

RELIGION AND PUBLIC LIFE

Bill Donohue

As a sociologist and a Catholic activist, I was anxious to read *American Grace* by Harvard's Robert D. Putnam and Notre Dame's David E. Campbell. I was not disappointed: it is the most impressive volume on religion and public life to be published in many years. The subtitle of the book, *How Religion Divides and Unites Us*, accurately conveys the theme.

The findings are culled from large-scale surveys, the results of which have been compared to the findings of other prominent surveys; there is also some anecdotal material, drawn from congregational profiles, that bring the data to life. After reviewing the religious landscape over the past half century, the authors write, "Perhaps the most noticeable shift is how Americans have become polarized along religious lines." By that they do not mean that people of different faiths find themselves at odds more than ever; rather, they are speaking to the religious-secular divide. Every day I go to work I find plenty of evidence they are right.

American society has witnessed several periods of religious change, beginning in the 1960s. Unlike the Fifties, a decade where religious participation was at its highest point, the Sixties was a period of secular revolt. Indeed, it was a time of cultural convulsions: challenges to traditional interpretations of morality were commonplace, often crudely expressed. This triggered a backlash which was made evident with the rise of religious conservatism, reaching a peak under the presidency of Ronald Reagan. More recently, we have seen a secular surge. The culture war, it seems plain, is up for grabs.

It has long been true that young people tend to drift away from religion (at least until they marry and have families), but today's young people tend to be more secular-minded than previous generations, owing in part to their more secular-minded boomer parents. They are decidedly more friendly to gay rights, although they are less committed to the abortion-rights movement than previous generations. Overall, Americans today are much less likely to say that religion is "very important" to them than was true of men and women in the Fifties; church attendance is down, as well.

Much has been said lately about the “nones,” i.e., those who claim they have no religious affiliation. Here is where Putnam and Campbell are at their best. The “nones” constitute about 17 percent of the population, making them larger than mainline Protestants (14 percent). But unlike those energetic atheists whom I debate, these “nones” really have no cause for celebration: “most of the nones are not necessarily hard-core secularists,” they say, and, in fact, “self-identified atheists and agnostics comprise a vanishingly small proportion of the U.S. population.”

So who are these “nones” if not the unbelievers? For the most part, they are people who still believe in God, but for a whole host of reasons do not choose to affiliate with any organized religion. That this has something to do with the cultural preoccupation with radical autonomy seems plain, but, no matter, it is not a good sign for those of us who hold to traditional beliefs. On the other hand, while this group is fertile pickings for militant secularists, the fact that most of them are not swelling the ranks of the Secular Humanist Society cannot be overlooked.

Many of the findings in this book find support with previous studies. Women are more religious than men; the poor gravitate to religion more than the wealthy; blacks take their religion more seriously than whites; Latinos are now prominently represented among the ranks of the faithful; Americans across the board are more liberal on the question of pre-marital sex than ever before; and support for abortion and homosexuality split cleanly on the religious-secular divide. This religious chasm is also manifested politically as Republicans are more religious friendly, and the Democrats more secular friendly.

This is an accurate profile of Americans, both past and present. A more contentious issue is the public role of religious Americans and their secular counterparts.

The data drive the authors to maintain that “religious Americans are, in fact, more generous neighbors and more conscientious citizens than their secular counterparts.” Yes, religious men and women volunteer more often, giving more of their time tending to youth, the elderly and the needy than secularists, and this includes time spent volunteering in secular institutions, not just religious ones. They are also more generous: nearly a third of the most secular 20 percent

of the population give nothing to charity, while only 6 percent of the most religious 20 percent are this stingy.

When it comes to measuring empathy and altruism, we learn that religious Americans "score significantly higher" than their secular brethren. They are also more participatory: people of faith are much more likely to join community organizations, and "even professional and labor groups." The evidence suggests, say the social scientists, that "religiously observant Americans are more civic and in some respects simply 'nicer.'" Indeed, they find that those who are religious are also happier than others. The work by Arthur C. Brooks, now the president of the American Enterprise Institute, found much the same in all categories.

The authors take issue with Brooks, however, by questioning his contention that religious conservatives are more generous than other Americans. They say it is the religious status, not the ideological one, that explains this phenomenon. In fairness to Brooks, however, he found that "liberal families earn on average 6 percent more per year than conservative families, and conservative families [give] more than liberal families within every income class, from poor to middle class to rich." Similarly, Republicans give more than Democrats.

If there is one finding I would quarrel with it is the conclusion that secular Americans are more tolerant than religious Americans. Putnam and Campbell correctly contend that most survey data point to this conclusion, but the problem is most of the studies share the same methodological bias.

In 1991, I published an article in a popular magazine assessing the history of tolerance surveys. Beginning with the work of Samuel A. Stouffer in the 1950s, it is true that most surveys show that religious Americans are less tolerant. In general, the most tolerant Americans are purported to be well-educated, liberal, young, urbanite and male; they are also more likely to live in the northern states and have no religious affiliation. But are they really more tolerant, or just more indifferent?

Tolerance means "to put up with"; indifference means it doesn't matter. The former may be a virtue, though tolerance for intolerance is hardly meritorious. Indifference, on the other hand, bears no respect as a civic virtue. Only one study

that I encountered picked up on this difference, and that was the work of John L. Sullivan, James Piereson and George E. Marcus, *Political Tolerance and American Democracy*.

Sullivan et al. understand that real tolerance exists only when there is a conflict with other values. For example, the problem with most tolerance studies is that they rarely pose questions that challenge verities held by those who are more liberal and secular in their outlook. For example, it stands to reason that those who treasure a core set of traditional moral values will be less sympathetic to the rights of those who seek to mock them than secularists would be. We just saw this played out with the reaction of secularists to the ants-on-the-crucifix video at the Smithsonian: when we complained of their intolerance, we were labeled censors, or worse.

In the 1980s, Herbert McClosky and Alida Brill reviewed tolerance surveys from the late 1970s. In *Dimensions of Tolerance*, they scored as intolerant those who said marital infidelity was wrong. The implication, of course, is that society would profit by having more Americans demonstrating tolerance for adultery. In fact, they have, and the social consequences are just as evident.

A free society depends on a moral consensus: if there isn't general agreement on what constitutes right and wrong, then it is a sure bet that government will establish the moral ordinates. Therefore, while social norms that are tightly drawn may be inimical to freedom, constant attempts to make them more elastic are fraught with danger. That this should be done under the banner of tolerance make the results all the more pernicious.

On p. 1 of *American Grace*, the authors say that when the Cecil B. DeMille classic, "The Ten Commandments," came out in the 1950s, monuments of the Ten Commandments were donated to communities across the country by De Mille and the Fraternal Order of Eagles. No one blinked. They correctly observe that if such an undertaking were to take place today, it would be "the subject of litigation all the way to the Supreme Court." So true and so revealing.

This anecdote speaks volumes. Despite what the pundits have said, there is very little evidence that over the past half century traditionalists have sought to turn America into a theocracy. But there is plenty of evidence showing how civil

libertarians, multiculturalists and organized atheists have sought to drive religious expression from the public square. Their intolerance is palpable.

The same is true in the schools: textbooks have been stripped of their religious content and gross intolerance has been shown to our Judeo-Christian heritage. At the level of higher education, just last year a professor from the University of Illinois was fired (he was later reinstated) for the crime of explaining in an e-mail to an inquiring student what the natural law teaching of the Catholic Church is on homosexuality. "On America's elite campuses, today," writes Yale professor Stephen Carter, "it is perfectly acceptable for professors to use their classrooms to attack religion, to mock it, to trivialize it, and to refer to those whom faith truly matters as dupes, and dangerous on top of it." I have said it before and I will say it again: there is more tolerance for dissent within the Church than exists on college campuses.

Yes, there are militant religious fundamentalists who are just as intolerant, but the difference is that tolerance surveys are not likely to tap the intolerance of militant secular fundamentalists. There is a secular and political hue to these surveys that reflects the ideological predilections of those who devise them.

Aside from this reservation, *American Grace* is a book that is rich with information and analysis on the status of religion and public life in America. The authors have given us a book that is as readable as it is erudite.

THE ENDURING LEGACY OF JOHN PAUL II

Ronald J. Rychlak

George Weigel's magnificent biography of Pope John Paul II, *Witness to Hope*, was published in 1999. Knowing that the pope's story was not over, Weigel promised that he would one

day write a completion. This is it, and it is a powerful and welcome compliment to the earlier biography, but it is much more than that. This book stands on its own and gives the reader an authentic sense of history, of Karol Woytyla (John Paul II) and his place in history, and of the Catholic Church and her teaching.

The first part of *The End and the Beginning*, "Nemesis," is a riveting account of John Paul II's battles with Soviet Communism. The second section, "Kenosis," offers an unforgettable portrait of John Paul II's efforts to spread Catholic teachings, from his early years until his physical demise. The third section, "Metanoia," examines John Paul's inner motivation and his place in history. Overall, the book provides history, biography, theology, and much drama.

The section on Soviet actions against the Church is particularly exciting and unexpected. Many of the years covered here were also covered in *Witness to Hope*, but Weigel has new sources of information, so he has new stories to tell, and he tells them very well.

Drawing on documents from the archives of the Soviet KGB, East Germany's Stasi, and Poland's SB, Weigel shows that the communist regimes were even more duplicitous, petty, and evil than most people had suspected, and the Church was a favorite target. Weigel writes: "Among the enemies of Soviet communism, real and imagined, none was more feared by the KGB and its predecessor than the Catholic Church." This fear of the Church spread to other intelligence agencies across the Soviet bloc.

Poland and the pope's Polish identity is an important part of this story. Weigel explains: "The Catholic Church, which suffered terribly during World War II, had emerged with its honor intact and its historic role as the repository of Polish national identity and memory confirmed." After World War II, Pope Pius XII took a hard line against communism, and the Soviets brutally repressed the Polish Church and Church leaders (especially Bishop—later Cardinal —Stefan Wyszyński). Weigel calls Poland under the Soviets "a country in which men of unblemished honor and extraordinary heroism could be convicted as traitors and murdered by communist thugs."

Shortly before the future pope was made a bishop in 1958, the Soviets ratcheted up their campaign against the Church. Soviet agents monitored Bishop Woytyla for years. They did not,

however, originally see him as a serious threat. After all, he was just a poet and an artist. They did not know the heart or the future of this young Polish priest.

Within months of his election, John Paul II ignited a revolution of conscience in Poland, and it ultimately led to the collapse of European communism and the demise of the Soviet Union. Of course, much of this was covered in *Witness to Hope*. New to this book, however, are many of the actions and reactions of the communist authorities. Efforts to suppress the Church in communist countries were rampant.

Soviet bloc intelligence agencies placed spies, disguised as priests or students, into many churches. Even the Eastern Orthodox Metropolitan of Leningrad, one of the presidents of the World Council of Churches, was a KGB agent. Spies were not only in Polish churches during Woytyla's years as bishop, they were in the Vatican itself during his pontificate. These agents tried to influence political policies and theological doctrine (especially with liberation theology).

In chronicling this secret war between the Vatican and the Soviet Union, Weigel reveals the astonishing lengths to which the Soviet bloc was willing to go to undermine John Paul II. He offers little new information regarding Soviet involvement in the 1981 assassination attempt, but he does note that most Poles and many close friends of the pope felt that the Soviets were not completely innocent. He also makes clear that Western democracies did not look very hard; they were afraid of what they would find.

One fascinating story relates to an effort to smear the pope's reputation. Using their counterfeiting experts, in 1983 Polish intelligence agents crafted a phony diary purportedly written by a former lover of Cardinal Woytyla. They used the identity of a woman he would have known but who had since passed away. The plan was to leave the diary hidden in an apartment where it would be found during a police raid. Western reporters would assume that it was legitimate and report on it as such.

As it turned out, however, the agent assigned to plant the fake diary got drunk and was involved in an automobile accident. In an effort to avoid arrest and detention, he explained who he was and exposed the plan. One can only wonder what would have happened had the pope's credibility been damaged early in his pontificate by a disinformation scheme

like this.

Soviet bloc intelligence agents also conducted phony letter-writing campaigns against the pope, and they sought out "malleable publishers in capitalist and developing countries" to damage the Church's reputation by producing books about the Inquisition, the Vatican's alleged relations with Nazism, and the Church's wealth. These hatchet jobs were often complimented with blackmail campaigns against Vatican personnel.

An interesting issue for students of Vatican diplomacy is the relationship between the late pope and his Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Cassaroli. In 1979 John Paul made Cassaroli a Cardinal and named him Secretary of State even though they took very different approaches to communism. Cassaroli was the principal architect of the Vatican's policy of Ostpolitik—cautious reconciliation with communist governments. John Paul was more directly confrontational. Despite Soviet assurances to the contrary, he knew that it was impossible to have "communism with a human face."

Sometimes Cassaroli was afraid that the pope's actions would lead to bloodshed. It didn't. Weigel credits the pope for both his effective use of Cassaroli's skills and for playing a pivotal role in the collapse of European communism. There are those who would dispute this analysis (arguing that communism would eventually have collapsed under its own weight), but Weigel makes a persuasive case that John Paul ignited a "revolution of conscience" with his nine day trip to Poland in 1979. It is hard to deny that the trip was a trigger for the collapse. "And of course: no John Paul, no nine days."

In the second part of the book, Weigel brings us very close to the man Karol Woytyla and allows us to see him and know him as no other author could do. Weigel had years of incomparable access to John Paul II and many people in his inner circle. He puts that access to good use, showing us why the late pope has been dubbed "John Paul the Great."

From his early charge: "Be not Afraid," to the elderly man unable even to speak, Weigel shows us a real human being—a genius with a sense of humor and a warrior with a tender heart. His kenosis (self emptying) powerfully contradicted the modern culture of narcissism and inspired millions to live not for themselves but for others.

In these final years, John Paul dealt with many difficult issues: the sex scandal, science and life issues, calls for his resignation, the European Union's denial of its Christian heritage, Islamic terrorism, and the war in Iraq, just to name a few. All of these issues presented challenges for the Church and for the elderly man who led it.

There were also significant calls for liturgical reform. When Pope John XXIII opened the Second Vatican Council in 1962, he expected it to ignite a new Pentecost. Instead, the liturgical reform of Vatican II "was followed rather rapidly...by diminished Mass attendance throughout Europe and North America and deteriorated sense of Eucharistic amazement." Pope John Paul tried to counter these forces, at least in part, with the Great Jubilee of 2000.

Between the opening of the door at St. Peter's Basilica on December 24, 1999 and the end of the Jubilee year, Pope John Paul II presided over numerous ceremonies, and he made a historic pilgrimage to Israel. On that five-day visit, the pope visited holy sites and met with Israel's political leaders and chief rabbis. While there, he blessed Israel, expressed support for a Palestinian homeland, and offered an apology to God for failings of the Church. It was widely regarded as another triumph for the aging pope.

Weigel chronicles the tumultuous last years as the once avid sportsman gradually succumbs to Parkinson's and old age. He details John Paul's remarkable courage and resilience as the eyes of the world were upon him. Through his own suffering, he bore witness to the inherent dignity of the human person and came to embody the trials of billions of people across the globe.

After a moving account of John Paul's final moments, Weigel turns to the third section of his book in which he provides an in-depth analysis of John Paul's inner strength and considers his historical importance. No one will be surprised to find that Weigel considers John Paul to have had "the most consequential pontificate in centuries."

John Paul once wrote: "They try to understand me from the outside. But I can only be understood from the inside." That is probably true, but Weigel gives us the best description that can be had from the outside. Karol Wojtyla cared little for material possessions or comforts. He was nourished by

prayer—a “lifelong dialogue of faith.” Weigel calls it *metanoia*—a process of repentance or penance leading to a change of heart from sin to the practice of virtue. This gave John Paul the strength he exhibited throughout his life.

John Paul left behind a legacy of ideas too long to list, but Weigel addresses many, including his defense of reason, teachings on sexual ethics, and views on interreligious relations. Weigel, a just war theorist who disagreed with John Paul on the American military operation in Iraq, feels that the late pope should have done more to bring that doctrine in line with the realities of modern warfare.

The End and the Beginning is a fitting completion to Weigel’s *Witness to Hope*. Taken together, these books serve as the authoritative chronicle and comprehensive assessment of John Paul II’s life.

Ron Rychlak is the author of the revised and expanded volume Hitler, the War, and the Pope. He is a professor at the University of Mississippi School of Law and a member of the Catholic League’s Board of Advisors.

VIRTUES FOR EVERYONE

Laura E. Finnegan

***A Guy’s Guide to the Good Life: Virtues for Men* by Robert Lockwood. St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2009.**

We are all looking for answers to the same, age-old questions: how can I live my life better? How can I be a better person? It seems we have found a short, enjoyable, and educational volume of suggestions. In Robert Lockwood’s book, *A Guy’s Guide to the Good Life: Virtues for Men*, he mixes his personal life experiences, a bit of history, and a touch of Scripture to lovingly lecture young men on the virtues of how to live

“the good life,” or in other words, a life of meaning and purpose.

A book on virtues at first seems rather textbook, boring almost—define the virtue, give an example, suggest we live our lives accordingly. However, Lockwood’s memoir-like account gives us much more than that. It gives us great insight into a life well-lived: one of love and joy, of fond memories, and not-so-fond memories, of faith, manhood, fatherhood, but most of all, of happiness. Through these memories he illustrates how he has lived, and continues to live, his life virtuously, and how those virtues have led him to true happiness. He adds some history, biblical events, and occasionally Dante’s approach on each virtue, giving an educational lesson while mixing in his interesting, and often funny stories.

The book is organized simply, comprised of seven chapters split into two parts. The first part focuses on the cardinal virtues—prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice, while the second part is dedicated to the theological virtues—faith, hope, and charity.

Before he begins, Lockwood makes a few brief notes in a Foreword where he addresses, rather succinctly, what “the good life” is all about—happiness. He advises that we love our neighbor as we love ourselves, because in the end, we all have the same thing, which is nothing, if not love. He relishes that no amount of money, sex, or power (in no particular order) will ever make you truly happy; they will only satisfy you for a time being, because no feeling of happiness can ever equate to the true happiness generated from love, divine love.

Each chapter is introduced with a definition of the virtue about to be discussed. Prudence, we are told, is the virtue of divorcing personal desire from the judgment of whether an act is right or wrong. The discussion on prudence is opened by use of the example of his first-ever speeding ticket. He recalls, “Like every guy in the joint, I was convinced I was

an innocent man, a victim of circumstances.” The following day, after retracing his route, he realized he was in fact guilty of speeding, and deserving of the ticket he received.

His point: truth is available—we just have to find it, we must be in constant pursuit of the good. He quotes Frank Conroy, an American writer, who claimed that we could never know the whole truth of anything because, “all we know is what we think we know.” Living as Conroy says, without the constant pursuit of truth, gives way for the platform on which the “absurdity of life” lies. It rejects the need for God, the meaningfulness, and purposefulness of life. As Lockwood found when he searched deeper to find the truth behind his speeding ticket, there is always an avenue to truth, and we should make it the road most traveled.

The second chapter opens rather strongly, tugging at our heart strings with the story of Emily, a college basketball player who has cancer. Fortitude, as we learned, means firmness in the times of difficulty and constancy in the pursuit of the good. With fortitude, we face the fearful and live each day in hope. Emily most certainly lives fortuitously. Despite the fact that her wig (which hides her cancer-induced hair loss) has fallen off in the middle of the game—and that she doesn’t even seem to notice—she plays harder and stronger than most of her healthy teammates, determinedly foraging to the bitter end. Lockwood remembers that Emily played with such passion, strength, and courage that were it not for the missing wig he wouldn’t have believed his coach friend when he shared this sad information about his player. From this story we learn that living fortuitously is living with courage and bravery. It’s about never giving in to our weaknesses because when we do, we fail to be fortuitous.

Temperance, which is discussed in the third chapter, is one of the most important virtues one can follow. It teaches us to live our lives moderately, with balance. We must learn to rule our passions, and not let our passions rule us. We must

learn to prioritize. A light-hearted lesson from Lockwood comes in the form of a conversation he had with a friend at a baseball game. A die-hard fan, his buddy asks him how the Twins are doing. Lockwood quickly responds, "What do I care about the [Minnesota] Twins? I'm a Mets fan." After a moment, his friend turns and says, "I meant your twin grandkids." Moments like this are common in *Virtues for Men*, and they give it a raw value from a real-life perspective. Here we are supposed to understand that he is passionate about baseball, but he cannot let it consume him. We have to appreciate all aspects of life, and remember our parents' words, "everything in moderation!"

The discussion on justice is a rather powerful end to the total discussion of cardinal virtues. To live justly is to live by acting accordingly to our basic beliefs. It is to seek "the good" for all of God's creatures by creating harmony and peace. He reminds us that we should, "give unselfishly to the poor in the hardest of circumstances," something that Mother Teresa constantly taught us through example, "because [Christ] is in each and every one of them." To illustrate this, Lockwood remembers attending a New York Knicks basketball game as a child with his father. After the game they encountered a panhandler whose legs were missing from the knee down. Lockwood commented that he couldn't imagine living life without his legs, to which his father responded, "Legs don't make the man. You'd be surprised what you could live without." He ends the segment with a final thought, "Justice is the faith lived, no matter the conditions, no matter what appearance it might take on, no matter how the story ends in the human condition."

Faith marks the fifth chapter and the start of the discussion of theological virtues. Though he relates a few occurrences in his life to give an illusory definition, it is his frank statement on faith that sums the virtue up best. He says, "People today have a need for 'sense' and 'meaning' in their

lives, but they are lost because they no longer believe in truth, particularly religious truth." This point is made clearer when he says that years ago people, "accepted the basic principles of their faith," whereas, "today, the theory goes, religious doubt is the new intellectual standard." Faith, he says, is not a blind leap but rather, since it is based in God and from God, belief with certainty. He notes that although our faith is from God, it also requires us to grow, especially when understanding the truth. We must always be working at our faith because this is the only way to grow and wholly pursue the truth. The loss of traditional acceptance of faith in contemporary society will eventually derail our pursuit of the truth, and jeopardize our true happiness. We're reminded that faith is what binds us to God. And in faith, we will find happiness; after all, achieving true happiness is impossible without faith.

Hope, we learn, is having the confidence that God will never abandon us. It is the longing for the familiar, and the expectancy of future bliss. Lockwood begins the chapter with his first encounter with death as a boy—a little old lady who was a parishioner at his church had passed away. Being a young child he was confused as to where the woman had gone when he no longer saw her. He didn't understand when his mother told him the woman was now part of the "eternal celestial choir." Bemused, he asked his mother if the church would still be there even if she wouldn't be able to attend church. His mother responded, "The church will always be there." He ends the chapter with a reflection of an old man's funeral—the father of a dear friend. Towards the end of the funeral mass, he noticed a lonely Cheerio hiding underneath a pew. It was the remnants of Sunday Mass; a toddler had undoubtedly been persuaded to keep quiet with the "old Cheerios bribe." This meant that there was hope that the church would always be there, and the young folk were keeping that hope alive.

The final chapter of the book is a discussion on charity, the

virtue commonly referred to as love, the most important virtue of all. Love, especially divine love, is what makes this world go round because God is love. It frees us from the pains and sorrows in life. There are certainly touching moments in this chapter, ones that illustrate true love: the unbreakable bond between father and daughter, or the love of a dying mother caring for her dying son is included among them. It is moments like the time he drove through the night to be at his daughter's hospital bedside as she delivered twins, his first grandchildren, which identifies the type of love he is trying to illustrate—the kind life would be meaningless without. He closes with one final thought from the immortal words of Dante, "I felt my will and my desire impelled/ by the love that moves the sun and the other stars."

His memories, which seem abstract at first, always have an obvious message at the end. Each tale, whether it is from his personal life, the Bible, or from Dante, somehow seamlessly correlates to the description of the contending virtue. The common thread among all of the virtues is to live in constant pursuit of truth, the good. This pursuit is what gives each life purpose and brings us closer to true happiness and divine love. Happy, love-filled lives are proof that life is not absurd; each life has purpose, and it has meaning and value. It is when we do not live virtuously that our lives become meaningless, because they fail to pursue the good.

A Guy's Guide to the Good Life: Virtues for Men is a recommended read for all, not just young men. It is a soulful reflection of a happy life lived with love. It urges us to search inside ourselves to find happiness within, and to realize that truth and "the good" are the means to the ultimate end of happiness and love. Truth, we must remember, is always available, sometimes it just requires searching. We must never settle for mediocrity, because when we do so, we deny ourselves happiness. These lessons transcend age and gender, they are lessons we can all benefit from. Lockwood's

book is by no means groundbreaking, but it is a necessary and enjoyable read for all.

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THE DEFINITIVE WORK ON PIUS XII

Kenneth D. Whitehead

***Hitler, the War, and the Pope (Revised and Expanded)* by Ronald J. Rychlak. Our Sunday Visitor, 2010.**

University of Mississippi Professor of Law Ronald J. Rychlak published a book ten years ago with the same title as that shown above. This new book, just published, is presented ten years later as a “revised and expanded” version of the earlier book, and while it definitely is that, this bare description greatly understates the degree to which this new book now covers virtually every aspect of the Pope Pius XII question, and thus has been transformed into what must now be considered the definitive book on the subject. If you have this book, you have everything you might ever need to defend the record and reputation of the World War II head of the Catholic Church.

The earlier edition was already notable for the taking up and dealing with by means of well-documented facts and carefully thought-out arguments the unjustly criticized pontificate of Pope Pius XII and, in particular, in evaluating the pope’s reactions and behavior in the face of the holocaust against the Jews brought about by Hitler and the Nazis. As most people are aware, within about a half dozen years after the death of Pope Pius XII, questions began to be raised and accusations

made about the pope's behavior during World War II: the pope was allegedly passive and "silent" in the face of Adolph Hitler's "final solution" to the "Jewish problem"—which consisted, as nearly everybody also knows, in the well-known Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jews. Although nobody has ever explained how merely "speaking out" by anybody could ever possibly have stopped the Nazi juggernaut, Pope Pius XII was nevertheless blamed anyway. His failure to "speak out" in the way that the postwar critics who rose up against him thought he should have spoken out meant that for them he had actively *contributed* to the evil wrought by Hitler and the Nazis; he was somehow held to be complicit in Hitler's "final solution" and hence himself "guilty."

Once the pope's "guilt" was established in the public mind in this fashion, what the late Notre Dame Professor Ralph McInerny aptly called the "defamation" of Pius XII, got going in earnest and ballooned into the veritable anti-Pius "industry" that has lasted down to our own time. Book after book and study after study all supposedly established that the wartime pope had been given to cold diplomacy rather than caring concern; that he was perhaps himself anti-Semitic (or at least indifferent to Jewish suffering); that his hatred of Communism blinded him to the evils of Nazism; that his many years of service in Germany as a papal diplomat had made him uncritically pro-German; that he was only concerned with the security of the Church and of Catholics; that he was unduly fearful of retaliation against any action that might be taken by the Church; and that, in the end, perhaps, he was just simply a moral coward.

All of these allegations and others against the pope have now been carefully identified, dissected, and answered in this book by Professor Ronald Rychlak using citations, argumentation, and documentations which in the end are not just irrefutable but are overwhelming. It turns out that there never was any case against Pope Pius XII, none. As the rabbi

who contributes a Foreword to this book remarks, the “case” against Pius XII really consisted all along in “lies, slander, malice, and a desire to thwart justice.”

Professor Rychlak documents this in relentless detail. He has delved into virtually all of the allegations or suspicions that have been lodged against the pope; he has examined the evidence for them; and has provided the answers which should be persuasive to any fair-minded person. He appears to have read or consulted practically everything that has ever been written about the Pius XII controversy, pro or con.

More than just showing that Pope Pius XII was not silent and guilty in the face of great evil, however, the author shows rather that, on the contrary, he was really a brave and saintly man for whom a “cause” for canonization is currently pending in the Catholic Church based on voluminous testimonials to the heroic virtue of the man from those who actually knew him and worked with him. Although Pope Pius XII was the head of an officially neutral state in the course of the worldwide fighting going on between the Allies and the Axis powers, and hence did not openly favor an allied victory, he also headed up during that same wartime period the Catholic Church’s extensive efforts throughout the war to help victims, refugees, and displaced persons, including Jews. There is abundant documentation throughout this book that the pope and the Church provided enormous assistance specifically to Jews—contrary to allegations still often made and still unfortunately widely believed. Rychlak cites examples of Jews being helped or hidden not just by monasteries, religious houses, or seminaries; he cites examples where Pope Pius XII personally helped Jews.

The book itself consists of eighteen chapters which cover the situation of the papacy going back into the nineteenth century, as well as chronicling the rise of Nazism and Fascism in Germany and Italy following World War I. Several chapters deal with the pontificate of Pope Pius XI in the 1920s and

1930s in the course of which Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, who would be elected pope himself just before the outbreak of the war in 1939, played a vital and significant role. He was, in fact, the architect of many of the policies and action of Pope Pius XI, who, however, never came in for as much criticism as Pius XII did.

The World War II years, as well as the policies, actions, and conduct of Pope Pius XII in the course of them, are covered in a separate chapter for each one of the war years. The pope and his curia did *not* in any way, shape, or form “collaborate” with the Fascists or Nazis, but simply endeavored to survive under what amounted to the very difficult conditions of a wartime occupation by them.

A very important addition to this “revised and expanded” volume is a new chapter entitled “The Play and the KGB Plot,” in which the author goes into the background of the infamous stage play, *The Deputy*, by German playwright Rolf Hochhuth. It was this crude and slanderous play which, in the 1960s, started the ball rolling in the “blame game” against Pius XII. Although Hochhuth claimed that his depiction of the wartime pontiff was based on historical facts, the play was anything but factually based. Rather, it consisted of blatant fabrications which, as Rychlak shows, had originally been concocted and assembled in the Soviet Union in order to discredit the Church. Rolf Hochhuth was either a Communist himself or a dupe. Moreover, the play itself, both in Europe and America, as the author also shows, was produced and largely promoted by known Communists in the theater world of the day.

The defamation of Pius XII, in other words, really *did* start out as a result of a “Communist plot”! Yes, there really was one in this case! The amazing thing is that this myth of a bad pope went so far and lasted so long, considering its true origins. It really has to be considered one of the more successful subversive efforts ever mounted by the Communists.

And the sad fact too, of course, is that this false myth of a silent and guilty and “collaborating” pope has, unfortunately, endured down to our own time in the minds of many people. As is well known, entire books, often well received and touted by today’s elites and the media, have been published bearing titles such as *Hitler’s Pope*, *The Popes Against the Jews*, and *The Silence of Pius XII*. Professor Rychlak devotes another entire chapter to refuting those he calls “The Critics” of the wartime pope. In this chapter, he very knowledgeably and competently takes on, among others, such anti-Pius authors as John Cornwell, Saul Friedländer, Daniel Joseph Goldhagen, and Susan Zuccotti. It is when he closely examines “the case” mounted against Pius by such authors that he discovers and demonstrates how groundless that case against the pope really turned out to be.

The anti-Pius writers—especially the Catholics among them such as Michael Phayer and Garry Wills, or the ex-Catholics such as James Carroll—really ought to be ashamed of themselves in the light of what the true facts about Pius XII turn out to be. Most of these facts have been there all along. Now that Ronald Rychlak has assembled, organized, and published them, there is no longer any excuse for these critics. One is really hard pressed, in fact, to understand just what the motive had to be for so many to come out blaming and defaming Pius XII in the way that they did. No doubt some people always wanted a convenient scapegoat. It would also seem that the animus of many against Pope Pius XII was really an animus against the Catholic Church. Even then, however, it remains hard to understand how the false myth about him could ever have grown up and persisted the way it has. The appearance of this book ought to herald the end of any further possibility of credibly continuing to maintain the accusations against the wartime pope—but don’t hold your breath!

Of course, other fine writers such as Sister Margherita Marchione, Rabbi David Dalin, William Doyno, Jr., Patrick

Gallo, Robert A. Graham, S.J., Ralph McInerny, and Michael O'Carroll, among others, including Ronald Rychlak himself in his 2005 book, *Righteous Gentiles: How Pius XII Saved a Half Million Jews from the Nazis*, have all been making the case for a good number of years now against the detractors of Pope Pius XII. Time has been required for all of this material to sink in, but that it will sink in is surely inevitable in the long run since, as the old proverb has it—and as we must hope—"Truth is mighty and shall prevail." And with this new and definitive edition of *Hitler, the War, and the Pope* by Ronald J. Rychlak we now have between the two covers of one book the evidence that Pope Pius XII, far from being a dupe or a tool of the Nazis, was actually an effective and honorable—and saintly—Vicar of Christ.

The book contains a good Index and Bibliography, as well as photostats of nineteen of the more important key documents. There are also no less than 137 pages of densely packed Notes, which often contain material as interesting and revealing as the main text.

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THE POPE AND THE SCANDAL: REJOINDER TO CRITICS

Robert P. Lockwood

Pope Benedict XVI and the Sexual Abuse Crisis: Working for

Reform and Renewal by Gregory Erlandson and Matthew Bunson. Our Sunday Visitor, 2010. Available at www.osv.com

The title doesn't make you want to read it—*Pope Benedict XVI and the Sexual Abuse Crisis*. The daily carpet-bombing of the Church in media has given us more than our fill on the topic and many of us would be reluctant to go through the rack and rope of a book-length treatment.

But that would be a mistake. This is an important book that is neither a whitewash of the Church or a tabloid rehash.

Instead, the authors offer a serious study of the extent of sexual abuse in the Church, how the Church responded and, more specifically, how Pope Benedict XVI has responded.

The book, published by Our Sunday Visitor, is written by Gregory Erlandson (president of Our Sunday Visitor) and Matthew Bunson (general editor of the annual *Catholic Almanac* and editor of the bi-monthly magazine, *The Catholic Answer*).

The book provides a solid response to the over-the-top sensationalism that has created more heat than light in understanding sexual abuse of minors yesterday and today. While they don't pretend to answer why sexual abuse happened within the Church, they make it clear that it did happen, the Church as a whole did not always respond properly in the past, and that it is vital that reform and renewal take place to ensure that it does not happen again.

They make certain strong points in regard to the sensationalism that surrounds the issue today.

There is the not-so-thinly-veiled accusation in media, particularly the *New York Times*, that Joseph Ratzinger—as a German archbishop, as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) and as Pope Benedict XVI—was at best negligent and, at worst, attempted to cover-up and

protect abusive priests.

The authors make the definitive case that this is a “defamation of one of the Church officials who has understood clearly the scale of the crisis of sexual abuse and who has labored to end it and to reform the Church in such a way that it can never happen again.”

At the same time, they point to the extensive progress—virtually ignored in media—which the Church has made to address the issue, particularly in the U.S.

The Church in the United States provides a “road map to reconciliation, reform and authentic justice,” through a dynamic program to ensure a safe environment for young people that is a model not only for the Church universal, but for any entity, secular or religious.

The authors cite four factors that created the sexual abuse crisis within the Church. The first factor is the scale of the crisis. While the numbers are small, they are universal with cases of abuse in Catholic environments taking place everywhere from Brazil to Newfoundland.

Second, the modern crisis became very public. In the past, sexual abuse of children was generally kept private. Whether the environment of abuse was in the home, public schools, or the Church, cases rarely became public because neither the family nor the institutions wanted it public.

Third, for whatever reason civic authorities themselves stayed out of the picture. It was a crime, but one that was rarely prosecuted.

Finally, the authors argue, many in Church leadership simply refused to believe “that such a profound evil” could exist within the Church.

From the mid-1980s on, particularly in the United States,

cases of abuse and what was perceived as a cover-up by Church leadership began to go public. Public cases in Louisiana and Fall River, Massachusetts, involving two priests who were serial abusers, led the Church in the U.S. to a series of reforms codified in 1992.

The 1992 reforms, built on practices adopted before hand in dioceses such as Pittsburgh under Bishop Donald W. Wuerl, called for immediate reporting of accusations to civil authorities, quick removal of priests from active ministry for credible allegations, assistance to the victims and their families, and transparency in responding to the issue publicly.

The flaw in the 1992 guidelines, the authors contend, was that they had no force of law. Dioceses could pick or choose what to and what not to implement.

In 2002 the abuse crisis exploded in the Archdiocese of Boston when the *Boston Globe* won access to Church documents involving an abuse case. The documents showed Church authorities moving a serial abuser from one parish to another and aggressive reporting soon exposed the names of other abusive priests.

The scandal then went national as many dioceses faced cases of abuse—many from decades past—going public. Lawsuits were filed and attorneys for victims were providing the ammunition reporters needed to build an ugly case against the Church.

The bishops responded by expanding the 1992 norms with additional stress on the screening of anyone in the Church involved with young people, as well as mandatory “safe environment” programs in every parish and an independent audit to verify Church practices.

The “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People” along with the Essential Norms that put canonical teeth behind the legislation were approved by the U.S. bishops in Dallas in 2002.

The Holy See, with the support of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, quickly approved the Essential Norms which became law for the Church in the U.S.

Outside the U.S., however, the reaction of the Church was often much slower even as the abuse crisis went worldwide. The authors outline cases that exploded in Australia, Canada, Germany and Austria with devastating impact.

Today's crisis—in the sense that the crisis has once again dominated media recently in America —began with the release of two in-depth government reports in May and November of 2009 of abuse that took place in Ireland.

The first report document decades of abuse inflicted on children in residential institutions run by 15 religious orders. The second report, focusing on the Archdiocese of Dublin, found “a systematic willingness on the part of Catholic leaders to ignore terrible cases of abuse and sexual misconduct—in the hope, mainly, of protecting the good name of the Church.”

Coverage of the scandal in Ireland resulted in the same kind of media scrutiny elsewhere. A case in the Archdiocese of Munich led to media charges that Cardinal Ratzinger had been involved in keeping an abusive priest in active ministry. A case from the 1970s in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee— involving a priest who molested deaf children—lead to charges that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under Cardinal Ratzinger had impeded the priest being removed from ministry.

In both cases, it became clear—after the headlines—that Cardinal Ratzinger was not involved in any cover-up or keeping a priest from being removed. However, media had begun to take aim at Pope Benedict, which is where the story stands today.

The authors are at pains to refute the charges against Pope Benedict. Not only do they point to his innocence, but they

make the strong case that the rooting out of abusive priests, and bishops who hid abuse, and safeguarding against future misconduct, are part of an ongoing reform and renewal that the pope has been shaping and directing.

They note that immediately after his election, Pope Benedict proceeded on the case of Father Marcial Maciel Degollado, the founder of the Legionaries of Christ, a worldwide and influential religious order. Accused of sexual misconduct with seminarians of his order, he was removed from ministry.

The book details the pope's ongoing campaign to rid the Church of what he calls "filth," and to put in place universally a screening system to make certain that abusers will never be ordained again. At the same time, he has accepted resignations one after the other of bishops who failed to address the issue of abuse within their dioceses.

"Pope Benedict, both as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and as pope, has played a historically pivotal role in the Vatican's response to the crisis: From leading the CDF's efforts before and after 2001 in reviewing the case files of suspect priests to his own efforts to address the issue forthrightly as pope, Benedict has grown into a leadership role just when the Church has most needed him," the authors conclude.

"He has met with victims. He has rebuked the abuser priests. He has challenged the bishops. He has overseen a series of procedural reforms that have allowed the Church to respond more quickly when it is necessary to restrict, suspend, or even laicize a priest," they state. Pope Benedict has made it clear, the authors state, that "avoiding scandal" cannot be the response by the Church to claims of abuse and that victims and their families must be the Church's deep pastoral concern.

The authors acknowledge that the Church has been unfairly singled-out for condemnation and that "there are many agendas

at work in the current round of controversies.” They rightly dismiss any implication that abuse exists uniquely in the Church, or that practices such as celibacy, or the doctrine of a male-only clergy, are contributing factors to abuse.

They also dismiss both the secular and religious agendas that exploit the abuse of young people for their own causes, particularly agendas that are at odds with the moral teachings of the Church.

But they clearly see that the sexual abuse crisis has presented the Church with the challenge of continuous reform and renewal.

The sexual abuse crisis, they write, requires “accountability that the pope has already established (and) must be continued.” Those who have abused children must be held accountable in both civil and Church law. And this accountability must continue to be extended to Church leadership.

The authors write that the Vatican should also make certain that the norms and policies established in the United States, and England as well, should be principles implemented universally.

The review and screening that has been established in the Church of the United States for anyone involved in dealing with children should also become an example for any entity, government, or institution that deals with children.

Finally, they state, “the renewal of the priesthood and religious life must continue, with the ultimate aim of renewing the entire People of God in their relationship with Christ.” This is a strong, courageous and necessary book.

Bob Lockwood is a member of the Catholic League’s Board of Advisors.

LEXICON OF DEATH

Joseph A. Varacalli, Ph.D.

***John Paul II: Confronting the Language Empowering the Culture of Death* by William Brennan. Sapientia Press, 2008. Available on Amazon.com**

Language both shapes and is shaped by society and its social movements, organizations, and individuals. To this must be added the reality of “power”: just who and what has the ability to generate language whose message will be widely accepted and therefore disproportionately shape civilization and the consciousness of the majority of individuals?

William Brennan’s excellent and most recent volume, *John Paul II: Confronting the Language Empowering the Culture of Death*, makes clear the literally “life and death” consequences of the role that language plays in society and everyday life “for the construction and transmission of both life-denying and life-affirming definitions of the more vulnerable and marginalized individuals in today’s postmodern, technologically driven, hedonistic, and nihilistic world.” The author’s book convincingly analyses the late Pope John Paul II’s “two-pronged strategy in countering a burgeoning culture of death that is engulfing an increasing number and range of victims.” The first part of the strategy is “to employ sometimes graphic but always authentic terminology in stripping away the litany of euphemisms constructed to obscure the destructive practices used against the victims.” The second is to replace them “with a wealth of life-affirming designations founded on the Judeo-Christian ethic of equal and intrinsic value for all human lives whatever their status, condition, or stage of development.”

Making reference to *The Gospel of Life*, Brennan proceeds through the main body of his must-read book to demonstrate how the language of what John Paul II termed the “culture of death” is promoted by a “vast network of complicity which reaches out to include international institutions, foundations, and associations” that Catholic social thought refers to as examples of “structures of sin.” This network includes sectors of the powerful realms of medicine, commerce, politics, law, and ideology, all fomenting the destruction of innocent human life while masking it with duplicitous language (e.g. “freedom of choice,” “quality of life,” “problem pregnancy,” “disease,” “humane medical service,” “medical procedure,” “health care service,” “death selection and death control,” “mercy killing,” “biological material,” “tissue,” “parasite,” “non-person,” “sub-human,” “borderline functional people,” “embryonic reduction,” “therapeutic cloning,” among a host of other euphemisms). This volume builds upon the insights provided in a previous work of importance by the same author, *Dehumanizing the Vulnerable: When Word Games Take Lives*. (My review of Brennan’s earlier work was published in *Language and Faith*, the 1996 Proceedings of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars.)

The many themes discussed by Brennan also brought to mind some words given at the retirement party of my late mentor, Monsignor George A. Kelly, that personally changed the course of my own Catholic apostolate and led to my involvement with a host of Catholic institutions devoted to the promotion of Catholic education and Catholic social thought. Riveted into my consciousness are the words uttered by the good Monsignor “that he would never respect Catholic academics who just write; in order to change the world one has to build social institutions.” While ultimately costing me many academic publications, I immediately recognized that my mentor was correct. My response was to become involved in institution building activities with the Society of Catholic Social Scientists and the Nassau Community College Center for

Catholic Studies, in addition to stepping up my support for such vital associations like the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, The Cardinal Newman Society and The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, among others.

What's the connection between Brennan's emphasis on language and my own on Catholic institution building and support? It is that in order to be effective, language requires a base of social support. Put another way, and despite the reality that the Magisterium of the Catholic Church is on the right side of all the raging arguments over the direction of contemporary civilization and has contained within its religious and intellectual heritage an impressive array of linguistic concepts and ideas, it is losing ground in the world-wide culture war with the social forces promoting the "culture of death." How can it be that the vision of the Catholic Church, so reasonable and balanced, so eloquent and logical in expression, which possesses the Truth and pronounces a life affirming morality, be either rejected or ignored by substantial portions of the globe, especially by a Western civilization that the Catholic Church was so influential in creating? Why doesn't the perennial reality of the "natural law," written into the heart and "itself the measure of culture and the condition ensuring that man does not become the prisoner of any of his cultures" always convince civilizations and people to embrace, with both mind and heart, a "culture of life?" Why haven't the forms of argumentation of brilliant thinkers like Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI been more successfully received?

Is the answer to these hard questions solely to be found in the crystallization of an imposing "culture of death" supported by powerful institutional arrangements? If the existence of the latter is at least part of the answer, the next question, conversely, is "where are the structures and institutions, Catholic or otherwise, that support the 'culture of life?'"

I suspect that a significant part of the answer as to why the culture of death is spreading and the culture of life is receding lies in the relative failure of the Catholic Church in two areas: 1) in creating and maintaining social institutions that can and do serve as effective carriers of both the natural law and Catholic social thought and 2) in effectively forging coalitions with groups that share the Church's vision on crucial issues of morality and public policy. In short, Catholic culture and the natural law require social movements and organizations that support its plausibility in the minds of individuals, especially those who are now, or will be eventually, part of the contemporary cultural elite. While *The Gospel of Life* is certainly correct in claiming that, objectively speaking, "no word has the power to change the reality of things," it is nonetheless sociologically necessary to provide the supporting institutional and organizational scaffolding to guide individuals to recognize and appropriate Truth.

Brennan brings up the issue of institution building, at least indirectly, by making reference to the Potsdam Conference convened by the Allies after the surrender of Germany in World War II where Stalin infamously and sarcastically quipped, "How many divisions has the Pope?" Stalin was mistaken, of course, in ignoring the very real religious and cultural authority of Pope Pius XII and the Catholic Church at the time. However, I believe that *Time* magazine writer, Paul Gray, is equally wrong when he stated, in his 1994 "Man of the Year" article, that "John Paul needs no divisions. He is an army of one, and his empire is both as ethereal and ubiquitous as the soul..." I think it far more accurate to state that while no military and other temporal powers are needed, the Papacy and the Catholic Church require powerful and organized legions (or as Stalin would put it, divisions) of individuals who willingly and lovingly accept the Catholic worldview and actualize it in both their everyday lives and promote it in both public and civil life.

In order for the Catholic worldview and the natural law to acquire the required socially institutionalized "accent on reality," the Catholic Church and her ecumenical and political allies must weaken significantly the present monopoly held by secularists in the public square of modern life. In the contemporary United States, this monopoly is most manifest in government, corporate capitalism, higher education, the mass media, and the arts. This monopoly sets the stage for the widespread "secular sabotage" taking place today and so clearly analyzed by Bill Donohue in his latest book of the same name. In other words, the social institutions of the public square must include at least a fair representation of serious Catholics and other orthodox religionists if one is to expect the natural law to have a chance to compete successfully in an open market place of competing ideas and linguistic formulations.

A presupposition, in turn, for a greater authentic Catholic presence in public life assumes that the present array of Catholic institutions (in education, health care, social welfare, catechesis, etc.) be purged of, at worst, the widespread dissent against and, at best, the widespread ignorance of, the Catholic religious, moral, and intellectual tradition that has rendered the reception of authentic Catholic social thought in American and world civilization almost totally impotent. (For more on this, see my book *Bright Promise, Failed Community: Catholics and the American Public Order*.) Too many nominally Catholic professors, teachers, bureaucrats, and social activists employed within the Church's network of institutions employ similar exercises in semantic gymnastics to those of the outright secularists as discussed by Brennan in refusing to follow John Paul II's linguistic injunction in truth-telling, i.e., "to call things by their proper name."

Along with all others, Catholics are active producers of language and ideas. The point, however, is to make sure that

the language and ideas created and used by Catholics and non-Catholics alike reflect an objective moral order whose ultimate author is God and not those that reflect the flawed products of men who would think of themselves as gods. The necessary task in evangelization requires, then, using the language of the culture of life as found throughout the official Catholic worldview along with strengthening and rebuilding the Catholic organizational network that supports such a culture of life—brick by brick, parish by parish, association by association, social movement by social movement, and, yes, division by division.

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BASEBALL AS BELLWETHER

Bill Donohue

***Kiss It Good-Bye: The Mystery, the Mormon, and the Moral of the 1960 Pittsburgh Pirates* by John Moody. Shadow Mountain, 2010. Available on Amazon.com**

It's April, and that means it's time for baseball. Fans of all teams will be drawn to John Moody's inspiring volume, and this is especially true of those from Western Pennsylvania. Moody has given us a birdseye view of the 1960 World Series that pitted the victorious Pittsburgh Pirates against the fabled New York Yankees. But this is much more than a baseball book: it is an insightful account that showcases the influential role of religion on the great American pastime.

The drama of baseball is something that has captured the imagination of journalists, social scientists, novelists and

sports junkies. Moody's contribution more closely parallels the work of a social scientist: he places this premier American sport in context. While it is the 1960s World Series that is at the heart of this book, it is the run-up decade to this incredible event, namely the 1950s, that sets the tone. The Fifties was a time of relative stability, both in terms of values and lifestyle. Yes, segregation was a problem, and Moody does not neglect its role. But it was also a time when narcissism was not yet a cultural celebration.

John and I got to know one another when he was working for *Time* magazine, and I have been proud to consider him as a friend ever since. He is perhaps most well known for helping to start the Fox News Channel, and is busy today in another pioneering project at FNC. How he found the time to write this book is not certain, but my guess is that since it is a work of passion, it naturally flowed out of him. To wit: it is obvious that he wrote *Kiss It Good-Bye* as a love letter to his home town: he grew up in Bethel Park, a suburb of Pittsburgh.

While Moody's own Catholic roots shine through in the book, it is his portrait of Pirate ace Vernon Law that dominates: the pitcher's devout Mormon upbringing played an integral role in that memorable 1960 season. What Moody has done is to weave a great baseball narrative with an equally great sociological tale: baseball proves to be more than a snapshot of American culture—it proves to be a bellwether. He also offers a picture of Pittsburgh, complete with an assortment of black and white photos, that is more than a backdrop: it is the basis of this incredible chapter in American history. At bottom, Moody is not just a chronicler—he is a story teller. Naturally, he is Irish.

How did Vern Law, a Mormon farm boy from Meridian, Idaho wind up in the Steel City? Bing Crosby had something to do with it. May 20, 1948 was a day Law would never forget: it was the day he graduated from high school, got engaged, met with nine cigar-puffing baseball scouts on his front porch, and saw his

mom field a phone call from Bing Crosby. The cigars were handed out to the scouts by Babe Herman, then representing the Pirates, at the behest of Crosby: the famed singer reasoned that a family like the Laws wouldn't appreciate the cigars (tobacco is a Mormon taboo), thus making them ill-disposed to having their son sign with their teams. But the Laws liked Herman—he brought Mrs. Law flowers and chocolates. All that was left was the phone call. When Mrs. Law spoke to her hero, Bing, it made his job of inducing the Laws to persuade their son to sign with the Pirates that much easier.

Law was known to his teammates at “The Deacon,” and he clearly embodied many virtues. It wasn't just cigarettes (popular with players in those days) that the 6'3" Mormon shunned, he followed his religion by rejecting alcohol, drugs and promiscuity. Reared with a deep sense of service, he not only gave ten percent of his income in the form of a “full tithe” to his religion, he gave of his time; his voluntarism benefited many. While as a Mormon he stood out from the other players, he was able to live the American dream of being judged by his performance, not his acquired social attributes.

Law's religion proved controlling, in the best sense of that word. “I prayed for strength. I prayed that I would do my best. I prayed that no one would be hurt in the game. Just praying to win would have been selfish.” If someone did get hurt in the game, it wasn't because he willed it: Law never tried to “get even” by hitting a batter. His sentiments seem quaint today, especially in an era where the only thing embarrassing about steroid use is being caught.

Law put demands on himself that are all but unthinkable in today's game of baseball. He faithfully tried to orient his behavior toward six rules that he penned. “I will never criticize my superiors. I will never insist I am right to the extent of angering others. I will never raise my voice or engage in heated argument. I will never forget that I am one of God's marked men. I will always remember I am made of the

same stuff as the worst sinner. I will always have a smile for everyone, especially those who like me least." This was a tall order, but it gave Law something to aim at besides throwing strikes.

Others took notice of Law's demeanor. Moody relates a great story—all but unimaginable today—of the time when "The Deacon" was thrown out of a game. Law did not so much as protest the umpire's decision as he did express bewilderment. "Stan, why are you throwing me out? I haven't been swearing at you." What he failed to realize was that the umpire was just being avuncular. "I threw Law out of the game because I knew he's a minister of some kind and there was a lot of abusive language on the bench, and I didn't want him to hear it. So I threw him out." It is inconceivable that an ump would ever do that today, and if he did, he'd be the one thrown out of the game.

Law's reputation as a honest broker was lost on no one, though some tried to make him bend. There was the night in Philadelphia when one of his teammates, who shared an adjoining room, bet a young woman that if she showed up by his bed, he would decline the invitation. The woman lost \$50. Then there was the time when an ad agency for Marlboro asked Law to endorse the brand. It mattered not a whit to the company that he didn't smoke, all they wanted from him was an endorsement. "With my association with the Church," he said, "and with the standards I think athletes ought to maintain, I'm sorry I can't endorse your product." Today athletes wear multiple product logos on their uniforms, getting paid a small fortune for doing so. Indeed, it would be headline news if an offer were rebuffed.

Moody touches on how and why baseball changed. If the Sixties started where the Fifties left off, by the end of the decade it was evident that the Sixties signaled radical individualism. It was at that time that baseball owners yielded to the players' union by instituting free agency. Curt Flood, an infielder for the St. Louis Cardinals, refused to be

traded to Philadelphia, claiming he was not chattel. While it was a clear win for individual rights, it was also a sure loss for team cohesion, player loyalty and fan appreciation. Moreover, it was also a huge win for teams in big cities with lucrative television contracts (e.g., the Yankees) and a severe blow to teams in smaller markets (the Pirates). In other words, it was a bellwether of cultural excesses to come.

Vernon Law imbued traditional moral values that not only made him a great man, it made him a great athlete. In a day when middle relievers rescue starting pitchers after five innings of work, Law's accomplishments seem inhuman. He would pitch 18 innings (giving up two runs) and then hurl another 13 innings four days later. There is no doubt that Law held the keys to that classic 1960 season. In the mid-1950s, the Pirates finished at the bottom, or near the bottom, every year. "Pittsburgh stank," writes Moody. But that was about to change.

Before the first pitch was thrown in the World Series, the bookies in Las Vegas gave the Pirates a 1 in 15 chance of beating the Yankees. The Yanks were loaded with power: Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris, Bill Skowron, Yogi Berra. And they had Whitey Ford on the mound. But Pittsburgh was not without talent. Besides, Law, there was Harvey Haddix, Dick Groat, Roberto Clemente, and Bill Mazeroski. The Yankees had Casey Stengel, a bit of a grump, orchestrating the team, and the Pirates were blessed with Danny Murtaugh, the smiling Irishman.

Law had a 20-9 season and performed well in the World Series, despite being injured. The ankle injury that Law endured came in the clubhouse after winning the pennant. The catcher, Bob Oldis, was so excited he pulled a shoe off of Law's foot, resulting in a sprain. While that was an accident, what precipitated the incident was another inadvertent moment. Bob "The Gunner" Prince, the voice of the Pirates, got everyone so jacked up that the atmospherics proved combustible. Prince was

known for his antics, and for his indomitable delivery every time a Pirate homered—"You can kiss it good-bye!"

Prince, of course, would have much to cheer about when Mazerowski hit his famous home run in Game 7 beating the Yankees. Maz's homer landed in Schenley Park, across from Forbes Field, and was never found. As Moody details, the nuns who taught him were delighted. Indeed, Sister Mary Raphael led her students in the rosary just before the last game. How could the Pirates lose with those odds?

When the Pirates won the Series, Pittsburgh was already in the throes of its Renaissance, led in the post-war years by Mayor David Lawrence and Richard King Mellon. The pollution that once soiled its reputation had been checked, and the transition from a steel town to a vibrant corporate center was evident. The Golden Triangle blossomed and the concentration of colleges, universities and hospitals heralded a new beginning. In short, Pittsburgh had emerged as a city to be reckoned with. The Pirates made sure of that.

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ASSESSING LITURGICAL REFORMS

Patrick G.D. Riley

Mass Misunderstandings: The Mixed Legacy of the Vatican II Liturgical Reforms by Kenneth D. Whitehead. St. Augustine's Press, 2009. Order online at www.staugustine.net or your favorite online bookseller.

The subtitle presents the burden of this highly informative book. Not every liturgical reform given us by the Second Vatican Council sat well with the devout, as older Mass-going Catholics are aware. Nor, as the author makes clear, did the reforms have the desired effect of returning more Catholics to the practice of their faith, measured by attendance at Mass.

Kenneth Whitehead quotes the present pope, when he was the cardinal archbishop of Munich ten years after the Council, as speaking bluntly of “the present decadence of the Catholic Church.” Another decade later, the same words of the same Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger were quoted in the immensely successful book-length interview with him titled *The Ratzinger Report*. In that book the future pope noted: “Developments since the Council seem to be in striking contrast to the expectations of all, beginning with those of John XXIII and Paul VI.”

No more important development arrived than the widespread and uproarious rejection of *Humanae Vitae*, Paul’s clear restatement of the aboriginal condemnation of contraception, a condemnation unique to Hebrew tradition and Catholic tradition alike. (For the Hebrew condemnation, which was essentially carried ahead by the Catholic Church, see *The Encyclopedia Judaica*, under “Birth Control.”) But the way in which the reform of the liturgy mandated by the Council was carried out had to rank high on the list of the shocks undergone by the Church following the Council.

Paul VI’s high expectations for the Council were dashed all too soon. By 1968, three years after the Council’s end, he lamented that the Church was engaged in “self-destruction.” That anguished cry, Whitehead observes, is “equally indicative of what occurred and how it seemed to some observers at the time.”

But how does all this fit in with what Whitehead calls the “mixed legacy of the Vatican II liturgical reforms”? The

answer lies in a maxim cited no fewer than five times in this book: *Lex orandi, lex credendi*, which can be rendered *the law of what we are to pray is the law of what we are to believe*. That means that the liturgy embodies the Catholic faith and teaches us our Catholic beliefs. But a seemingly inevitable corollary of that principle is that a distorted liturgy distorts our beliefs.

Certainly the most obvious means of distorting the liturgy lies in translation. The Italian words for translator and betrayer are so close that to link them is proverbial with educated Italians. Still, translators must be allowed some freedom lest the result be unidiomatic, hence wooden and creaky. But the translations of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) were often “flat, pedestrian, and prosaic,” in Whitehead’s words.

At times they were seriously distorted. Among the most egregious examples is the still current translation of the *Gloria*. Early in the Mass, the Church gives us the song that the Gospel has the angels sing at Bethlehem, *Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis*. Straightforwardly, to anyone with even a slight knowledge of Latin, that last phrase means *peace to men of good will*. Why then did ICEL omit *of good will*, words implying that Heaven may not give peace to men lacking good will?

Is that not a vital lesson of the Gospel? Of ordinary experience?

Whitehead observes that examples of the same kind could be multiplied in the “liturgical texts that have constituted our liturgy in English over the past nearly forty years”—although he also chronicles the reform of the ICEL carried out over the past decade and more by Cardinals Medina and Arinze so that the new English translations that will be coming out promise to be enormous improvements over what we have had since the Mass began to be celebrated in the vernacular.

ICEL's original translations were also guilty of omitting repetitions, which might be considered trivial since no meaning seems to be lost. Moreover it has long been a criticism of the Church's prayers that they engage in the "useless repetition" of the Gentiles. But repetition need not be useless. It is embedded in literature from ancient to modern times, and for good reason. Remove the anguished repetitions of Lear over his dead daughter, and much of the impact vanishes. Moreover you would be bereft of a supreme example of Shakespeare's dramatic genius.

We might think that drama has little to do with the liturgy. But we must recall that the core of the liturgy, the Mass itself, is a representation of the drama of Calvary. (Note carefully: that's *re*-presentation. I italicize the *re* and insert a hyphen for fuller clarity.) The Mass deserves the best that our sense of drama can offer.

Three years before his election as Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Ratzinger wrote of the older usage, ordinarily styled *Roman*, or *Tridentine* after the Council of Trent:

"Anyone who nowadays advocated the continuing existence of this liturgy or takes part in it is treated like a leper; all tolerance ends here. There has never been anything like this in history; in doing this we are despising and proscribing the Church's past. I must say, quite openly, that I don't understand why so many of my episcopal brethren have to such a great extent submitted to this rule of intolerance, which for no apparent reasons, is opposed to making the necessary inner reconciliation within the Church." [*God and the World*.]

This, for all its untempered language, was not far removed from Pope John Paul II's demand in the *motu proprio* of 1988 in which he excommunicated the extreme conservative Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre for ordaining four bishops without the necessary agreement of the Holy See. Despite the excommunication, he cautioned that respect "must everywhere be

shown for the feelings of all those who are attached to the Latin liturgical tradition.” However Whitehead notes that it was “only in response to an actual schism that Pope John Paul II finally called for ‘a wide and generous application’ of the indult provisions allowing the celebration of the Tridentine Mass.”

It is impossible, in a relatively brief review, to cover all the important matters raised and fully explained in this wide-ranging book of 240 pages. Among them are some Jewish reactions to the prayers for the Jews in the retained Tridentine Mass, official changes in those prayers, and Whitehead’s careful explanations of them; reasons why some highly dedicated Catholics are uncomfortable with the post-conciliar Mass; extreme reactions against Vatican II among some ultra-conservative Catholics; prospects for the return of ultra-conservative schismatics; the welcome accorded Benedict XVI’s overtures by the successor to schismatic Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre; and the repudiation by most Catholics of the renewed condemnation of contraception by Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae*.

With that disastrous repudiation, Whitehead concludes Part One of his book, which deals with the revival of the traditional Roman Mass by the new Pope. The middle part, which is by far the longest, deals with Vatican II and the reform of the liturgy.

A relatively brief Part Three examines the Lefebvrite schism more deeply, and recounts the diffusion of “creative” liturgies after the Council. Amazingly, one of the most assiduous initiators of such liturgies was the papal master of ceremonies himself, Archbishop Piero Marini. For example, he staged dances in the liturgy, despite their explicit prohibition. Only after two years and more from Benedict’s election was Marini removed, “kicked upstairs” to head a papal commission. He was replaced by another Marini, named Guido, no relation.

It is unfair to single out any one part of Whitehead's book as the most important, but I do so anyway. Part Two, on "Vatican Council II and the Reform of the Sacred Liturgy," has fifteen chapters whose headings will catch the attention of many readers. Among them: *Kneeling or Standing?*, *The Tabernacle of the Blessed Sacrament*, *How "Altar Girls" Got Approved*, and *"Inclusive Language."*

Part Two contains some other devastating criticisms of effects on the liturgy from radical feminism. I hasten to add that radical feminism—to be distinguished sharply from humane feminism—has not only tainted the worship of God through defective translations and arbitrary additions, but has damaged the most basic natural institution of all, namely, the family.

Quite pertinently when speaking of radical feminism, Whitehead quotes the ancient Roman poet Horace: "You may throw nature out with a pitchfork, but she will keep coming back." Horace might have added: "brandishing her own pitchfork." Or as Horace's older contemporary Cicero, when speaking of natural law, put it more mildly: "Whoever disobeys it is fleeing from himself, rejecting his human nature, and hence will suffer the very worst penalties even if he escapes what is commonly considered punishment."

Whitehead's chapter, *How "Altar Girls" Got Approved*, is of interest less for how that happened than for what he thinks female acolytes might comport for the future. He makes the point that women still may not "be appointed or installed as acolytes, or servers at the altar," but he notes that feminists who want access to priestly ordination consider altar girls "yet another wedge issue," positioning them all the closer to their goal of reaching the priesthood.

Yet Whitehead is far from critical of the new liturgy. For example, he favors the new Eucharistic Prayers and use of the vernacular, and explains some of the benefits of the new

liturgy generally.

In the interests of full disclosure, I should state that I count Kenneth D. Whitehead among my oldest and most cherished friends. One reason that I esteem him so highly is the service he has rendered the Church through his many excellent publications. The present book is an outstanding example.

Patrick G.D. Riley is a member of the Advisory Board of the Catholic League. Ken Whitehead is a member of the league's Board of Directors.

THE RESURRECTION AS HISTORY

Dinesh D'Souza

***Life After Death: The Evidence* By Dinesh D'Souza. Regnery Publishing, 2009. Order online at www.regnery.com or your favorite bookseller.**

Many cultures and religions affirm life after death but only one asserts that someone actually died and returned to life. This claim is made exclusively by Christianity. No one says of Moses or Muhammad that after their deaths they were seen again in the flesh. So if the Christian claim is true, it shows not only the possibility of life after death but also legitimizes the specifically Christian understanding of the afterlife. So let's for the purpose of argument treat the resurrection as an historical claim no different from any other historical claim.

Here are the four historical facts that have to be accounted for. First, Christ was tried by his enemies, convicted, and crucified to death. Second, shortly after his burial, Christ's tomb was found to be empty. Third, many of the disciples, but

also one or two skeptics, claimed to have seen Christ alive in the flesh, and interacted with him, following his death. Fourth, inspired by the belief in Christ's bodily resurrection, the disciples initiated a movement that, despite persecutions and martyrdom, converted millions of people to a new way of life based on Christ's example and his teachings. These facts are in the mainstream of modern historical scholarship. They are known with the same degree of reliability as other facts that are taken for granted about the ancient world: say the fact that Socrates taught in the marketplace of Athens, or the fact that Caesar crossed the Rubicon, or the fact that Alexander the Great won the battle of Gaugamela.

In history, we take the facts that we do know and we try to make sense of them. Historian N.T. Wright, in a mammoth study, argues that the hypothesis that Christ actually rose from the dead may sound intuitively implausible to many but it has great explanatory power. In other words, if it happened, it makes sense of all the other facts listed above. It would help us to understand why the tomb was empty, why the disciples thought they saw Christ after his death, and why this astounding realization motivated them to evangelism and strengthened them to face persecutions and martyrdom without renouncing their new convictions. Wright goes much further, though, suggesting not merely that resurrection is a sufficient hypothesis but also that it is a necessary one. What he means is that no alternative hypothesis can explain the given facts with anything approaching the same degree of plausibility. Since skeptics have been advancing alternative theories for two thousand years, this is quite a claim. So let's briefly review some of those alternative theories.

Perhaps the most popular one, at least since the Enlightenment, is that the resurrection is a myth; the disciples made it up. "The myth of the resurrection," writes Corliss Lamont in *The Illusion of Immortality*, "is just the

kind of fable that might be expected to arise in a primitive, pre-scientific society like that of the ancient Hebrews." The disciples expected that their leader would return, so they concocted the story that they saw him alive after his death.

While this is the view perhaps most widely held by skeptics today, it is actually the weakest attempt to make sense of the facts. First, as Wright shows, the idea that dead people don't come back to life is not an Enlightenment discovery. The ancient Hebrews knew that as well as we do. Second, Christ's Jewish followers did not expect him to return to life. Jews believed in bodily resurrection but not until the end of the world. The disciples were utterly amazed when they saw Christ in the flesh, and some refused at first to believe it. Third, it is one thing to make up a story and another thing to be willing to endure persecution unto death for it. Why would the disciples be ready to die for something they knew to be a lie?

A second theory is that the disciples stole the body. This theory is a very old one; in fact, it was advanced by Christ's Jewish opponents to account for the empty tomb. Jewish polemics against Christianity for two centuries continued to emphasize this theme. The theory, however, has several obstacles. Christ's tomb was barred by a stone and guarded by Roman soldiers. How could the disciples have gotten by the guards? Moreover, if the disciples stole the body, they would know for a fact that Christ wasn't raised from the dead. We come back to the problem with the previous theory: why would the disciples' mourning turn to gladness? Why would they embark on a worldwide campaign of conversion? Why would they refuse to recant their beliefs on pain of death?

What really requires explanation here is not how the disciples stole the body but why Christ's critics would so tenaciously advance such an implausible explanation. The answer seems obvious: they had to account for the fact that the tomb was empty. The empty tomb is significant because we know that Christ's followers were proclaiming his resurrection in

Jerusalem almost immediately following his death. If they were simply making this up, it would be easy to disprove their claims by producing Christ's corpse. This didn't happen, and the obvious explanation is that neither the Jews nor the Romans could do this.

A third theory holds that Christ didn't really die but was merely in a swoon or trance. In the tomb he revived, made his getaway, and then showed up before the disciples. There are two main problems with this theory. For starters, it presumes that Roman soldiers didn't know how to kill people. Typically crucifixion is death by asphyxiation, and if Roman soldiers weren't sure the victim was dead they would break his legs. Christ's legs were not broken, evidently because the soldiers were convinced he was dead. So the idea of Christ reviving in the tomb is far-fetched.

But even if he did, he would have been barely conscious, at the point of death. Imagine a man in this condition rolling back the stone, eluding the guards, and then presenting himself to his followers. Their expected reaction would be, get this man to a doctor! But this is not what happened. The disciples, disconsolate over Christ's death, did not claim to experience a wounded man in a swoon; they claimed to see a man who had triumphed over death and was fully returned to life and health. Because of its complete incongruity with the historical evidence, even historian David Strauss, a noted skeptic about the resurrection, rejected the swoon theory.

Finally there is the hypothesis of the hallucinating disciples. We find this view defended in Gerd Ludemann's *The Resurrection of Jesus* and also in the work of John Dominic Crossan, Marcus Borg and the Jesus Seminar. Ludemann says that in the same manner that today people claim to have "visions" of the Virgin Mary, the disciples then had "visions" of a Christ returned from the dead. According to Ludemann, these visions proved contagious and "led to more visions" and eventually just about everyone was reporting Jesus sightings.

The hallucination theory has gained credibility in recent years with the emergence of a substantial number of people who claim to have seen UFOs, or Elvis returned to life.

But the great problem with the hallucination hypothesis is that hallucinations are almost always private. Except in very rare cases, more than one person does not have the same hallucination. If ten people report seeing something very unlikely, it is not convincing to say they are simply dreaming or imagining things, because you then have to account for why they are all having the same dream or imagining the same thing. Historian Gary Habermas asks us to envision a group of people whose ship has sunk and who are floating around the sea in a raft. Suddenly one man points to the horizon and says, "I see a ship." Sure, he may be hallucinating, but then no one else is going to see the same ship. Now if the others on the raft also see it, forget about the hallucination theory, it's time to start yelling for help because there really is a ship out there.

Apply this reasoning to Elvis sightings and it's obvious that if several normal people say they saw Elvis in Las Vegas, they most likely didn't make it up. Probably they saw one of the many Elvis impersonators who regularly perform in night clubs and casinos. In the same way, when people report witnessing a UFO they are almost certainly not hallucinating; rather, they did see something in the sky but didn't know what it was. The problem in most cases isn't hallucination but misidentification.

Now Christ is reported to have appeared many times to the disciples. Paul notes that on one occasion he appeared to more than 500 people. Many of these people were reportedly alive and in a position to dispute the veracity of Paul's account. James, who was a skeptic about Christ's ministry, reportedly became convinced Christ was the messiah only after seeing his resurrected body; so too the apostle Thomas, the famous doubter, was convinced of the resurrection only after he

touched the wounds of Jesus. Paul himself was by his own account a persecutor of Christians until Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus. Never in history have so many diverse individuals, from different backgrounds and on different occasions, reported the same hallucination. Nor can hallucinations account for the empty tomb, or for why the Jews and Romans could settle the whole controversy by producing Jesus' body.

The remarkable conclusion is that for all their veneer of sophistication, none of the alternative theories provides a remotely satisfactory account of the historical data before us. The resurrection hypothesis, however fanciful it appears at the outset, turns out upon examination to provide the best available explanation. There is no attempt here to definitely prove the resurrection. One of the most striking discoveries of historical research is how little we know for certain about the past. What I am trying to show is that the resurrection cannot be cavalierly dismissed as religious myth. Rather, based on scholarly standards uniformly applied, the resurrection survives scrutiny and deserves to be regarded as an historical event.

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WHAT HAPPENED TO NOTRE DAME?

Kenneth D. Whitehead

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at www.staugustine.net or your favorite online bookseller.

Many people were shocked when the University of Notre Dame, long thought to be America's premier Catholic university, in May, 2009, invited President Barack Obama to be its commencement speaker and to receive an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. It was not the first time that Notre Dame had hosted a U.S. president, but since President Obama had come into office with such a pronounced and unapologetical pro-abortion stance—verified within the first few days of his administration when he quickly removed by executive order those obstacles to untrammelled abortion put in place by previous administrations—it was hard to understand how a Catholic university could single him out for special honors.

In 2004, in fact, the Catholic bishops of the United States had issued a statement on "Catholics in Political Life," in which, among other things, the bishops had declared that:

The Catholic Community and Catholic institutions should not honor those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles. They should not be given awards, honors, or platforms which would suggest support for their actions.

Notre Dame's honoring of President Obama was thus a direct contravention of the position that the Catholic bishops had expressly established on the question of honoring pro-abortion politicians. The bishop of the diocese in which Notre Dame is located, the Most Reverend John M. D'Arcy of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, pointedly declined to attend the university's commencement and declared that Notre Dame had chosen "prestige over truth."

In the controversy that blew up and lasted for several weeks after the announcement of Notre Dame's invitation to the pro-abortion president, more than 80 American Catholic bishops publicly spoke out against it. This was an unprecedented public reaction by bishops, but then the university's action

was an unusually defiant and even crude and insulting rejection of the bishops' responsibility to lay out and make clear what the proper reaction of Catholic institutions ought to be on one of the principal moral issues of the day. Equally unprecedented were the more than 350,000 signatures of Catholics who signed a petition protesting the university's action and asking Notre Dame's president, the Reverend John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., to rescind the invitation.

Thus, many Catholics were scandalized and, indeed, shocked that a Catholic university would turn out to have so little regard or respect for Catholic teaching on the very grave issue of legalized abortion in America—against which the Church's opposition has been made so unmistakably clear in the numerous statements issued over many years by the bishops and the popes. Abortion is *not* just another neutral or indifferent or optional matter in the Catholic view.

According to Charles E. Rice, emeritus professor at the Notre Dame law school and the author of this new book which, ably and concisely, tells what *did* happen to Notre Dame, Catholics are right to be dismayed and scandalized by the university's action. However, according to him, they should not have been shocked by it, or perhaps even surprised. For according to him, what happened to and at Notre Dame went back a very long time. He shows that Notre Dame "made a wrong turn four decades ago," and has been acting on wrong principles—antithetical to authentic Catholic faith—ever since. Notre Dame, according to him, has not been a Catholic university in the true sense for quite a long time.

Professor Rice traces the university's wrong turn back to something called the "Land O'Lakes Statement," a manifesto issued by a group of Catholic academics and college presidents meeting in Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin, back in 1967. This Statement was subscribed to (if not largely inspired by) the very well-known president of Notre Dame in those days, the Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C. According to the Land

O'Lakes Statement:

The Catholic university today must be a university in the full modern sense of the word, with a strong commitment to and concern for academic excellence. To perform its teaching and research functions effectively, the Catholic university must have a true autonomy in the face of authority of whatever kind, lay or clerical, external to the academic community itself. To say this is simply to assert that institutional autonomy and academic freedom are essential conditions of life and growth, and indeed of survival, for Catholic universities, as for all universities.

In practice, this claim to "autonomy and academic freedom in the face of authority of whatever kind," amounted to a declaration of independence by the university from the authority of the Church. The Church was no longer seen as necessarily defining what was authentically "Catholic" and what was not. In no way did Notre Dame and the other Catholic colleges and universities that subscribed to the Land O'Lakes Statement cease to be subject to the rules and laws of the state, or of accrediting, licensing or of funding agencies and the like. It was just the Church's rules that were effectively set aside. The Land O'Lakes Statement was very instrumental in the secularization of many Catholic institutions, beginning in the 1960s.

It was primarily to counter this pernicious secularization of Catholic higher education that prompted Pope John Paul II to issue his apostolic constitution on universities *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* ("From the Heart of the Church") in 1990. Subsequently, the U.S. bishops issued their own "Application" of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* for this country in order to try to modify or even reverse the secularization of so many Catholic colleges. However, the fact that Notre Dame nevertheless felt justified in honoring President Obama in defiance of the bishops' policy indicated that the bishops still have a long way to go to restore the integrity of Catholic higher

education.

In this book, author Charles E. Rice accurately and effectively chronicles some of the deleterious effects of this straying off the right path of authentic Catholicism on the part of Notre Dame (and many other Catholic institutions!). By declaring the teaching authority of the Church to be "external" to the university, as the Land O'Lakes Statement did, these institutions, in effect, set themselves up as competing moral authorities to the Church. Henceforth, the university would decide what was right and wrong according to its own criteria, regardless of the Church's teaching.

Professor Rice discusses a number of cases where Notre Dame went off the moral tracks long before the Obama invitation. As early as the 1960s, for example, the university was holding conferences with such organizations as Planned Parenthood and the Population Council to examine whether there might not be an alternative "Catholic" position on birth control different from the traditional teaching which Pope Paul VI reaffirmed in 1968.

Later, in 1984, Notre Dame famously provided the platform for New York Governor Mario Cuomo to inform the world that Catholic politicians could be "personally opposed" to abortion while enabling and promoting it through the public offices held by them.

Then there was the inexplicable refusal of Notre Dame president Father John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., to come out against campus performances of the obscene play "The Vagina Monologues." Professor Rice records a statement of Father Jenkins that no anti-Semitic play or speech would ever be permitted at Notre Dame since it would be "opposed to the values of a Catholic university." Yet over a number of years Father Jenkins could never bring himself to affirm that this wretched play crudely exploiting women and depicting, yes, actual violence against them was even more opposed to those

“values.”

The arguments of Father Jenkins aiming to justify the Obama invitation are no more convincing than his arguments justifying the performance of this obscene play on campus. They are embarrassing, in fact. One can only wonder how the trustees of Notre Dame could countenance such leadership as that of Father Jenkins. Professor Rice recounts the whole sad tale of the commencement fiasco in several brief but hard-hitting chapters. It is all here, not only the serial missteps of the university administration, but the admirable, dignified, and prayerful counter-steps, mostly led and inspired by students. The book thus fulfills the promise of its title in answering the question, in adequate and carefully documented detail, of what happened to and at Notre Dame.

In addition, the book contains a very informative Introduction by long-time Notre Dame Professor Alfred J. Freddoso throwing further light on the whole affair. It also reprints the inspiring talk to the Notre Dame Response Rally by Father Wilson D. Miscamble, C.S.C.—showing, thankfully, that not all of the Holy Cross fathers on the campus are of the caliber of Father Jenkins!

Although Professor Charles E. Rice thus provides as lucid and cogent account of the whole Notre Dame/Obama affair as could be expected—and abundantly shows what happens when the Church’s teaching authority gets laid aside!—it still remains something of a mystery *how* America’s one-time premier Catholic university came to such a sorry pass. One tantalizing clue, however, perhaps lies in the reported statement of former ND president Father Theodore Hesburgh that before a university can be “Catholic,” it must first be a “university” as understood by the secular “modern world.” This was to get it exactly backwards: a university must first be in conformity with the Catholic Church as “the teacher of truth” (Vatican II, *Dignitatis Humanae*, 14) before it can be a true Catholic university.

Kenneth D. Whitehead's latest book is Mass Misunderstandings: The Mixed Legacy of the Vatican II Liturgical Reforms (St. Augustine's Press, 2009). He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Catholic League.