturgy as present in the uninterrupted tradition of the Church, and attested, in continuity with the past, in the most recent Magisterial teachings starting from the Second Vatican Council up to the present pontificate". He stated his opposition to a distinction between a "Pre-Vatican II" and "Post-conciliar Church," as if there were two Churches instead of one engaged in continuous development under the one abiding Spirit.

In support of this approach he cited whole passages from Pope Benedict XVI, but also Pope Pius XII's *Mediator Dei*, and Vatican II's *Sacrum Concilium*. All conspire to demonstrate that Vatican II was not a volcanic upheaval that wiped out the preceding civilisation as so many seem to believe, but a surge of growth in the self-same Church through a reappraisal of methods, goals and emphases.

He said: "I purposefully used the word continuity, a word very dear to our present Holy Father. He has made it the only criterion whereby one can correctly interpret the life of the Church and the conciliar documents, including all the proposed reforms contained in them. How could it be any different?" He discreetly alludes to those who disagree: "Some individuals are truly partisan to a way of thinking justly and properly defined as an ideology."

This is but a taste of the argument Marini developed, seeking always "the authentic spirit of the liturgy, with joy and true spiritual relish. To achieve this it is essential to regard both the present and the past liturgy

of the Church as one patrimony in continuous development." The result is that in the Spirit we come to pray, and Christ breaks out in our lives.

Monsignor Marini developed four other themes: the first being that the Liturgy is God's gift to the Church, and is not left to the arbitrary will of man. This precludes the proprietorial attitude towards it of those who "stitch together the Sunday Liturgy on their own authority", as the then Cardinal Ratzinger wrote in *God and the World*.

Liturgy as God's gift is not left to the arbitrary will of man

Marini also considered the orientation of liturgical prayer. Modern research demonstrates that from the first Christians, mindful of "the tender mercy of God, whereby the Orient has visited us from on high", turned East to pray, the priest leading his people. The historical exemplar and indeed our own experience are persuasive arguments in favour of celebration ad orientem, so conducive to prayer focused on the sacrificial action Christ the Eternal Priest.

Adoration

Next he treated of adoration and union with God: "Everything in the liturgical act through the nobility, the beauty, the harmony of the exterior sign, must be conducive to adoration, to union with God; this includes music, singing, silence, the way we proclaim the Word of the Lord, or pray, use gestures, vestments, sacred vessels, other furnishings – the sacred edifice itself."

Marini then examined Active Participation, seeking it in the lives of the Saints attending Mass. It does

not consist in busy activity, but in an interior focus on the essence of the liturgical action, viz., the Canon, and our own Holy Communion that follows. Again he cites Cardinal Ratzinger's *The Spirit of the Liturgy*: "The real liturgical action, the true liturgical act, is the oratio. This oratio – the Eucharistic Prayer, the Canon – is really more than speech; it is actio in the highest sense of the word".

The final theme was that of sacred or liturgical music. "Why does the

Church insist on certain forms of music?" he asks. "It is properly these forms ... in their holiness, goodness, universality, which translate in notes, melodies, singing, the authentic liturgical spirit leading to adoration of the mystery celebrated, helping ... to capture the essential primacy of God acting in Christ."

Marini concluded his paper with a strong appeal for a "reform of the reform" initiated by the Council: "its goal would be to carry on that providential reform of the liturgy that the conciliar Fathers had launched, but has not always, in its practical implementation, found a timely and happy fulfilment."

Effectively Mons Marini's paper was a State of the Union address, appraising the key areas of concern in the liturgy today and the strategies needed for the immediate future if the Church is to be its true self. How fascinating it will be to have a similar paper delivered in five years' time to gauge the progress made. *Arrivederci Roma!*

“Fiery City” not without hope

R. J. Stove reports on a visit to Liège in eastern Belgium.

Connoisseurs of Belgian railway station architecture (and you all know who *you* are) will doubtless have a special place in their hearts, or at least in their viscera, for the monstrosity that since August 2009 has functioned as Liège’s train terminus. This steel-and-glass eyesore – which resembles nothing so much as the brainchild of a blindfolded terrorist who abandoned his Sydney Opera House imitation halfway through, in favour of some serious acid-dreaming – is all the more offensive because of how abundant the pleasantly pre-modern buildings are elsewhere in the city centre. Hard though it is to believe now, Liège used to be an economic powerhouse; and it looked the part.

The Industrial Revolution came earlier to Belgium than to any other Continental nation, in fact than to any nation except England. To this day Liège is often called *La Cité Ardente*, “The Fiery City.” Whilst Liège might not have had “dark satanic mills”, it had plenty of dark satanic coal-mines and iron foundries, for which, indeed, it enjoyed a European fame. A local worker would often be called a “*tête de charbon*”: literally, a “coal-head”. For most nineteenth-century inhabitants, Liège and Charleroi (99 kilometres apart from one another) represented dual antechambers to hell. In the former town’s Museum of Walloon Life visitors can still discover for themselves the replica of a coal-mining tunnel from around 1900. It is hard to imagine even rats, let alone human beings, choosing to stay in such an environment, unrelieved as the latter was by any hint of intelligent

Bismarckian – or even Bonapartist – paternalism towards working men’s basic survival.

Red-hot leftists

Not surprisingly, Liège acquired a tradition of voting for red-hot leftists. In 1950, when Belgian politics revolved around whether Léopold III should be allowed to continue as monarch, anti-Léopold riots became fiercer and bloodier in Liège than anywhere else. Long afterwards (1991) a gunman slew Deputy Prime Minister André Cools, the local Socialist Party’s boss, outside the Liège flat where Cools’s *petite amie* lived. The resultant police case turned into one of those mega-Balzacian legal sagas which drag on by the decade, involving as it did wholesale bribery, the enforced resignation of NATO’s Secretary-General, and crooked tendering for military equipment. A scarcely credible *thirteen years* after the killing, two defendants (the third had committed suicide) went to gaol; but the actual trigger-finger’s owner has yet to confess or to be identified.

Mere visitors to Liège, though, may happily avoid such high-jinks, just as it would be a particularly masochistic tourist in Melbourne who got caught up in the local Underbelly-style epic of gangsters whose names end in vowels popping other gangsters whose names end in the same vowels. There is less day-to-day criminality discernible in Liège’s streets than in those of any English-speaking metropolis known to me. After the physical (no less than the moral) squalor of London and, increasingly, Sydney, Liège is a treat. Trains to and from Liège, not to mention buses within the city’s limits,

are admirable in terms of promptitude and cleanliness. While governments in England, Australia and the USA embraced the delusion that every infrastructural problem can be solved by throwing eight-lane highways at it, Belgium preferred to invest in making an already impressive national rail grid even better. Most Liègeois – particularly in view of petrol costs – would probably find it extravagant to own a car at all, because not only does public transport work excellently on the whole (and competitively priced taxis continue for those who simply must be driven in private), but much of the city can be negotiated on foot.

Dignified poverty

It needs to be. For Liège is, in a dignified First World way, *poor*. Being in Western Europe, it does possess a more or less functional welfare system; furthermore there are fewer beggars visible (and when visible, they are far less importunate) in downtown Liège than in downtown Melbourne. But the coal and steel production stopped in the 1980s – it could achieve nothing that Third World slave labour could not supply for one-fifth of the wages – and Liège has since then been in the position of a former rust-belt centre trying to reinvent itself. No obvious landmarks exist to attract the spendthrift proletarian sightseer. The publicity given by the Liège Tourist Bureau to a museum of *washing-machines* indicates a certain desperation. Outside summer, the climate is pretty dismal; and even guidebooks admit to how little English is heard. The few foreigners I saw included a young American corporate type in an expensive fawn suit, almost

dancing with rage about how hard he found it to communicate with the locals. How he washed up there at all, I cannot conceive. *La Cité Ardente* would be the last place where any sane business would hold a management convention. (Liège's existence drives, *Deo gratias*, one more nail into the coffin of that backpackers' lie: "They speak English everywhere.") There are little telltale signs of a cash-strapped populace. Several museums are operating on reduced opening hours, thanks to the recession. In my entire stay I noticed no-one carrying a laptop (how strange after Brussels!), no youngster affixed to an iPod, and precisely one person talking into a mobile phone. Spectacular facial piercings (rings through bottom lips and similar), seemingly inescapable in London, were absent here. Enquiries about how many Liègeois have cable TV, or when their last dental appointments took place, might not be unduly welcome.

What Liège has plenty of – and this has occurred since my last visit, in 1990 – is African immigrants. Many of these are Congolese, and though illegal immigration must be a problem in Belgium as it is in other European states, the average Congolese migrant probably has a Belgian (now European Union) passport. Unless our political memories stretch back to newspaper coverage – worldwide half a century ago, but fallen into total oblivion since – of Congolese politicians such as Patrice Lumumba, Moïse Tshombe, and Joseph Kasavubu, we all too readily forget how big an empire Belgium once had. In Liège one cannot forget, for the laundries, the cafes and even the cleaning centres all count the Francophone Africans amongst their staff.

Overall what surprised me about Liège was the shock of the familiar. About forty minutes' walk from the train station – and across the river

Meuse, which bisects the city – is the area dominated by the church of Saint-Pholien. No reader of Georges Simenon's Inspector Maigret novels will need to be told more: his *Maigret and the Hundred Gibbets* (1930) is dominated by a nightmarish group of Dostoyevskyan students who congregate near the church. In 1990 the neighbourhood seemed wholly unchanged from when the novel was written. These days restaurants, dry-cleaners, and phonocard stores have sprung up, but after only a little effort of imaginative reconstruction, the Simenon reader – especially in winter's twilight – will still find the hairs standing upright on the nape of his neck.

Maigret

Simenon (who died as recently as 1989) is still something of a tutelary Liègeois deity. Not far from Saint-Pholien can be found a bust of Maigret's pipe-smoking creator, one characterised by rather embarrassing idealisation. The real Simenon wore coke-bottle glasses, had a long face, and gave the impression of a dirty-minded bank clerk straight from Central Casting; but the sculpted Simenon, underneath his fedora, is of a Rabelaisian and cherubic appearance, which will remind Australian readers of nobody so much as the late columnist Max Teichmann. Originally the bust had a pipe sticking from its mouth, but after vandals repeatedly broke off the pipe and stole it, the municipal authorities – lacking Maigret's own detective skills – shrugged their shoulders and allowed the bust to remain pipeless.

Discretion could well have been, for them, the better part of valour. Towards outsiders, most Liègeois whom I met tended to be, not exactly hostile, but defensive. If you walk into a working-class bistro and, by opening your mouth, reveal less-than-

perfect French – my own, fluent and well-pronounced though it now seems to be, would never fool a native – you can expect unwelcoming looks, although you can also expect superb and inexpensive food. I should hate to be a Brussels policeman appealing for Liègeois eyewitnesses to a crime. Restaurants display the requisite no-smoking signs (*Défense de fumer*); the Liègeois obstinately ignore them, and puff away. British author Harry Patterson, in his survey *A Tall Man in a Low Land*, compared Liège to Liverpool. For me, there seemed much merit in that comparison. Wall Street might now rule the world, but Liègeois – like Liverpoolians – never really got the memo.

There is even a minor movement among certain Liègeois to revive the Walloon language. Wikipedia has a subset where the pages are entirely in Walloon; and one evening in Liège when checking my E-mails, I noticed that the (white) youth at the next computer was tapping out in Walloon his contributions to an online discussion group.

Religion

Where religion currently fits into Liège life, who but an expert can say? Eisenhower once asserted that France had become a pagan country. He thus aroused much indignation among Frenchmen, who thought that theirs was still the actual Christian country, and that the land of Nevada divorces and freak-show California mortuaries was where paganism really dwelt. I can only report what I saw, and – equally important – what I did not see.

What I did not see was the organised head-kicking godlessness *de rigueur* in modern London. Neither in Liège nor in Brussels did I spot the atheistic (and Richard-Dawkins-sponsored) posters on the sides of London buses; nor the casual anti-Catholic insolence that seems inseparable from an ordinary

London conversation or newspaper editorial; nor the stomach-churning pornographic pictures in London phone booths. (Belgium has, of course, pornography for those wretches who want it – but the point is, it can be avoided.) Liège's cathedral (St Paul's) dates from the tenth century, and only amid the Low Countries' embarrassment of ecclesiastical riches could it have remained little known; in any place less endowed than Belgium with mediaeval triumphs, it would be honoured. So statistics about church attendance tell, as per usual, only part of the story.

Those statistics are not great, for Belgium any more than for the rest of Europe. Belgium has approximately eleven million people. Of those, more than seven million identify themselves as Catholics. But Louvain University sociologists investigating (2006) the number of Catholics who actually attended Sunday Mass discovered that only 11 per cent did. Goodness only knows how much the Catholics who *do* attend Sunday Mass comprehend their own faith's doctrines. Still, this problem may well be lessened by the fact that Belgium – like France and Germany but utterly unlike England and America – has an adequate, non-feral government education system. (My own Melbourne organ-teacher, the redoubtable Merrowyn Deacon, made in 2009 the tart and accurate point that “if one can speak three languages by age thirteen, then ‘self-esteem’ should take care of itself.”)

One should not paint too roseate a picture. Belgium now has a vile euthanasia law, which King Albert II shamefully endorsed, rather than abdicating as his brother Baudouin did in preference to countenancing a pro-abortion statute. Yet the extraordinarily high number of severely deformed people in Belgian cities' streets implies that there remains public uneasiness about both abortion and euthanasia:

uneasiness which makes an agreeable contrast to the doltish apathy that both outrages inspire in the Anglo mind.

Danneels' heritage

Brussels' recently retired Cardinal Godfried Danneels told *The Tablet* (31 May 2008), “My whole life has been the application of Vatican II, especially in liturgy, catechesis, the relationship between the Church and the world.” This credo he expounded, not in decent shame, but with every

“Vatican II
is the French
Revolution in
the Church”

- Cardinal Danneels

sign of glee: just as his predecessor Cardinal Leon Suenens had taken pride in proclaiming that “Vatican II is the French Revolution in the Church.” Very different, at least so far, has been the attitude of Danneels' newly appointed successor André-Joseph Léonard, former bishop of Namur in central Belgium. Bishop Léonard, by far the most pro-traditionalist member of his country's episcopate (Namur Cathedral has offered a daily Latin Mass since he took over), has been a staunch public defender of *Summorum Pontificum*.

All this suggests that a certain cautious optimism is in order regarding Belgian religious life, and Belgian life more generally. Those Anglo-American commentators who get their kicks from writing off “Old Europe” – always citing demographic data which, even when unimpeachably accurate, are often lifted out of context – should

not leap too hastily to their keyboards. Here, typing these words, is one Catholic layman who (on the strength purely of what his own eyes saw and his own ears heard) left Belgium much better pleased than he had been when he entered it.

Mindset

Portions of this pleasure came from being exposed to a regional mindset partly Latinate. As Chesterton said, “Latins are logical and have a reason for going mad.” They also have a realism that the typical Englishman long ago lost. Everything we Anglophones worry about in Western Europe, Western Europeans themselves worry about, often to the point of public protest.

There persists in Belgium, for the ordinary budget-conscious Englishman or Australian and increasingly for the ordinary budget-conscious American, a *douceur de vivre* utterly unimaginable at home. It might be the tiny little Romanesque parish church down the road, where the gift stall sells CDs of sublime seventeenth-century organ music. It might be the second-hand bookshop tucked away behind the hotel. It might be the polyglot ticket-collector waving away your proffered passport with a smile. Or it might be something as inconsequential as the pretty young blonde Liègeoise desk clerk who, grinning charmingly and mendaciously, says “*Vous parlez français très bien, monsieur.*” (Shades of the nonagenarian Oliver Wendell Holmes: “What I wouldn't give to be eighty again!”) Whichever form it takes, it leaves one abiding impression: namely, that Belgium, for a serious spiritual and cultural revival, only needs to turn the clock back to about 1960. What method can possibly save England, by contrast, less drastic than turning the clock back to 1530?

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Conversation with Russian friends

Robert Moynihan of *Inside the Vatican* reports on a recent visit to Russia and to his old friends in the Russian Orthodox Church

*“The starry belltower, haven from sin,
The stones of the marble floor,
polished by kisses...”*

Marina Tsvetaeva (1892-1941),

I am in Russia -- not Rome. Why? Because, born in the middle of the 20th century, no country has seemed more mysterious, more romantic, and, yes, more vaguely sinister, to me than Russia: Holy Russia, cultured Russia, the Russia of the Czars, of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky and Rachmaninoff, of Lenin and Stalin, and now of Putin and Medvedev, the Russia which was Russia, and then was the USSR for 70 years, and is now Russia once again.

As children in America, we were given a double image of Russia: Russia the communist stronghold, where God was prohibited as “the opiate of the people” and religious believers were persecuted and sent to work camps to freeze and die; and Russia as the “House of Mary,” the nation with more chapels dedicated to the Mother of God than all the other countries in the world put together, the nation therefore cherished by Mary, the nation whose soul and spirit would one day return to faith, and in so doing, bring a time of peace to the whole world. And this, I was told as a boy, was part of the meaning of the mysterious message of Fatima, which we were told was a message from Mary herself, to little children, chosen to hear it because their elders no longer had ears to hear.

And so I always wished to visit here, to see for myself, if there was faith in this country, and, if so, of what kind.

I traveled to Russia with a colleague, Daniel Schmidt of the Bradley Foundation of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We landed in Moscow a little after noon, made our way through the airport passport control, and were met by a driver sent to pick us up by Archbishop Hilarion Alfeyev, 42, the “Foreign Minister” of the Russian Orthodox Church, our host. The driver’s name was Raphael.

Raphael took us to the Danilovsky Monastery, where we are the guests of the Russian Orthodox Church — a Church which dates to the year 988 AD, when Prince Vladimir converted to Christianity, and which since that year has been one of the constituent elements of the Russian identity and soul. After resting an hour, we were

picked up by an old friend, Leonid Sevastianov, one of Alfeyev’s assistants, and brought to a restaurant where we had dinner with Archbishop Hilarion, Leonid, Alexei Puzakov, the conductor of the Tretyakov Gallery choir, and Vadim Yakunin, a benefactor of the Russian Orthodox Church, and a co-founder with Alfeyev of the St. Gregory Foundation, set up to support Russian Orthodox cultural and religious activity, sometimes in conjunction with Roman Catholics -- one of the reasons I am here.

Alfeyev has been quite busy for half a year, since his nomination in April to his post, head of the Department of External Church Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church, which has made him the second most prominent figure in the Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy after Patriarch Kirill himself. Alfeyev was in Rome in September to meet with Pope Benedict XVI. He will be traveling to France this weekend, then to China next week, then to other countries.

“I spend 80% of my time now on the road,” he tells me.

I have worked with Alfeyev in recent years to bring concerts of Russian Orthodox music to Rome, Washington, New York, and Boston. The music, composed by Alfeyev himself and performed by Russian orchestras and choirs, includes a *Passion According to St. Matthew* -- an extremely moving interpretation of Christ’s Passion -- and a *Christmas Oratorio* -- an astonishingly joyous celebration of Christ’s birth.



Cultural alliance

The goal of this “concert work” was to try to help to “bridge the gap” between Catholics and the Orthodox by means of cultural collaboration, in the hope of hastening the time of closer doctrinal and ecclesial relations between Catholics and the Orthodox worldwide.

And a second reason for my visit to Moscow, in addition to discussing future collaboration with the St. Gregory Foundation, is to attend another Russian concert here tomorrow night.

Our dinner passed quickly. I asked Alfeyev how his meeting with the Pope had gone. “Very well,” he said.

“I had been told that we would only have perhaps ten minutes together, but the meeting went on for one hour,” Alfeyev said. “We spoke in English. The Pope speaks perfect English.” Alfeyev also speaks excellent English, as he studied theology and Church history for four years at Oxford in England.

As for the content of that meeting, Hilarion said he could not reveal particulars. But *Interfax* has reported that “Archbishop Hilarion highlighted the importance of mutual testimony by Orthodox and Catholic believers of *traditional Christian values before the secular world*. He noted the identical views of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches on such matters as family, maternity, demographic crisis, euthanasia, and many other ethical problems.”

In short, what Hilarion is working on is a worldwide “alliance” between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches.

And that is another reason I am in Moscow: because I am persuaded that the Pope’s recent decision to offer “ordinariates” to Anglicans as a way to return to union with Rome may presage an offer to the Orthodox Churches of equally historic importance.

Icon of Kazan

Hilarion has often spoken of the suffering of believers under the rule of the Soviet regime.

Just three days ago, on November 8, 2009, Hilarion was in the Russian city of Mtsensk to bring there the Kazan

from the German Catholics, and today you are receiving it to return it to the place of its abiding. May this holy icon remind us of the tragic past of our Fatherland and be, at the same time, a source of solace, joy, and hope for a better tomorrow. Let us pray to the Mother of God beseeching Her to protect our homeland from any evil and lead us to the Heavenly Fatherland. Take this icon, Vladyka, and may it keep the flock entrusted to your care.”

No doubt, Catholics in Russia have also suffered greatly, and I have mentioned this to Hilarion on a number of occasions. It is my conviction that the shared suffering of Catholics and Orthodox will soon persuade us that we have more in common than what separates us.

Hilarion vision

Here is an interview I did with Hilarion on the day Pope Benedict was enthroned as Pope, April 24, 2005. The interview sets forth Hilarion’s vision for this Catholic-Orthodox “alliance.”

RM: What are your hopes for the new pontificate?

Hilarion: As a Russian Orthodox bishop, I hope, first of all, that the new pontificate will be marked by a breakthrough in relations between the Roman Catholic and the Russian Orthodox Churches, and that a meeting of the Pope of Rome with the Patriarch of Moscow does take place. This meeting must be preceded by concrete steps in the direction of a better mutual understanding, and by careful elaboration of a common position on major dividing issues.

I hope, next, that there will be a general amelioration in the relations between the Catholic Church and the



Archbishop Hilarion Alfeyev

Icon of the Mother of God found by a German soldier in the ruined house in 1943 and returned to the Russian Orthodox Church this year.

Hilarion on November 8 told the story of the icon and its return to Russia. “I received the Mtsensk icon

world of Orthodoxy, and that the Joint Catholic-Orthodox Theological Commission resumes its work after a five-year pause, or that a new commission for bilateral dialogue is formed in order to discuss Uniatism, primacy and other theological and ecclesiological questions which still divide our churches.

of relativism... that recognizes nothing definite and leaves only one's own ego and one's own desires as the final measure.' A sermon on the eve of the conclave was meant to be programmatic, and it is clear that the war against relativism which Cardinal Ratzinger declared did not scare the other cardinals: on the contrary, by

by the Bishops' Council of the Moscow Patriarchate in 2000. There are so many striking similarities and so little difference. Why, then, should we not be able to reveal our unity on all these major issues *urbi et orbi*?

RM: How does this proposed alliance differ from the Joint Catholic-Orthodox Commission that you have already mentioned?

Hilarion: It is meant to be something completely different. The commission must be concentrated on what divides us, while the alliance should explore, clarify and then publicly announce the things on which we are united. The commission will be concentrated on the matters of doctrine and ecclesiology, while the alliance should be centred on social and moral issues. The commission will continue the internal Catholic-Orthodox debate, which has already lasted for many centuries, while the alliance should enable us, without necessarily overcoming our internal problems, to form a common front to defend Christianity as such against everything that may challenge it now or in the future.

I was the sole representative of the Moscow Patriarchate at the last session of the Joint Catholic-Orthodox Commission, which took place in Baltimore in 2000, and I remember how difficult the discussion on the issue of Uniatism was. There was so much frustration, disappointment and bitterness on both sides that not only was no agreement reached, but even the decision on whether the work of the commission would ever be resumed was not taken.

Even if resumed, the work of the Joint Commission will not be an easy one and is likely to continue for many years to come. My fear, however, is that by concentrating exclusively on the dividing issues,

There ought to be a European Catholic-Orthodox Alliance to fight secularism, liberalism and relativism prevailing in modern Europe

As far as the Catholic Church as such is concerned, I hope that it will continue to preserve its traditional social and moral teaching without surrendering to pressures from the 'progressive' groups that demand the ordination of women, the approval of the so-called 'same-sex marriages,' abortion, contraception, euthanasia, etc. There is no doubt that Benedict XVI, who has already made his positions on these issues clear, will continue to oppose such groups, which exist both within the Catholic Church and outside it.

Combat in Europe

I also hope that the Catholic Church will continue to combat liberalism, secularism and relativism both in Europe and outside it. Just two days before becoming Pope Benedict XVI, the then Cardinal Ratzinger addressed his fellow cardinals with a sermon which, according to some journalists, broke like a thunderclap. 'We are moving,' he said, toward 'a dictatorship

electing him as Pope they expressed their readiness to join him in this noble, but extremely painful and difficult combat.

In order for this combat to be more inclusive, I have recently suggested that a European Catholic-Orthodox Alliance be formed. This alliance may enable European Catholics and Orthodox to fight together against secularism, liberalism and relativism prevailing in modern Europe, may help them to speak with one voice in addressing secular society, may provide for them an ample space where they will discuss modern issues and come to common positions. The social and ethical teachings of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches are extremely close, in many cases practically identical. I have had a chance to compare the 'Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church,' published by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in 2004, with the 'Bases of the Social Doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church,' approved

Oriens

Russia

such as Uniatism, proselytism and primacy, we are likely to lose precious time that could be used for a common witness to the secularized world. Europe, in particular, has so rapidly dechristianized that urgent action is needed in order to save it from losing its centuries-old Christian identity.

This is precisely why I propose that, parallel to and independently from the Joint Commission, a European Catholic-Orthodox Alliance should be formed in order for the official representatives of the two churches to

be able to elaborate a common position, in particular, on all major social and ethical issues. The two churches can speak with one voice, and there can be a united Catholic-Orthodox response to the challenges of secularism, liberalism and relativism. If necessary, some other issues of mutual interest could be a subject of discussion within the framework of the alliance with the view of presenting a unified position on them.

The rationale behind my proposal is the following: our churches are on their way to unity, but one has

to be realistic and understand that it will probably take decades, if not centuries, before this unity is realized. In the meantime we desperately need to address the world with a united voice. Without being one Church, can we act as one Church? Can we present ourselves to the outside world as a unified structure, as an alliance? I am convinced that we can, and that by doing so we may become much stronger.

RM: Why, then, a European alliance and not a world alliance?

Hilarion: Firstly, because I believe that it is in Europe that the most deadly battles between Christianity and relativism are going to take place in the nearest future. It is in Europe that the onslaught of militant secularism against religion takes the most aggressive forms. It is Europe that most obsessively denies its Christian heritage. It is in Europe that crucifixes are taken away from schools, religious symbols are banned from public places, and Christianity becomes an object of constant criticism, outrage and mockery. It is in Europe that a profound demographic crisis affected Christian population, threatening its very survival. Not that these processes do not take place in other parts of the world, but it is in Europe that they become so stunningly evident.

Secondly, in Europe there is a certain numerical balance between Catholics and Orthodox: 280 million of the former against 210 million of the latter. In some other parts of the world (like, for example, South America) the former outnumber the latter to such a degree that no dialogue on an equal footing is feasible.

RM: Suppose such an alliance is formed, what issues should it address?



The Church of St Sophia in Vladimir, Russia

John G. ...

continued on page 25

The prophet motive

The Churching of America, 1776-2005: Winners and losers in our religious economy; by Roger Finke and Rodney Stark; Rutgers University Press, 2005

Reviewed by John Lamont *

Why do more Americans go to church regularly than people in any other country in the world? It's been that way for decades. Now, sociologists have started to look for explanations—and the most likely one applies the principles of free-market capitalism to religion. The free market, the argument goes, has permitted religious groups that adopt successful strategies to expand, and to do so at the expense of those groups that fail. In contrast, Europe—with its history of established churches, each holding a monopoly within its state—has been progressively secularized. This has resulted from the lack of competition in the religious marketplace, leaving declining, unattractive religions as the only options for potential believers. Because the new school of sociologists of religion has borrowed ideas from the rational-choice theories of economics, it has been dubbed the “rational choice” school.

The old story about the cause of decline in religious practice is termed the “secularization thesis” and was advanced by sociologists Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Bryan Wilson. This thesis posited that religious belief is linked with the way of life of traditional agrarian societies and that industrialization and technical advance inevitably cause religion to decline. Instead

of praying for rain, farmers turn to irrigation and fertilizers; instead of praying for a return to health, the sick take antibiotics. Religion's role in everyday life becomes smaller as people develop this-worldly solutions to their problems. Skeptics who have questioned the secularization thesis have claimed that it reflects, rather than any hard evidence, the antireligious bias of those who maintained it: The founders of the fields of anthropology and sociology were hostile to religion, and they wanted their new disciplines to play a role in undermining and replacing it.

Rational choice

The rational-choice school goes in a new direction. It points out that evidence from America falsifies the secularization thesis. In *The Churching of America, 1776–2005: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*, Roger Finke and Rodney Stark show that, at the time of the American Revolution, less than one-fifth of the American population claimed church membership; the rate rose to more than one-third in the mid-nineteenth century and to more than one-half today. This is what they refer to as the “churching of America.” (Together with William Bainbridge and Laurence R. Iannaccone, Finke and Stark are the main figures in the rational-choice school.)

Market model

In the United States, then, religion actually grew with industrialization and technical advance—a fact that falsifies the claim that technological and scientific development must lead to religious decline. Following the lead of sociologist Robert Wuthnow, Stark, Iannaccone, and Finke attribute the popularity of the secularization thesis among social scientists to the fact that the social sciences are less scientific than the hard sciences, with the consequence that “their semi-religious reliance on non-testable claims puts them in direct competition with traditional religions.”

The rational-choice school explains American exceptionalism by offering a general theory of religious behavior. The school's theory has two principal components. The first, a market model of religious competition, is used to explain the level of religiosity in societies. The second, a supply-side analysis of the success of particular religions, focuses, in Stark's words, on “the behavior of religious firms rather than only upon religious consumers.”

The market model of religious competition asserts that, when a religion enjoys a monopoly in a given market, its leaders, lacking the spur of competition, will not try very hard to make religious practice an attractive option. But when a competitive market in religions replaces a monopoly, not only will the spur of competition be present, there also will be a process of natural selection among religions, with the more attractive religions gaining at the expense of the less attractive ones. This is the model that the new school uses to explain American religious exceptionalism.

Before the American Revolution, most of the American colonies had established churches, and Americans were not very religious. After the Revolution, these churches, no longer established, had to raise their game in order to compete for members. Churches that did not offer much to people shrank, and churches that were attractive grew. This competitive process made the average church more effective at getting members. This, in turn, led to a rise in religious practice in the United States throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Europe, by contrast, churches maintained an established or quasi-established status until the twentieth century, which resulted in steadily diminishing attendance.

Because it offers a good explanation for American religious exceptionalism, Finke and Stark's market model represents a considerable achievement. As a universal explanation for the strength of religious practice within societies, however, it does not fit the data. The market model predicts that societies in which one religion has a monopoly will be religiously lax. But societies as varied as the Byzantine Empire, sixteenth-century Spain, Tibet under the Dalai Lama, Malta until the late twentieth century, and many Islamic countries throughout history were not lacking in religious fervor. In general, prior to the American Revolution, free markets in religion were scarce or nonexistent, but religiously fervent societies, while not universal, were not uncommon.

Canadian decline

Nor is it true that a free market in religion always leads to increased religiosity. Most areas of Western Europe have not had an established church for over a hundred years. The religiosity of these lands was significantly higher when they did possess established churches, and

the removal of establishment has not produced any of the positive effects that the free-market component of the rational-choice school predicts. Stark and Iannaccone's claim that some degree of religious monopoly has persisted in these countries (they cite, as an example, Belgium's pre-1981 ban on sending Jehovah's Witnesses publications through the mail) does not provide a convincing explanation for the failure of the free-market model in Europe. Such remnants of religious establishment do not, after all, impose a significant cost on belonging to religions that are not the established one.

In his books *Fragmented Gods* (1987), *Unknown Gods* (1993), and *Restless Gods* (2003), Canadian sociologist Reginald Bibby has shown that the Canadian experience provides particularly clear evidence against the universal efficacy of a free market in religion. Such a free market has existed in Canada since the British conquest in 1759, and, until the post-World War II period, Canadian religious observance seemed to confirm the free-market model. As recently as 1956, Canadians were considerably more religious than Americans, with an average claimed weekly church-attendance rate of 61 percent. After 1956, however, the rate of reported weekly church attendance in Canada fell below the American rate and has now stabilized at about 25 percent. According to a poll taken in 2009 for the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, 38 percent of Americans now say they attend religious services at least once a week. This figure is consistent with the 40 percent level that has held steady in the United States since the beginning of Gallup polls in the 1930s. (Because people may be inclined to claim that they attend church more often than they actually do, there is some question about how accurate figures for church attendance are. If we assume, however, that the degree of exaggeration is

similar in both Canada and the United States, these figures still can be used to compare the two countries.) The drop in religious observance in Canada did not happen as a result of the existence of an established religion. As Bibby has found, the fall resulted largely from Canadians' continuing to have some attachment to a religion but ceasing to practice it.

The explanation of the failure of the free-market model in Western Europe and Canada probably lies in the fact that, for such a model to apply, people have to think of a religious commitment as analogous to a purchasing decision, and to think of different religions as analogous to competing sellers of goods. Although this sort of thinking may be true of many or most Americans, it is not universal. Belonging to a particular religion often has been thought of as analogous to (or part of) membership in a family or an ethnic group, neither of which can be chosen or renounced. In Canada, for example, movement from one religious family to another is extremely rare; Canadians, as Bibby has found, do not act as consumers in a religious market.

Supply side

The second main component of the rational-choice school—its supply-side analysis of the success of religions—offers a more successful model than does the free-market component. The supply-side approach to macroeconomics emerged in the 1970s, in response to the failure of then dominant Keynesian ideas, to cope with a combination of inflation and low economic growth. The Keynesian approach identified the management of demand as the key to a prosperous economy. The supply-siders insisted, on the contrary, that economic policy should focus on the supply of goods and services. They recommended reduction of the then

prevalent high marginal tax rates—70 percent or more—on the grounds that such tax rates fostered inefficient economic activity and discouraged work. The rational-choice school took from this school the idea of focusing on the supply of religion rather than the demand for it. One claim of the supply-side analysis is fairly obvious: Religious practice involves effort, and reward for this effort largely depends on the existence and activity of the supernatural being or beings toward whom the effort is directed. To motivate people to make this effort, a religion must place great stress on the existence and power of these supernatural beings. Thus, the more overtly and insistently otherworldly a religion is, the more successful it will be.

Taking a risk

The other claim of the supply-side model is more interesting and surprising: Religions succeed if they make distinctive and demanding requirements of their adherents. The rewards of religion are supernatural and, therefore, unseen. Religious commitment thus involves taking a risk, and one's perception of this risk is lessened if the other members of one's religious community are zealous and committed. A high average level of enthusiasm also makes the collective activities far more rewarding; compare, for example, singing hymns in a small and listless congregation with singing as part of a large, enthusiastic group.

Zeal and commitment are also necessary to lessen the "free rider" problem that plagues all voluntary groups—the problem of members who take the benefits of membership without contributing themselves. One can add to these considerations the fact that much of the appeal of religion comes from its providing moral principles with which to structure

one's life. Such principles are far more effective when one sees that most of the people around one are following them. A community of people who, by and large, follow the principles of a morally demanding religion is a far more effective moral educator than any amount of preaching—a factor that is especially important for parents. Thus, a church has to set high standards for membership in order to be attractive, and the churches that set high

is those with the most influence—the clergy and the leading laity—who most desire to lower the level of sacrifice and because each reduction seems so small and engenders widespread approval.

This process leads churches to lower the standards required for membership. This pleases people in the short run, but in the long run, after the effects of lowered standards make themselves felt, it drives them away.

The stricter the demands a religion makes, the more its adherents identify with it

standards are the churches that will grow. Those with low standards will shrink because low standards reduce the rewards for religious commitment below the required cost in time and effort. This is why, as Finke and Stark assert, "the churching of America was accomplished by aggressive churches committed to vivid otherworldliness."

In addition to presenting the supply-side analysis, Finke and Stark offer an explanation of why religions tend to abandon the winning recipe of success:

Cost reduction

Because of the long-term exchange relations that religious organizations require, people are forever paying the costs in the here and now while most of the rewards are to be realized elsewhere and later. As a result, humans are prone to backslide, to get behind on their payments. . . . Thus, other things being equal, people will always be in favor of a modest reduction in their costs. In this fashion, humans begin to bargain with their churches for lower tension and fewer sacrifices. They usually succeed, both because it

Finke and Stark have shown how the supply-side model fits the American case: Mainstream Protestant churches that make few demands of their members are declining, and more demanding evangelical or Pentecostal churches are growing. Unlike the free-market model, however, this analysis fits all the data, not only the American case.

The supply-side analysis explains why, in 1945, at the close of the Second World War, Canadians were substantially more religious than Americans: Canadian churches were stricter. An example of Canadian Protestant strictness is the furore that erupted among Canadian Methodists at the time of the First World War, when it was made known that card playing was widespread among Canadian troops. A formative event in the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada was the arrival of priests fleeing the French Revolution. These men provided much of the clergy in Quebec and stamped the French Canadian Catholic Church with an outlook that was strict and conservative even by nineteenth-century Catholic standards. One might

expect that such strictness would put people off religion, but in Canada the opposite happened: Strictness led to high religious observance, for reasons that the rational-choice theory explains. After the Second World War, however, Canadian Protestants and Catholics liberalized to a greater extent than did their American counterparts. As a result, Canadian churches had less to offer their members than American churches did, and the Canadian rate of religious practice fell below that of the United States—again, as the rational-choice theory predicts.

The abandonment of demands and distinctiveness by the Catholic Church has had a particularly devastating effect on priests and nuns, a fact commented on by Finke and Stark, who remark that “many of the most distinctive aspects of Catholic liturgy, theology, and practice, abandoned by the Council, turned out to have been crucial for generating and sustaining vocations, especially vocations sufficient to meet the high costs of Catholic religious life.” This effect can be seen throughout the world, not just in Europe, and further confirms the

strict standards. Liberal Protestant denominations generally seem not to be salvageable: It is easier for believers who seek stricter standards to move to another church than it is to try to reimpose such standards on a resistant institution. Benedict XVI has made some movement toward a revival of Catholic distinctiveness by encouraging traditionalism, but the rational-choice theory does not predict that this will cause a general revival within the Church.

What will be necessary for such a revival is for strict standards to be required, not just permitted. This, however, would be antithetical to the pope’s approach, which focuses on gentle persuasion. On a brighter note, Benedict’s attempts to clarify the teachings of the Second Vatican Council open possibilities. In the decades since the council, its teachings have been widely understood as mandating an abandonment of Catholic distinctiveness and a virtual surrender to the modern secular world. What is needed now, in contrast, is an interpretation of council teachings that rejects the currently prevailing understanding and upholds traditional Catholic distinctiveness. If such an interpretation is not vigorously enforced as well as promulgated, however, no Catholic revival is to be expected. Instead, the pressures of secularism and competing religions will continue to erode Catholic membership. This is what the supply-side analysis predicts, and its predictions cannot be faulted so far. In short, if the Catholic Church is to thrive, a revival of zeal and reimposition of discipline within it is urgently necessary.

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Benedict XVI has made some movement toward a revival of Catholic distinctiveness

The situation in Western Europe is parallel. There, the main event to be underlined is the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and the changes that were implemented in its name. The postconciliar changes (and, to a debated extent, the conciliar documents themselves) tried to erase, as far as possible, many distinctions between Catholics and non-Catholics. This involved the abandonment of strict rules and distinctive dress for clergy and religious, the replacement of a distinctive liturgy by one that resembled Protestant worship, the legitimation of dissent on moral teaching, and the downplaying of strict Catholic doctrine in religious instruction. According to the rational-choice theory, these were the best possible steps that could have been taken to diminish European Catholicism, and this prediction has been confirmed by events. The most vigorous religious movement in Europe today is extremist Islam—a form of religion whose success is also predicted by the rational-choice theory.

supply-side analysis. Finke and Stark predict that “no longer in tension with the surrounding culture, the church will generate less commitment from its membership and will gradually fail to compete with a new generation of upstart sects.” In evaluating this prediction, it is important to remember that the secularization school and the rational-choice school are the only serious positions in the sociology of religion. There is no sociological theory or sociological evidence to support the claim that religions can preserve or increase their influence while lowering their standards and submitting to the society around them.

As far as I know, the important discoveries of the rational-choice school are completely unknown to religious leaders. How do these leaders’ policies stack up in the light of these discoveries? Muslims, whose extremism is increasing, are doing the right thing, as are Hasidic Jews and Protestants who preserve their otherworldly doctrines and

Requiescat in pace

Ralph McInerny

1929 - 2010

One of the marks of a virtuous character, according to Aristotle, is the performance of virtuous acts with ease and delight. On that basis, as well as others, Ralph McInerny was a remarkably virtuous man. One of Ralph's most beautiful books is entitled *The Very Rich Hours of Jacques Maritain: A Spiritual Life*, the premise of which is that "we can find in the person of Jacques Maritain a model of the intellectual life in the pursuit of sanctity." Those words certainly apply to Ralph, one of the great Catholic intellectuals of our time. What distinguished Ralph was not just his fidelity, his intelligence, and his astonishing productivity, but his gracious and ready wit. He possessed a knack for conversation with everyone—from philosophers and politicians, to the elderly and children. Unlike most gifted individuals, Ralph was never burdened by his gifts. He engaged in serious pursuits joyfully, almost playfully.

Public intellectual

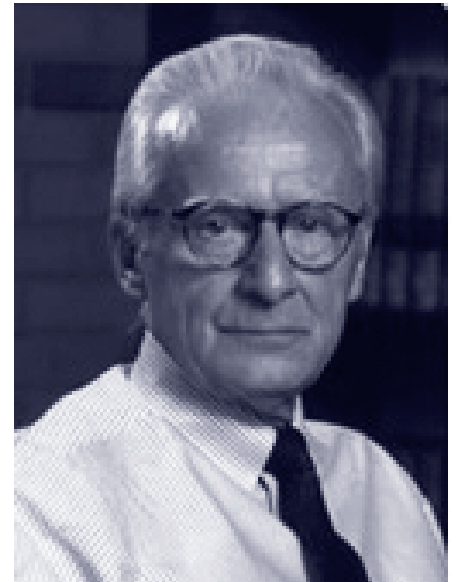
Ralph excelled in so many spheres and combined so many virtues in his person that it is difficult to know where to begin in recounting his noteworthy achievements. He was a philosopher (author of more than two dozen scholarly books, he gave the prestigious Gifford Lectures in 1999–2000), a translator (he translated the texts of Aquinas for Penguin Classics), a critically acclaimed and popular novelist (author of a number of mystery series, including the popular Father Dowling series that became a television series), a public intellectual

(he appeared on William F. Buckley's *Firing Line*, and was a member of President George W. Bush's Committee on the Arts and Humanities), a journalist (with Michael Novak, he founded *Crisis*, a journal of lay Catholic opinion), and a published poet. In the midst of all this activity, Ralph was remarkably generous with his time and his help, especially for his students, in whose families he expressed an avid interest.

Posthumous

In recent years after the death of his beloved wife Connie, with whom he had seven children, his thoughts turned increasingly to age and death. In a wonderful and deeply autobiographical volume of poems, *The Soul of Wit*, he reflected at length on death. He said often that since Connie died, he felt posthumous. They were indeed a perfect match. As a graduate student, I met Connie when Ralph introduced her by saying, "Have you met my first wife?" With a wit as quick as Ralph's, she had no trouble keeping up. Even or especially when occupied with thoughts of easeful death, Ralph's humor emerged. He liked to tell the story about a hospital visit to see a failing Jean Oesterle, his Notre Dame colleague, a convert to the faith, and a translator of Aquinas. Hesitantly, he asked, "Jean, do you know who I am?" She retorted, "Don't you know?"

Ralph had an indiscriminate love of puns; he seemed to enjoy bad puns more than good ones—a thesis that would seem to be confirmed by a perusal of the titles of his mystery novels (*On this Rockne*, *Irish Gilt*, *Law*



and Ardor, *Rest in Pieces*, or *The book of Kills*). An appreciation for the nuances and richness of ordinary language informed not only his humor but also his practice of philosophy. His most important philosophical text was *Aquinas and Analogy*, a study of the way Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle, teased out of the complexity of ordinary language unities of meaning. He rejected the idea that Thomas Aquinas provided us with a philosophical system intended to compete with other systems. Instead, Thomas was asking in a more precise way questions every human being asks; he is interested in the human good, not the good of professional philosophers or intellectuals. In keeping with this working assumption, Ralph wrote both for elite groups of scholars and for intrigued laymen. With the latter group in mind, he penned *A First Glance at Thomas Aquinas: A Handbook for peeping Thomists*.

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Clean up the Augean stables

Martin Mosebach and others appeal to Benedict XVI about the state of the sacred arts and music in the Church. **Sandro Magister** of *L'Espresso* reports.

ROME, November 5, 2009 – A few days before the meeting announced for November 21 between the pope and artists in the Sistine Chapel, an appeal anticipating its principal motivation has already come to Benedict XVI's desk.

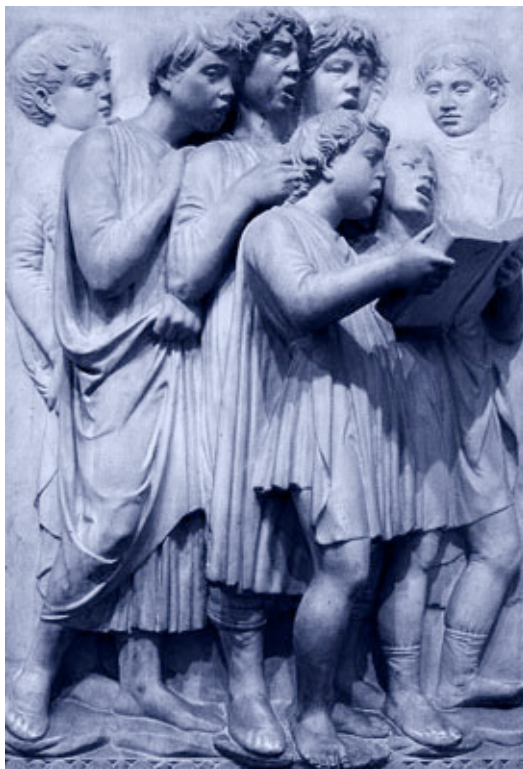
The appeal is “for the return to an authentically Catholic sacred art,” and was signed not by artists, but by scholars and other figures who are passionately concerned, for various reasons, about the fate of Christian art. Two names stand out above all: Martin Mosebach, and Enrico Maria Radaelli.

Mosebach is an established German writer whom Joseph Ratzinger knows well. His latest book: “The heresy of the shapeless [Formlessness]. The Roman liturgy and its enemy” was published this year, including an Italian edition by Cantagalli. And it is a stunning apologia on behalf of great Christian art, and more than that, of the Catholic liturgy itself as art. With biting invective against the iconoclasm that reigns today within the Catholic Church itself.

Radaelli, a disciple of the great Catholic philosopher and philologist Romano Amerio, is a sophisticated scholar of theological aesthetics. His masterpiece is: “Ingresso alla bellezza [Entryway to beauty],” released in 2008, a magnificent introduction into the mystery of God through his “Imago,” which is Christ. Beauty as the manifestation of the truth.

The appeal was born from seminars held in recent months in the library

of the pontifical commission for the cultural heritage of the Church, hosted by the vice-president of this Vatican commission, Benedictine Abbot Michael J. Zielinski. Active participants in the meetings included



Fr. Nicola Bux and Fr. Uwe Michael Lang, consultants for the office of papal liturgical celebrations. Fr. Lang is also an official at the congregation for divine worship. But no clergyman figures among the promoters of the appeal, not to mention any Vatican official. The signatories are laymen, of various competencies and professions.

After a brief introduction, the text unfolds in seven small chapters dedicated to the causes of the current fracture between the Church and

art, to theological references, to the commission, to the artists, to the sacred space, to sacred music, to the liturgy.

And it ends with the appeal itself, which is formulated in this way:

“For all the reasons set out above, we are eager to receive from Your Holiness a fatherly listening and the merciful attention of the Vicar of Christ. We beseech you, Holy Father, to read in our heartfelt appeal our most pressing concern for the appalling conditions of contemporary sacred art and sacred architecture, as well as a modest and most humble request for your help so that sacred art and architecture can once again be truly Catholic. This so that the faithful can again enjoy the sense of wonder and rejoice once again at the presence of the beauty in God's House. This so that the Church can be once more regain her rightful place, in this era of irrational, mundane and malforming barbarism, as a true and attentive promoter and custodian of an art that is both new and truly 'original': an art that today as always flowers in every age of progress, which reflowers from its ancient roots and eternal origin, faithful to the most intimate sense of Beauty that shines in the Truth of Christ.”

The complete text with the list of signatories can be read, in multiple languages, on the website created for this purpose.

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Papanomics: is there such a beast?

Lyle Dunne reflects on *Caritas in Veritate* and the debates it has sparked.

The release of *Caritas in Veritate* last September has re-ignited debates about the scope of the Church's teaching authority, even among orthodox Catholics. This is particularly problematic in economics, where some look for a Catholic "Third Way" between communism and capitalism, and focus on the dangers of dissent, while others are concerned about attempts to "baptise" positions on questions where Catholics can legitimately differ, seeing economics as on a different planet from the Church's teaching role.

Storck vs Woods

In this article I want to consider this issue mainly in the light of a debate between two American Catholic authors, Thomas Storck and Thomas Woods. They have been arguing since around 2004 in on-line journals about the relationship between economics and Catholic social teaching (CST), culminating in a "symposium" Catholic Social Science Review (also released in September 2009), with an article from Storck, a rejoinder from Woods, and responses from academics from Dallas, St John's and Friends Universities and the Acton Institute.

This exchange is illustrative of a range of views within mainstream Catholicism, and provides an opportunity to look at the way the debate is framed – which I think has impeded mutual understanding. I want to suggest some directions for taking it forward.

In a subsequent article I'd like to look at how this applies to the

encyclical itself, and social encyclicals generally, in the light of this debate.

Storck is a Chestertonian Distributist, and Woods what we would call an Economic Rationalist, of the

containing "every 1960s-era fallacy about Third World development".

Storck's view is basically that the Church has "right of way" over other disciplines. There is a sense in which

**Church's teaching authority is
limited to matters of faith and morals**

Austrian school, so it's not surprising they disagree on economic questions. This shouldn't in theory affect their views about the demarcation between economics and papal teaching, but in practice the debate often degenerates into an argument about the merits of neo-classical vs. more interventionist styles of economics – questions which are happily beyond my competence and present scope.

Woods argues, reasonably, that the Church can teach on the "moral significance" of "economic phenomena", but not on matters pertaining to the technical findings of economics – as the Church can decree that church buildings should be long-lasting and solidly constructed, but not what materials and techniques will best achieve this. (Of course, no such limitations apply to Woods himself, so he regularly interrupts this reasoned critique with the equivalent of "besides, everyone knows sandstone gothic is the way to go!")

This view leads him to reject an alarming proportion of the content of CST – or at least of encyclicals: *Populorum Progressio* is described as

this is uncontroversial: where the teaching authority of the Church is exercised within its legitimate purview, then that takes precedence over any view from other disciplines. But the question is, what is its legitimate purview?

Surprisingly, neither writer spends much time on the traditional view that the Church's teaching authority is limited to matters of faith and morals – though Woods apparently assumes this when he asserts that empirical statements and cause-and-effect relationships are not matters of faith-and-morals.

(I am assuming, as Woods and Storck seem to, that matters of faith are not relevant here, and that Church teachings on economics are based on morality. It is true that at least one contributor to the above-mentioned symposium criticises economists for a deficient understanding of human nature, but it seems to me that one does not look to economics for a complete theory of human nature, and "economic man" is only an attempt to explain economic behaviour.)

Storck sees any limitations as largely self-imposed: “it is the Church Herself which sets the limits to her teaching”, implying that the Church could expand its ambit if it chose. He argues that a number of statements in this area are examples of the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium. In support of this position, he argues that Popes certainly thought they had the right to make pronouncements on economics, and criticises Woods for claiming that

...a subject [economics], whose conclusions are based merely on human reasoning, is able to trump teachings which more than one pope claimed were a part of his legitimate teaching office.

In the area of economics, the Church’s role and competence are severely circumscribed

Storck cites *Quadragesimo Anno* 41–42, in which Pius XI refers to the principle established by Leo XIII that it is “our right and our duty to deal authoritatively with social and economic problems”. But to his credit he also cites the qualification that this authority applies not to technical matters, but to “all those which have a bearing on moral conduct”.

So if both agree that the Church can pronounce on economic morality but not on technical matters, what’s the argument about?

What’s the beef

Mainly, I suspect, about how to treat statements that contain elements of both. This turns in part on whether those elements should be treated as separate, or combined. Here our authors appear to take opposite views.

Storck says that “economic actions

are intimately involved with ethics”, quoting *Quadragesimo Anno* again to the effect that economic activity is not independent of moral discipline. He says that

...although the Church does not claim the authority to set forth the correct principles of economics... inevitably the papal social encyclicals make use of certain economic principles and modes of analysis which imply a certain understanding of how an economy operates...

I suspect therefore that he would take the view that a statement with a conclusion in economic morality, even if it involved a premise in economic

theory, should be considered as an integrated whole and would fall thus within the Church’s teaching authority.

On the basis of this exchange, it would seem that Woods’ view is that “technical” economics is concerned with what is (the “positive”), morality is concerned with what one ought to do (the “normative”), and never the twain shall meet. Applications of technical economics, like applications of ballistics or nuclear physics, have moral implications, but propositions (in any of these disciplines) about what will happen if we do x, are morally neutral.

(Unfortunately, given its importance, neither addresses the question directly.) So can we separate positive technical statements from normative moral teaching?

It depends whether we’re speaking of intrinsic or extrinsic morality.

Statements about the intrinsic morality of an action (whether it’s moral or immoral in itself) can be made independently of any technical or positive statements about the world. However statements about the extrinsic morality of actions depend on real-world knowledge.

So which are we dealing with here?

To answer this I’d like to go back to our authors. In response to Storck’s argument that social scientists who claim their findings invalidate Church teachings would not be taken seriously, Woods says that a sociologist advocating abortion to limit family size would not be analogous to his recommending free wage agreements, because there is nothing intrinsically immoral about the latter. Storck counters that this is begging the question.

Both astray

Here I think both go astray (partly because the abortion example shifts the focus onto intrinsic morality).

Storck glosses over “intrinsically”. His “question-begging” claim implies that free wage agreements may be intrinsically immoral, but he doesn’t really argue this. But Woods is distracted into arguing (as an economist) that free wage agreements are extrinsically good. So neither focusses on the key question of what the Church can say about the extrinsic morality of economic actions.

It seems self-evident that employees and employers agreeing terms doesn’t make this an immoral arrangement. (Nor a moral one: it is good or bad extrinsically, according to its effects.)

In fact it’s hard to imagine an economic act that would be intrinsically immoral, unless it were undertaken with deliberate malice – say, intentionally defrauding the labourer of his hire.

(Clearly it is wrong to buy or sell recreational heroin, or the services of a hit man. But the moral objection is to the commodity, not the economic arrangement.)

An analysis of the extrinsic morality of an action must consider, implicitly or explicitly, the expected consequences, and the likelihood and moral character (good, bad or indifferent) of each.

With economic actions, additional complications arise when the Church seeks to make authoritative (not to mention hypothetically infallible) pronouncements, including (but not limited to) the fact that identifying consequences can take us beyond morality into technical economics.

Consequences

These consequences may be obvious, as Woods implies, say in the case of an individual transaction – but it's not hard to think of counter-examples. If I buy these cheap joggers made in a third-world country, I'll be more likely to exercise (good), have more money to donate to charity (good) or spend on beer (neutral?); contribute to that country's economy (good) at the expense of ours (bad); encourage employing children at low wages (bad) meaning they won't be in school (bad) or begging (good - though giving to beggars is also good) – and what about the carbon footprint?

Even if we could agree on the probability and moral character of each consequence, we still need to assess their relative importance: how many children missing out on education balance one rescued from beggary? Clearly we can't specify rules, much less authoritative ones. The "common good" and "the greatest good of the greatest number" are useful guidelines in the abstract, but of little use in the hard cases.

In fact CST is largely concerned not with individuals' economic decisions,

but with rules and economic systems. Here another, often-ignored level of complexity arises. If an individual has an obligation to pay a fair price for commodity, does the state have a right or duty to determine or set that price? Is it the same for all buyers and all sellers?

Prudential judgement

This becomes more complex again at the level of national or international level economic policy. Politicians argue interminably about these, and not simply through ignoble motives. Post-lapsarian human wisdom is limited, and prudential judgements will differ on the basis of personality, experience, available information – factors that may be blameless, unconscious and ineradicable. Indeed, the "right" answer may be not merely unknown but indeterminate.

My conclusion is that, especially in the area of economics, the Church's role and competence are severely circumscribed. The Church can pronounce on intrinsic evil – and intrinsic virtue. But with extrinsic morality, the Church is largely restricted to adumbrating principles, and the factors to be taken into consideration. In some circumstances, it may be reasonable to say "if such-and-such an action led, as some aver, to the following consequences which are clearly bad, and if there are no offsetting benefits, then that action would be wrong". Could such a statement be made infallibly? Perhaps, in theory. But I can't quite get my head around the idea of a conditional infallible statement.

In the next edition I hope to consider this tentative conclusion in relation to *Caritas in Veritate*, and a few statements from other encyclicals, and see how it holds up.

Russia - continued from page 16

Hilarion: Apart from the issues of militant secularism, liberalism and relativism, it should, in my view, concentrate on various aspects of family and sexual ethics, as well as on bioethical questions. The Catholic Church has already made its official position on family, marriage, abortion, contraception, euthanasia, cloning etc. known to the world, so have some Orthodox Churches, notably the Russian Orthodox Church in its 'Bases of the Social Conception.' But where is a united position?

I believe that the modern battle between traditional Christianity (by which I mean primarily the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches) on the one hand and secularism, liberalism and relativism on the other is primarily centered round the question of values. It is not a theological argument, because it is not the existence of God that is debated: it is the existence of an absolute moral norm, on which human life should be founded, that is put into question. The contest has an anthropological character, and it is the present and future of humanity that is at stake.

By defending life, marriage and procreation, by struggling against legalization of contraception, abortion and euthanasia, against recognition of homosexual unions as equal to marital ones, against libertinage in all forms, Catholics and Orthodox are engaged in a battle for survival of the European civilization, of European peoples, of Europe as such. Let us unite our efforts and form a common front of traditional Christianity in order to protect Europe from being irrevocably devoured by secularism, liberalism and relativism.

My church

At the end of the evening, Hilarion asked us if we would like to go see his



church, the Church of Our Lady, Joy of All Who Sorrow.

We said we would be delighted to go, though we were concerned that it might be too late, as it was almost midnight.

“It’s never too late to go to church,” Hilarion said. And so we went through the streets of Moscow in the grey evening, and just before midnight reached his church.

Academy

Alfeyev had to call the church guardian to open the gate for him, and we went in. On these grounds, he wishes to construct an academy for theologians, a theological school for Russian Orthodoxy.

The location is remarkable, only about a five-minute walk from Red Square. I asked Alfeyev to show me how far away it was, and we ducked around a corner. “There is St. Basil’s Cathedral,” he said, pointing to onion domes at the end of the street, in the gap between two rows of buildings. “Red Square is just there.” I snapped a photo but it was dark so you can hardly see St. Basil’s, but it is there at the end of the street.

We then went inside the church. Hilarion venerated an icon of Our Lady, Joy of All Who Sorrow, and invited us to do so as well. “This is a wonder-working icon,” he said. “It is one of the most famous of all Russia.”

In Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Christianity, “Joy of all who Sorrow” is a title given to the *Theotokos* (Mary, the mother of Jesus). Many Orthodox parishes are named “Joy of all who Sorrow” and the specific commemoration of the Joy of all who Sorrow is on July 23, on Orthodox calendars.

Music - continued from page 22

The following is a sample chapter [edited and re-translated by *Oriens*]:

VI. SACRED MUSIC AND LITURGICAL CHANT

Holy Father, the Church today has an opportunity to recover its high magisterial role in the field of sacred music, and especially in the field of liturgical chant, which necessarily must conform to the measure of what is “good” and “right” in order that it might be intimately connected with the liturgy ...

Clean up

In the ancient history of Christianity the dialectical relationship between sacred music and secular music often prompted the Church to intervene to “clean out building of the Roman liturgy” (an expression explicitly used by many popes) and to rid it of secularist intrusions carried by music itself into the temple of worship. With the gradual development of music and musical technique over the centuries, these influences had become increasingly severe, profane in nature, and justified as an art for its own sake.

From the time of the Apostolic Constitution *Docta Sanctorum* issued by Pope John XXII (1324), the magisterium has always indicated the righteous way of understanding music in the service of worship. While gradually adopting new techniques compatible with the liturgy, the Church has always and consistently advocated, up to Vatican II and beyond, Gregorian chant as the primal root and source of inspiration for liturgical music. Simply on account of its nobility, the chant is the highest form of music - its anonymity, its genuinely meta-historical aesthetic and its sensitive universality enable it to embody perfectly the Catholic liturgical ideal.

We cannot now definitely establish musical forms and styles *a priori*, but the recovery of Gregorian chant, good polyphonic and organ music (inspired by the Gregorian) – ancient, modern and contemporary – would certainly, after decades of absolute shock and relativism in music, recall the liturgical “words” that the Catholic tradition in art and music has given us for centuries. This body of music has worked like ... veritable paving stones of the Catholic Faith because it was founded upon sensible data, endowed with truth and beauty, and was always devoid of that sterile, mannered and archaeological intellectualism ... that was the precursor of liturgical reform in the late twentieth century.

Maybe in the arts devoted to the service of worship, music is the strongest ... and also the more delicate because, by its nature and unlike the other arts, it requires a *tertium medium* between the author and the viewer, or the interpreter. For this reason the Catholic Church should take better care of music than of other arts and should, as happened in the past, urge the education of both authors and interpreters. Certainly a much greater educational effort must be made today than was called for in the Middle Ages, in the Baroque period or in the XIX Century, because today society is completely secularised. However, a clear knowledge is needed today of the fundamentals so that the musicians – once endowed with the needed expertise – can recover the *sensus ecclesiae* together with the *sensus fidei*.

Obituary - continued from page 21

His distinctive approach to Thomas Aquinas is most evident in his supple account of natural law (see *Ethica Thomistica*, for example), and in his defense of natural theology in the text of his Gifford Lectures, published as *Characters in Search of their Author*, the thesis of which Ralph states thus: “For us it is all but inevitable that, however momentarily, we feel ourselves to be

P. Grace Professor of Medieval Studies; he was also director of the Maritain Center and of the Medieval Institute.

Early on at Notre Dame, he began, in addition to his teaching and philosophical work, to write fiction. The story of how he made the transition from wanting to be a writer to becoming one is illuminating. After a time in which he haphazardly polished off and sent out short stories

Bouchercon Lifetime Achievement Award for mystery writing.

Notre Dame

Ralph’s life and career will always be enmeshed with the university he loved, Our Lady’s University. He was of course deeply chagrined at the direction of the University. The concerns about Notre Dame’s Catholic identity have become very public in the past few years with the administration’s decisions to elevate the tawdry *Vagina Monologues* to the status of great art and to award an honorary doctorate of laws to a pro-abortion president. Before all that, Ralph objected to the premature firing of Coach Tyrone Willingham, in an *New York Times* op-ed piece “The Firing Irish,” and to the unseemly image of a president and priest chasing down potential coaches on airport tarmacs in the dead of night. Even prior to that, Ralph objected to hiring practices that focused exclusively on “academic” criteria and rendered irrelevant knowledge of, and sympathy for, the Catholic faith and intellectual tradition. For Ralph, the accelerating abandonment of things Catholic at Notre Dame was the direct result of a craven quest for success understood in conventional, and often quite secular, terms.

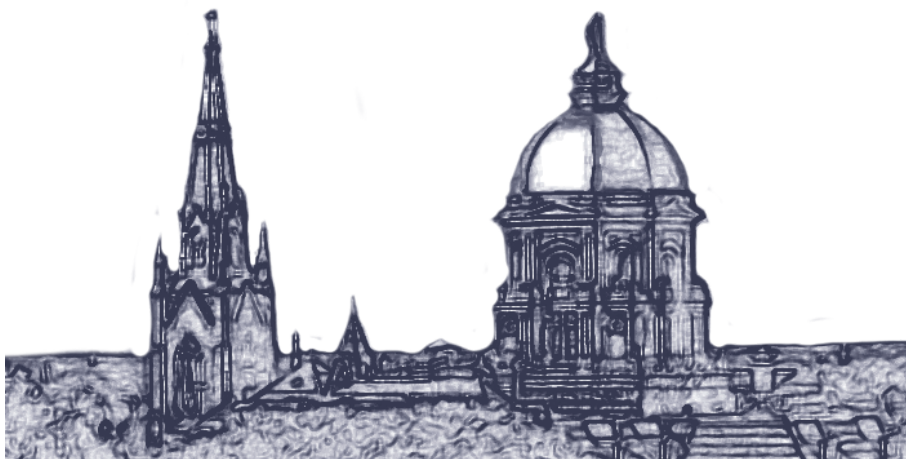
It is common to say that Notre Dame’s motto is “God, Country, Notre Dame,” but Ralph was quick to remind us that the official motto is “vita, dulcedo et spes”—words meaning “life, sweetness, and hope” from the Latin Marian prayer, *Salve Regina*. How fitting that Ralph’s last book, published just months ago, is *Dante and the Blessed Virgin*. Again, what he said of Jacques Maritain is equally true of Ralph. Teacher of teachers, he was a “model of the Christian philosopher, of the Thomist, both by what he taught and what he was.”

“No one owes you a reading”

- Ralph McInerny

part of a vast cosmic drama and our thoughts turn to the author, not merely of our roles, but of our existence. Natural theology is one version of that quest.” Ralph’s philosophical work flourished at the University of Notre Dame, to which he moved in 1955, after receiving his doctorate at Laval under the great Thomist Charles DeKoninck and teaching for one year at Creighton. His first office at Notre Dame was in the administration building, the Golden Dome. When he and a colleague became intrigued by the presence of an old safe, they opened it, and, amid the clutter, discovered a draft of a novel written by Knute Rockne. At Notre Dame, he held an endowed chair as the Michael

for publication, only to receive rejection letters, he decided that he would write daily over the next year. If nothing were accepted for publication, he would take that as a sign it was not meant to be. So, every evening, after he had put his children to bed, he would repair to his unfinished basement and stand, not sit, before his typewriter pecking away from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. On the wall in front of him, he had posted these words in bold, “No One Owes You a Reading.” He eventually published some short stories and then had a breakthrough in 1969 with *The Priest*, a work that became a bestseller. He wrote more than eighty novels and received the



University of Notre Dame, Indiana: McInerny’s great love.

Latin ... as I please

Never studied Latin? Well, **David Daintree*** writes, you probably know more Latin already than you think you do.

We sometimes hear people say that Latin is a difficult language, but it's no more difficult than any other: children of two or three start to lisp their mother's tongue with equal facility, regardless of whether that tongue is Latin, English, Sanskrit or Chinese. But it is true to say that the script of some languages is more difficult than others, and that the structure, too, may be particularly taxing to learn as an adult when one is transiting from English to a very different type of language. An English speaker must first unlearn a lot before he can start to learn Latin.

We can make that process easier for ourselves, however, by trying to identify the similarities, but in order to identify those similarities we first have to look analytically at our own language. It is surprising how many English speakers have no idea that English has rules of spelling and grammar, a working subjunctive, extant accusative case endings, strong and weak verbs. You don't believe me? Let's start to take a look.

In this issue we shall confine ourselves to verbs. I always tell my students that they cannot avoid the necessity of learning the three principal parts of every Latin verb - the present tense, the past (or perfect) tense and the past participle. What a burden that is! How unlike English! But no, exactly the same situation applies in English. To use the English verb correctly you have to know, first of all, whether a verb is strong or weak; whether it forms its past tense and its past participle by vowel mutation (strong verbs), or by adding the suffix *-ed*

(weak verbs). Having done that you then have to learn the three principal parts.

	Present	Past	Past Participle
Strong Verbs			
Ring	Rang	Rung	Rung
Swim	Swam	Swum	Swum
Do	Did	Done	Done
Go	Went	Gone	Gone
Speak	Spoke	Spoken	Spoken
Buy	Bought	Bought	Bought
See	Saw	Seen	Seen
Weak Verbs			
Cook	Cooked	Cooked	Cooked
Talked	Talked	Talked	Talked
Irregular Verbs			
Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit

What do we notice? Firstly, that English is not as simple as we thought. Secondly, that even among the strong verbs (*buy*, for example) the past tense and the past participle can be identical, and that in weak verbs they are always identical. Children have to learn these differences and of course they make mistakes, as all children do in all languages. I *swimmed* across the river and *seed* the other side, says the four year-old learning to master his own language. We have come to one of the major obstacles that Anglophones have to struggle past in order to learn Latin: they find it extremely difficult to grasp the great difference between the past tense of a verb and the past participle (actually an adjective) which is formed from it.

So for example in the two sentences *I cooked the meat and I ate cooked meat* I am using the word *cooked* in two completely different ways, firstly as a verb, secondly as an adjective. This

is crystal-clear in Latin (or French, or Italian), because the forms are utterly different, but it's seriously and confusingly obscure in English. If we know there is a problem, however, we can get on top of it, which is precisely why I am investing so much space, in a column about Latin, to English grammar.

If you're actively learning Latin, open your dictionary at any page and pick out a few verbs. Notice how the principal parts are set out and how distinct they are. But notice, too, how obligingly regular and common the first conjugation verbs are. There are thousands of them, all following the pattern *amo - amavi - amatus-a-um*. That's not much harder, is it, than adding *-ed* to the end of English weak verbs, but it does have the merit of distinguishing clearly between the past tense and the past participle. Good for Latin!

One final remark. I speak of three principal parts, but most grammars will tell you there are four. I'm not short-changing you, just trying to keep things as simple as possible. The fourth part, the infinitive, is the present stem plus a special ending. I tend to lump the present stem and the infinitive together, just as English does, to stress the unity rather than the diversity.

Next time, proof that the subjunctive exists in English!

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