



# AMERICAN CATHOLIC STUDIES NEWSLETTER

CUSHWA CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF AMERICAN CATHOLICISM

## *Beyond the Margins*

**E**xactly 20 years ago, I participated in a symposium at the Organization of American Historians on “New Directions in American Catholic History.” In its aftermath, I was asked by the editor of the *American Quarterly* to write an essay on the same subject — a “state of the field” article, if you will. I learned two things from this. First, if you want to publish something that people will actually read, write an article that purports to summarize what’s going on in a particular area of historical scholarship. Most of us can’t keep abreast of the literature in our own fields, much less others. Second, if you do write such an article, be prepared for lifelong type-casting. When Jim O’Toole invited me to present a paper on the “state of the conversation” in American Catholic history at the annual meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association, he put it this way:

perhaps, he wrote, I could structure my remarks “as a kind of latter-day reflection on the ‘On the Margins’ article.” I expect to be visited in the nursing home in, say, the year 2035, by an earnest graduate student seeking my views on the state of the field. So be careful what you wish for!

As its title indicates, my *American Quarterly* article was centered on the marginalized status of American Catholicism as a subject for historical research. Beyond the denizens of our then-tiny sub-field, hardly anyone read our books and articles — largely because our fellow historians didn’t think Catholicism was important. It was neither intrinsically interesting nor relevant in any meaningful sense to the evolution of American society and culture. Given that Catholics had constituted the nation’s single largest denomination since 1850 and made up a quarter of the nation’s population by the time we elected our first Catholic president, these assumptions sug-

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### *Important: Cushwa Newsletter Going Green*

This is the final printed issue of the *American Catholic Studies Newsletter*. Subsequently, we will publish the Newsletter in pdf format each semester, available at no cost, on the Cushwa Center’s Web site [www.nd.edu/~cushwa](http://www.nd.edu/~cushwa). If you wish to receive biannual e-mail notification when we post a new issue, please send an e-mail to [Cushwa.1@nd.edu](mailto:Cushwa.1@nd.edu) with your current e-mail address. Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you online in fall 2011.

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## Seminar in American Religion

On September 18, 2010, the Cushwa Center Seminar in American Religion met to discuss Peter Thuesen's *Predestination: The American Career of a Contentious Doctrine* (Oxford, 2009). Thuesen is the professor and chair of the religious studies department at Indiana University- Purdue University at Indianapolis. His recent work argues that predestination has been one of the most important and influential doctrines in the history of a variety of churches spanning the denominational spectrum. He contends that predestination has been overlooked as one of the chief sources of discourse among these churches. Thuesen's book was awarded the *Christianity Today* book award for History/Biography in 2010. Michael P. Winship, E. Merton Coulter Professor of early modern British and British North American religious history at the University of Georgia, and James Turner, the Rev. John J.avanaugh, C.S.C., professor of humanities at the University of Notre Dame, commented on Thuesen's book.

Winship began by praising Thuesen for the breadth of scholarship evident in *Predestination*. He acknowledged Thuesen's ability to balance a serious intellectual pursuit with an audience that encompasses a general reader. Winship also lauded Thuesen as "an extremely discerning reader of texts, primary and secondary; he isn't afraid to express personal judgments, and he has an eye for attention holding anecdotes, along with a fine sense of pacing, and he isn't adverse to making bold claims." Winship was particularly interested in how theology works in *Predestination*. He reiterated Thuesen's important point that the doctrine of absolute election was "ungoldy," an "inert doctrine" by itself. Calvin emphasized that only when the doctrine was associated with others — justification by faith and assurance of salvation — was it comprehensible in society. Winship especially

liked Thuesen's section on Puritanism where he explained how theology is lived out through piety. The Puritans were unique for developing an experiential predestinarian piety, which was bound up in a cycle of reassurance and despair and was constantly reinforced. As Winship explained, "Paradoxically, the more miserable you were, they [Puritans] argued, the more hope you could have that God had mercy on you, although any complacency about salvation was a sign that you had not yet grasped the depths of your depravity." Winship questioned Thuesen's notion of a hidden, predestinating God, claiming that there were many ways in which God manifested himself to the pious Puritan. For example, the discovery that one has been predestined by God for salvation was simultaneously an unveiling of God's omnipotence.

James Turner echoed Winship in opening his comments with praise for *Predestination* as an erudite work that is accessible to a wide audience. As scholars have been struggling to disentangle the doctrine of predestination, Turner focused his discussion on what is new about Thuesen's book. First, Turner pointed to Thuesen's examination of predestination which reveals the salience and legacy of the doctrine throughout American history. Second, Thuesen traces the doctrine in American Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism, two lesser studied areas. Third, he explains the persistence of the doctrine in contemporary, popular evangelicalism. Lastly, in describing the obsession that Protestant Reformed traditions have had over this doctrine, Turner suggested that "parsing the doctrine in the end could leach the mystery of the divine and the precariousness of the human condition out of popular Protestantism- [and could] leach the mystery out of predestination itself." Turner finished by posing questions to be taken up in discussion. In keeping with the new historical trend toward global history, Turner closed by asking Thuesen to comment on what happened to predestination in the rest of the



Peter Thuesen

Christian world. In other words, is *Predestination* "a story of American exceptionalism or is this a global tale"?

After thanking the commentators, Thuesen responded to some of the questions raised. He initially addressed Winship's point about Arminianism and Calvinism and how both, in some sense, can be seen as egalitarian. Thuesen agreed with Winship and said that he struggled with this topic in the book, mainly because of the large historiography dealing with the causes of the American Revolution and its relation to Calvinism. Thuesen then responded to Winship's comment concerning Brattle Street Church as being more representative of early church Puritanism than the manifestation of Puritanism in Massachusetts. Thuesen acknowledged that Puritanism, as it played out on American soil, became increasingly complex the more he studied it and thought about its transatlantic dimensions. He responded that maybe he was mistaken to affirm Massachusetts as representative of the early Puritan phenomenon, and maybe Brattle Street was more representative of the early church.

Thuesen also focused on Winship's question of whether the predestinarian God is transcendent or near. He agreed with Winship that this is a very important question that must be considered in-depth.

Thuesen perceives the laity as more interested in the nearness of God and he understands how predestination can come to mean a more internal, proximate God, but he acknowledges that the academic debates have kept these two dimensions in tension. Turner commented that maybe the question deals not as much with meanings of predestination as conceptions of God, and that the deeper issue is an epistemological question of how we know and conceive God.

Responding to Turner's question concerning the psychological aspect of predestination, Thuesen acknowledged that psychological aspects make predestination very interesting, yet at the same time, they are one of the hardest aspects to understand. He confessed that one of the most difficult parts of his book was writing something meaningful about the psychological aspects of predestination. Concluding his follow-up to Turner's question, Thuesen pondered whether predestination is an American phenomenon or a global story. Citing the Caribbean Presbyterian example, he stated that the influence of the works of Jonathan Edwards in the Caribbean prove that "Anglo-American debates are simply transferred onto other soils but with very different inflections sometimes."

The conversation was then opened to the seminar members and Mark Noll asked Thuesen where he saw the role of women in his story. Thuesen responded by saying that Harriet Beecher Stowe thought it was a male story as well, and Thuesen agrees with her because many women did not have access to the academy. A notable exception is Catherine Beecher, who wrote anonymously about free will versus predestination and advanced a Pelagian stance. Thuesen pondered that the story would have been different if more women had access to writing and the academy.

Noll also praised Thuesen for his thesis which posed sacramentalism against predestinarianism, and lauded his sections on Lutheranism. Luther had harshly criticized Erasmus for giving way on predestinarianism, and was equally hard on Zwingli for his views on sacramentalism. Noll asked "whether or not the irrelevance of Lutheranism largely in the American experience has been [rooted in] this effort

to try to keep together something of predestinarian theology and a very strong sacramental tendency as well?" Thuesen explained that he did not have a very satisfying answer for this and that further thought is in order.

George Marsden asked what Thuesen sees as the status of the contrast between predestinarianism and sacramentalism? Thuesen responded that predestination presents a logical tension between two contrasting religious logics. Returning to the previous discussion concerning a near or transcendent God, Thuesen understood the predestinarian God as transcendent, and the God of sacramentalism as visibly tangible. Invariably, there is a large middle ground and various theologies attempt to hold these two ideas in balance.

Marsden responded that he does not see why sacramentalism seen as a particular means of grace is also seen as an opposite. Rather, it seems that it is an alternative. Thuesen explained his own logic in showing that the sacramental/predestinarian contrast was very much perceived by the people at the time. He sighted the example of Bishop William Laud who believed that the altar was the place of God's residence on earth. Puritans and their opponents saw these questions animating the debate. For Thuesen, the real religious contrast is from where people obtain grace — is it from a decree or from a priestly sacrifice? He acknowledged that there are ways of holding these two view points together, yet he separates them in his own mind mostly because this was the perceived notion at the time.

Thomas Kselman asked about the chronology of the process of demystification, referring to Thuesen's epilogue where he claims that demystification occurs. As Thuesen states, "What has declined for many Christians in the modern United States, however, is the mystical dimension of their experience of divine grace." Thuesen responded that his "vagueness" in this quest to chart the erosion of mystery has been filled by authors such as Mark Noll, who showed that the process of demystification dates back at least to the 19th century. Thuesen stated that scholastic ambiguity was a Catholic "thing" and for Protestants the Bible was unambiguous. This mentality was largely the result

of the Enlightenment. Thuesen said that beneath this question lies divergent approaches to religious tolerance.

The conversation then turned to the disadvantages of focusing a book on predestination when the central issue is Christ and the sovereignty of God. Winship commented that the real issue was: "Am I saved or not saved?" rather than, "Am I predestined to be saved?" John McGreevy rephrased Marsden's original objection by noting that Thuesen is tracing a line from the Puritans to Rick Warren, and predestination is not the only way to do so. McGreevy spoke about how predestination was a more scholastic discussion, a type of intellectual history and did not play as big a factor on the ground. He suggested that Thuesen could go further and trace out the doctrine in the social practices within the community. Citing Carolyn Walker Bynum's book on the Eucharist (*Holy Feast and Holy Fast: the Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, University of California, 1988), McGreevy raised the question of whether one can combine doctrine and the social world of practices.

James Bratt asked Thuesen how the predestination debate would look at the popular level, among writers such as Melville and Twain. Thuesen answered that predestinarian themes in literature are a very fruitful subject of inquiry, in fact the most powerful theme in literature because "there you can get at the existential and aesthetic aspects of the doctrine that rarely come out as clearly in the pure theological sense."

## *Cushwa Center Lecture*

On September 20, 2010, Sally M. Promey, professor of religion and visual culture and professor of American Studies at Yale University, presented "Hearts and Stones: Material Transformations and the Stuff of Christian Practice in the United States" for the annual Cushwa Center lecture. Promey examined the material and sensory textual objects that are central to Christian practice. Instead of dealing only with the written and spoken word, Promey ventures into the look, feel, smell, taste, and sound of Christian practitioners. She engaged her audience with many slides and photo-

graphs that accompanied her presentation. Promey noted that “while historians and critics have often drawn sharp distinctions between Protestant and Catholic sensory cultures, some of which surely pertain, the overstated case for binary difference has tended to lump together all Protestants in visual and material opposition to all Catholics rather than to notice more finely grained similarities and differences within and across individuals and groups.” She argued that scholarship should undergo a “reconfiguration of categorical relations among things ‘visual’ and ‘material’” and proposed that the use of images in practice goes beyond simply sight and instead conjures up additional inter-relationships with other senses. She uses hearts and stones to “point toward a reciprocity between materiality and human embodiment.”

Promey traced Catholic and Protestant “heart” practices through the centuries. She claimed that Puritans were quite fond of images and, far from foregoing their use, reworked the ways in which they understood images in religious practice. Because of the analogical language of scripture from passages such as “the righteous have God’s laws inscribed on their hearts instead of on tables of stone” (Ezekiel 11:19), Puritans such as Richard Baxter sought to internalize the divine message and “trace the workings of the spirit upon [the] heart.” Promey showed photos of gravestones where the artist traced letters and signs upon a heart. In another example, Promey noted that Puritans sought to be Christ’s image in the world, an *imitatio Christi*. Thus Puritan aesthetics used scripture as their style guide for their “plain style.” “Plain” came to mean “clarity achieved by reiteration.” Promey went on to discuss the importance of the visionary practices of Marguerite Marie Alocque (1647-1690), a French Catholic nun who revived heart piety. The visual devotions “to the physical hearts of Jesus and Mary yielded a proliferation of pictures and statuary in many variations, scales, and media.” Mid-19th century Shaker communitarians in New York also used scriptural heart imagery.



Sally M. Promey

In 1844 they employed many pink, blue, and white heart cut-outs to cover the altar at the front of the meeting house. This “love letter from heaven” was a reminder that grace was already bestowed upon them and could be taken with them as a constant reminder. By the end of the 19th century, Protestants, like Catholics, had decorated their homes as an expression of Christian nurture.

As visible objects signify the internal, invisible longings of the heart, Promey has shown that both Protestants and Catholics have embraced them over the years. Just as Catholics embraced First Communion boxes so did Protestants use bible boxes as special shrines for family genealogies. Both Protestants and Catholics have a commercial culture that attempts to codify the desire for transformation and conversion.

Upon concluding her lecture Promey addressed the first question from Thomas Kselman, who stated that he was persuaded by Promey’s argument at a general and theoretical level. Yet he pointed out that if we drop down one level of theory, a lot of Promey’s evidence “might have reinforced differences between Protestantism and Catholicism so that the people using these objects weren’t only engaged in the kinds of transformative and transcendental acts they were affirming, they were also affirming confessional identity.” He wondered if

her example of a Protestant Marian shrine might be an exception, and if at the level of lived experience, such objects might have reinforced the religious differences Promey is trying to argue against at a higher level of theory. Promey answered, “yes, definitely” but that she set out to accomplish a different task. Promey said she was responding to recent literature which posits the two cultures as very separate, and, therefore, she claimed that both Protestants and Catholics were able to think analogically through spiritual texts.

Kselman agreed that both Catholics and Protestants might engage in a common process of analogic thinking, but suggested that they might come to very different conclusions about what objects and texts might mean. Promey explained that she is arguing against the long standing historiography that argues that the Protestant culture was without images. She contended that secularization theory put pressure on materiality and that she sees views of materiality as the hinge of this secularization debate. Thus, her interests lie in “all the things we have lost because of these binary divisions.” In her attempt to recapture Christian objects and focus on the similarities between Protestant and Catholic religious culture, some members of the audience believed that she might have given insufficient attention to the rich contours that make the subject of cross-confessional materiality so interesting. Promey concluded with a reminder there are also shades of grey, i.e., ambiguous spaces where similarity can be found.

## American Catholic Studies Seminar

On November 4, 2010, the American Catholic Studies Seminar discussed Katherine Moran’s paper, “Beyond the Black Legend: California and the Philippines, and the U.S. Protestant Attractions to Spanish Catholicism, 1880-1920.” Moran, an assistant professor of American history at the University of

Wisconsin at Stevens Point, unraveled the complexity of American Protestant attitudes toward Roman Catholics and the changes that occurred in these attitudes around the turn of the 20th century. In comparing the settlement of the Philippines with the settlement of southern California, Moran sought to explain the shift toward “many white, Protestant, middle-and-upper-class Americans” assuming “political and cultural power in areas that had previously been governed by Catholic Spain.” She argued that because many Anglo-Americans in southern California and the Philippines were involved with the construction of political authority, they reevaluated Catholicism and avoided anti-Catholic rhetoric in order to foster an environment of religious tolerance. This ambience of tolerance served the commercial industry in California and the creation of empire in the Philippines. As she compared the Philippines and southern California, the main difference lay in that southern California had an “already established political hegemony” while in the Philippines “the process of making U.S. colonial authority was still under way.” In the Filipino culture the Catholic Church was seen as a potentially “civilizing” agent and therefore Catholicism was used as a tool of empire.

Moran identified one of the strengths of her project as the insight that the roots of the attraction to Catholicism began in the late 19th century and that this shift was a result of debates about American

national identity. Her paper is part of her larger project which attempts to revise the dominant historiographical narrative of anti-Catholicism in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. She seeks to trace and explain an attraction to Catholicism among white, theologically liberal American Protestants. For the seminar discussion, Moran showed how American Protestants sought out good relationships with Catholics, believing that religious toleration was necessary to be a good global citizen. As the American Protestants actively sought out and avoided anti-Catholic rhetoric they understood that international, diplomatic success and even the creation of empire was contingent upon such religious tolerance.

Moran noted many tensions that emerged in her sources, such as the “friar problem.” Because friars took on both a political and religious role representing Spain in the Philippines, they were openly asked to leave. This is notable because the Philippines was a Catholic territory. Moran also astutely noted that as California boosters transcended religious divisions they simultaneously reinforced the boundaries of race and class: respectful exchanges between Protestants and Catholics were primarily among European, formally educated, and higher status persons from each religious group. Another example of the precision Moran used in unraveling this discussion is the distinction she made between religious tolerance and the rejection of the Black Legend on one hand, and the rejection of the ideas of Roman Catholicism. These two sets of

concerns did not go hand in hand. Religious tolerance did not mean acceptance of religious ideas, but rather the acceptance of Catholicism as a social, civilizing force in the Philippines and as a way to embrace a national history. Similarly, California missions gave boosters a foundation narrative of European expansion that could be compared with the “founding fathers of America,” but did not entail a wholesale acceptance of Catholic doctrines.

Cushwa Center

Director Timothy Matovina served as respondent for the seminar. He began his comments with praise for Moran’s work, then pointed out three broad eras in the history of California with which Moran dealt: the allegedly “golden” age of the Spanish missions, a period of corruption and decline, and, last, the Anglo-American redemption, which was a U.S. claim of a “renewed ascent of progress in the area as the United States resumed the civilizing work Spanish friars had begun.” This standard historiography is employed, consciously or not, to justify U.S. expansion into the former Mexican territories.

Matovina focused on the differences in rhetorical strategies between the Philippines and California. The Spanish friars in the Philippines were visible workers, not just remnants of the past, and Anglo-Americans comprised a much smaller percentage of the population. Matovina noted how Moran rightly emphasizes the role of the church in the Philippines as a force of social control. The friars were responsible for maintaining order in various facets of life.

Matovina concluded by posing several questions to the group for discussion. He asked if Moran saw any evidence of “Protestant dissent from or protest to the self-serving dominant narratives of their coreligionists.” He also inquired as to how her case study of the Philippines might compare to Puerto Rico, where Protestantism made more inroads after the Spanish-American War than in the Philippines. Matovina encouraged Moran to continue expanding her examination of the wider historical significance of her work and asked, “What was the significance of these historically-conditioned portrayals on the long-term history of the Black Legend and general perceptions of Spanish Catholicism and things Spanish?”

The discussion was opened to the audience. Scott Appleby, reading Moran’s paper with Jenny Franchot’s work in mind (*Roads to Rome: The Antebellum Protestant Encounter with Catholicism*, University of California, 1994), explained that Moran paints a different picture of Protestant attitudes toward Spanish and American Catholics, one not as hostile and dark as Franchot’s portrayal. Appleby asked Moran to speak about these disparate



Katherine Moran

views. Moran responded that in her first chapter, where she analyzes American travel narratives from Italy, she engages Franchot's work. She sees contrary evidence to Franchot's treatment of gothic language due in part to a post-Civil War anxiety. Moran cited travel narratives where Americans entered monasteries looking for a secret basement of torture, but instead were greeted with warm hospitality from the monks. Her research also showed monks in Italy actually mocking the language that Franchot described. Thus after the Civil War, Moran sees a shift towards an attraction to male religious figures and explicitly anti-gothic language, while previously there had been an attraction to female religious figures and gothic tropes. Thomas Kselman then asked, "How much do you want to swing the pendulum" and argue that the first view was entirely replaced by the later, explicitly anti-gothic view? Moran acknowledged that Appleby and Kselman are right and that she did not mean to overstate her claim.

Other seminar participants such as Virgilio Elizondo followed through on the comparative issue of how U.S. missions in Puerto Rico and Cuba compared to those in the Philippines, given that Spain lost all of these territories following the Spanish American War. Moran discussed the particular historical trajectories and how they shaped Protestant-Catholic relations in each locale. She also noted the need for further research to address this question, which is beyond the scope of the particular case studies in her larger project.

## *Research Travel Grants*

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These grants are used to defray expenses for travel to Notre Dame's library and archival collections for research on American Catholicism. The following scholars received awards for 2011:

**Anthony Bonta, Marquette University,** "Racial Justice and the United States Catholic Church."

**Christine Croxall, University of Delaware,** "Holy Waters: Lived Religion, Identity and Loyalty along the Mississippi River, 1780-1830."

**Robert Hurteau, Loyola Marymount University,** Biography of Rev. John J. Considine, M.M.

**Karen Johnson, University of Illinois at Chicago,** "Christ in the Negro: Catholic Interracialism in Chicago, 1930-1968."

**Theresa Keeley, Northwestern University,** "Reagan's Gun-Toting Nuns: Catholicism and U.S.-Central American Relations."

**James McCartin, Seton Hall,** "Sex and American Catholicism: From the Age of Nativism to the Sexual Abuse Crisis."

**Gráinne McEvoy, Boston College,** "American Catholic Social Criticism and the Immigration Question in the Restriction Era, 1917-1965."

**Paul Monson, Marquette University,** "Reclaiming the Benedictine Mission: the Vision of Martin Marty, O.S.B., for Monasticism in America, 1860-1896."

**Katherine Moran, University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point,** "The Devotion of Others: Secular American Attractions to Catholicism, 1870-1930."

**Guillaume Teasdale, York University, Ontario,** "The French of Orchard Country: Territory, Landscape, and Ethnicity in the Detroit River Region, 1680s-1810s."

## *Hibernian Research Award*

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Funded by an endowment from the Ancient Order of Hibernians, this annual award provides travel funds to support the scholarly study of the Irish in America.

**Ian Delahanty, Boston College,** "The American Irish, Slavery, and the Civil War."



## ***New Travel Grant Opportunity for Roman Archives***

The Cushwa Center in conjunction with Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame (<http://italianstudies.nd.edu>) announces a new annual funding opportunity, the **Peter R. D'Agostino Research Travel Grant**. Designed to facilitate the study of the American past from an international perspective, this competitive award of \$5,000 will support research in Roman archives for a significant publication project on U.S. Catholic history. The award is offered in honor of the late Peter D'Agostino, a friend and colleague to many, the author of the award-winning book *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (University of North Carolina, 2004), and a tireless promoter of the need for transatlantic research in American Catholic studies. Selection criteria for the award are the potential of the publication to advance studies of U.S. Catholic history and the articulation of a detailed plan to enhance the project through research in specific Vatican and/or other Roman archives. The deadline for applications is December 31 of each calendar year. For more information, see [www.nd.edu/~cushwa](http://www.nd.edu/~cushwa).

## ***Lived History of Vatican II Project***

In conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the opening and closing of the Second Vatican Council, the Cushwa Center announces the launching of a major research project designed to produce the first comparative, international, lived history of Catholicism in the Vatican II era. Our goal is to enlist researchers who will write close-grained local social histories of the immediate Council era and its aftermath in 12 select dioceses, at least one from each continent around the globe. Thus we are not looking for broad-brush accounts of the Council period in South Africa, for example, but a close study of

how the changes mandated by the Council were actually experienced in specific dioceses such as Pretoria or Umtata. The 12 researchers selected to participate in this project will participate in project consultations at the University of Notre Dame in spring 2012 and spring 2013, research and write a substantial chapter on the lived history of Vatican II in a select diocese, present their work at an international conference at Notre Dame in spring 2014, and have their work published in the project volume. Each researcher will receive a research account, travel expenses to consultations and the international conference, and a stipend of \$5,000. Self-nominations or nominations of colleagues as researchers for this project are being accepted now until June 1, 2011. Please send the name of the proposed researcher, the diocese he or she would investigate, and a brief (two-page) CV and (one-page) statement of the availability of primary sources for that diocese, why it is a particularly apt choice for this study, and previous investigations the proposed researcher already conducted on the diocese (if any). Nominations and inquires about this project can be sent to Cushwa Center Director Timothy Matovina at [matovina.1@nd.edu](mailto:matovina.1@nd.edu).

## ***New Position***

The University of Notre Dame's Center for the Study of Religion and Society (CSRS) and Institute for Church Life (ICL) are jointly launching a new initiative on sociological research on and for the Catholic Church.

Applications are now being received to fill a full-time, research-faculty (non-tenure track) position to conduct the work of the initiative. Applications will be received and reviewed until the position is filled. The startup date for the position is summer 2011, with the exact employment date negotiable.

The qualified candidate will be a sociologist (or perhaps from another appropriate social science discipline) with a Ph.D. degree (or who is ABD); who knows U.S. Catholicism very well and is

invested in the Church's well-being; is adept at survey data collection and analysis; is a strong writer; can lead and work collaboratively with a small research team; and who has public-speaking skills.

The University intends to make this initiative a long-term, successful program at the university. The initiative is currently funded for three years, starting in the summer 2011, during which time it is to establish itself and demonstrate its contribution and worth. The expectation is that three initial years of success will lead to continued funding, with potential to raise endowment funds and develop the program as justified. The special research faculty member hired for this position will play the central role in making that happen.

Applications for this position should include (1) a cover letter including clear statement of interest in the position and why the applicant is well matched for it and (2) a current CV. References need not be sent, as they will be requested later of short-list candidates. Applications should be sent to: Christian Smith, Center for the Study of Religion and Society, Flanner 816, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 46556 or by e-mail attachment to [chris.smith@nd.edu](mailto:chris.smith@nd.edu).

## ***Publications***

*The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* has been released in paperback in a third edition. Robert A. Orsi's book was the winner of the American Catholic Historical Association's 1986 John Gilmary Shea Prize.

The fall 2010 issue of the *U.S. Catholic Historian* is titled "Remembering the Past, Engaging the Present: Essays in Honor of Moises Sandoval." Contributors include Bishop Ricardo Ramírez, C.S.B.; Rev. Juan Romero; Rev. Robert Wright, O.M.I.; Alberto López Pulido; Kristy Nabhan-Warren; Mario T. García; Olivia T. Ruiz Marrujo; and Timothy Matovina. The issue was featured in a national release event to honor the journalist, editor, and

historian Sandoval on November 19, 2010, at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. The event was sponsored by the Oblate School of Theology, the Mexican American Catholic College, the history departments at St. Marty's University and the University of the Incarnate Word, the Cushwa Center, and the Center for Mexican American Studies at Our Lady of the Lake University.

## *Fellowships*

Researchers wanted: Franciscan History in the United States. **The Academy of American Franciscan History** is looking for six scholars to research and write extensive essays on aspects of the Franciscan experience in the United States. Each scholar will be asked to research and write a 100- to 120-page essay on one of the following topics as they relate to U.S. Franciscans: charity and justice, missions (post 1840), education, spirituality, parishes and immigration, and Franciscan women. The essays will be published as

part of a two-volume history of Franciscans in the United States and individually as small paperbacks. Each scholar will be required to participate in a conference/consultation at the beginning and end of the process. Scholars will receive a \$10,000 stipend, plus \$2,500 for travel expenses. Interested parties should send a brief statement of interest and CV to Dr. Jeffrey M. Burns, Academy of Franciscan History, 1712 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, Calif. 94709. Or e-mail applications to [acadafh@fst.edu](mailto:acadafh@fst.edu). For more information call 510-548-1755.

Applications will be considered beginning March 1 and will continue until all slots are filled. The project will begin in fall 2011.

The **Louisville Institute** seeks to enrich the religious life of American Christians, and to revitalize their institutions, by bringing together those who lead religious institutions with those who study them so that the work of each might inform and strengthen the work of the other. The Institute especially seeks to support signifi-

cant research projects that focus on Christian faith and life, religious institutions, and pastoral leadership. Research grant programs include: Dissertation Fellowship, First Book Grant Program for Minority Scholars, Project Grants for Researchers, and Sabbatical Grants for Researchers. Application deadlines and grant amounts vary. Complete details are available at: [www.louisville-institute.org](http://www.louisville-institute.org), via e-mail at [info@louisville-institute.org](mailto:info@louisville-institute.org), or by regular mail at Louisville Institute, 1044 Alta Vista Road, Louisville, Ky. 40205.

*We welcome notes from colleagues about conferences, current research, professional advancement, or other news that will be of interest to readers of the American Catholic Studies Newsletter. Please send your latest news to Paula Brach at [pbrach@nd.edu](mailto:pbrach@nd.edu). Thank you!*

## BEYOND THE MARGINS

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gested a kind of invincible ignorance on the part of our otherwise amiable colleagues. Imagine how different our past would look if American Catholics had received, in proportion to their numbers, the same research attention that's been devoted to New England Puritans. The obvious question before us is whether things have changed appreciably. Are we as historians of Catholicism still marginal to the profession? Here, I think, the news is more good than bad, no matter how under-valued most of us feel on occasion. (Who, after all, is ever loved and admired enough?) For one thing, there are more of us, suggesting that our subject is increasingly seen as having both relevance and intrinsic interest. It also means that our audience is growing, even given a worst-case scenario, where only like-minded scholars read our work. Far more important is the quantity and quality of the work that's been done in our field since the early 1990s. Because of this body of schol-

arship, Catholicism is now firmly established as an integral aspect of American religious history — rather than being an exotic or mildly disreputable outlier. As for the history of religion, it is — at least according to a recent issue of the *Perspectives* publication of the American Historical Association — the hottest field among graduate students in American history today, which can only work to our advantage. One might also reference the recent (albeit modest) proliferation of teaching positions and even chairs in American Catholic history and studies, several of them, interestingly, at non-Catholic institutions.

What about Americanists who don't specialize in the history of religion? Do they pay any attention to our work? Many, of course, do not. (Who, one might ask again, can keep up with the literature even in her own field?) Here, too, I see more than a glimmer of hope. This is partly because we're getting better at situating the

Catholic story in a broad national context — at explaining why our subject matters, which we've done with particular panache when it comes to politics. Cheers for the likes of Eve Sterne and Jim Fisher for showing how integral Catholicism has been to urban political culture, at least in places like Providence and New York. Cheers as well to the brothers McCartin for explaining to their militantly secular brethren why Catholicism matters for trade union history and that of working-class politics generally. And may I make particular mention of John McGreevy's *Catholicism and American Freedom* and Philip Hamburger's *Separation of Church and State*, because of which it's now next to impossible to think about the history of American liberalism without taking Catholicism into account. In the proximate future our tribe should figure prominently too as the history of American conservatism is written — an endeavor that's just beginning to get under way.



Political history has made a comeback of late precisely because the American historical enterprise has become so hopelessly balkanized — politics provides the integrating narrative that all of us are hungry for. Catholics should be an integral part of that narrative, and it's up to us to ensure that they are included.

Certain changes in American society since 1990 have also worked to our advantage as historians of American Catholicism — maybe even creating a unique moment of promise for us as we strive to move into the historical mainstream. The emergence of Catholics as the largest and most volatile swing voting bloc in recent elections, for example, has demonstrated to a broad audience that religion still counts in American politics, even at a time of declining religious affiliation. As E.J. Dionne likes to say, “There’s no longer a Catholic vote — and it matters enormously.” The aggressive political behavior of certain bishops in recent years — unprecedented in our history — has focused attention on Catholics, too, especially in the context of a disintegrating religious right. Shaun Casey’s recent book on the role of religion in the 1960 presidential election was mostly about Protestants. It was Protestant leaders, after all, who stirred up religious trouble in that election for the Catholic candidate. A book about the 2004 election, by contrast, would be about Catholics. In fact, polarization within the American Catholic tribe — painful as it is for those who count themselves members — has probably made that tribe look more interesting to many intellectuals, who generally prefer debate and fractiousness to well-ordered conformity. Not every Catholic threatened with excommunication in the diocese of Colorado Springs in 2004 voted for George Bush.

On a more positive note, continued heavy immigration since 1990 has generated growing interest among intellectuals, policy makers, and the literate public generally in institutions and practices that promote not just assimilation but the strengthening of civil society. I can’t think of a group of historians better equipped to address these concerns than historians of American Catholicism — and that would be the case even if the majority of today’s immigrants weren’t Catholic by birth.

What other group in American history has a more impressive track record than Catholics, when it comes to assimilating the immigrant masses and building communal institutions? Similarly, the growing national anxiety over public education — motivated in part by an artfully-orchestrated campaign against public-sector unionism but also reflecting troubling realities — means a potentially large audience for inventive research on Catholic education, a topic we’ve neglected for far too long, notwithstanding the heroic labors of Phil Gleason and his lonely band of disciples. Catholics know something about building a mass alternative to public education in the context of class and ethnic division. What worked, and why, in the Catholic past? What didn’t? And what were the costs — not just economically but psychically as well? Given the current state of disarray in the American church, it’s ironic that Catholic history should be so richly relevant to the American present. But irony or no, let us not — to quote my grandfather — look a gift horse in the mouth.

In the space that remains, I’d like to do two things. I want to comment briefly on several areas of scholarly achievement that represent dramatic progress compared to the “state of the field” in the early 1990s. Then I want to comment at slightly greater length on where we might usefully go from here, although I realize I’ve already engaged in certain prescriptive musings. When I wrote “On the Margins” back in 1992, I was rightly troubled by the dearth of research on women religious. Given the state of the archives in many religious communities and what looked to be a general disinterest in the subject, I didn’t expect that dearth to be remedied any time soon. But I was absolutely wrong. We’ve seen a mini-explosion of books and articles on this topic, mostly of superior quality. It’s as if the energy inherent in the

field of women’s and gender history had been transfused into this particular aspect of the study of American Catholicism. The scholarship in question ranges temporally from the colonial and early national

periods — Emily Clark’s recent book on the Ursulines in New Orleans being a principal example — to the later 20th century, with Amy Koehlinger’s *The New Nuns*. We have studies of individual communities, like Diane Batts Morrow’s account of the early decades of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, as well as books that examine several

orders in the context of a particular ministry or place: Suellen Hoy on Chicago, for example, or Maureen Fitzgerald on New York. Kathleen Cummings has shown us that the lives of women religious intersect in multiple and sometimes unexpected ways with those of lay female activists, suggesting that future studies might profitably incorporate both groups. The same point is evident in an excellent 2002 anthology on Catholic women’s higher education, edited by Tracy Schier and Cynthia Russett.

I was also struck, back in the early 1990s, by how little had been written about American Catholicism after the 1920s and the end of mass immigration. My generation of Catholic historians clearly preferred the color and contentiousness of immigrant Catholicism to the dreary conformity — as we saw it — of the assimilated Church. (The post-Vatican II Church was obviously more exciting, but since it was part of our lived experience it was hard for us to think about historically.) Here, too, things have changed dramatically. This has happened in part because time has passed: younger scholars today see interest, even romance, in the world of schoolgirl Marian processions, Holy Name Societies, and support for the likes of Joseph McCarthy. A good deal of credit, however, should go to the Cushwa

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Center and its remarkable multi-year project on the study of 20th Century Catholicism — Scott Appleby’s brainchild, it should be noted. That project has thus far supported the publication of at least a dozen scholarly monographs, including books already mentioned by Eve Sterne, Jim Fisher, and Amy Koehlinger. Jim O’Toole’s edited volume on 20th-century Catholic devotional practice — a joy to teach and a genuine landmark in the history of spirituality — is another happy product, as is (I hope) my own book on Catholics and contraception, not to mention several promising studies in the still-under-researched area of Latino Catholicism. The Cushwa project might even get partial credit for such recent achievements as Jim McCartin’s book on prayer, where he engages the same period and many of the same themes as the O’Toole essayists, while delving creatively into the political implications of changing Catholic spiritual practices.

Perhaps the single most exciting aspect of the Cushwa project was the willingness of its participants to grapple as historians with what Hugh McLeod has recently called “the religious crisis of the 1960s.” McLeod’s book by that title should be mandatory reading for everyone engaged in the historical study of Catholics in the United States, even though his focus is primarily on Great Britain and Western Europe. Tim Kelly, a Cushwa project participant, has recently published a provocative book on Catholic Pittsburgh in the 1950s and ’60s, where he deploys statistical evidence — unusual in studies of Catholic piety — to demonstrate a pronounced decline in standard forms of Catholic devotionism several years prior to the opening session of the Second Vatican Council. Kelly also examines the implementation in Pittsburgh of Council-mandated liturgical reform, a subject wide open for further research. No one really doubts, I think, that post-conciliar change had roots in the pre-conciliar decades. But we still need to show just how this worked. Did American Catholics in the 1950s still inhabit a genuine sub-culture? Or, to borrow from

Joe Chinnici, did most of them possess little more than a “rhetoric of sub-culture” — hence the rapidity of change among American Catholics after the mid-1960s?

Tim Kelly’s book ends in 1972, a prudent choice on the author’s part but one that raises an important question. The period after 1945 is indeed ripe for exploration — arguably the “next big thing” for historians of American Catholicism and perhaps for historians of American religion generally. But at what point does historical perspective cease to operate? How close to the present day can we bring the story? Joe Chinnici maintains that we can’t yet deal as historians with the period after 1980 — a dictum it might be interesting to debate among our colleagues. If he’s right, what should we make of a book like *A People Adrift* — Peter Steinfels’ admirable meditation on the American Church since the Council? Is it a work of historical scholarship or better described as historically-informed commentary? And is historically-informed commentary something that academic historians should engage in?

Let me now ask, by way of conclusion, where we go from here. How do we build on what we’ve achieved? In terms of what might be called “internalist” topics — those that pertain to a fuller understanding of the specifically American Catholic past — the possibilities are almost literally legion. I can’t think of a subject that doesn’t need more research. We still need more work on women religious, including a synthetic overview of sisters in the American past. We especially need more work on Catholic laywomen and the Catholic gender system. Understanding Catholics and gender

means taking both sexes into account, so we need some pioneering studies of the construction of Catholic masculinity and male spirituality. Priests are still a notably under-researched group, despite important recent books by Michael Pasquier and John Dichtl. My generation, I think, shied away from priests as a subject of study because of lingering resentments over clerical authority; younger historians may be similarly put off by the recent wave of

sex abuse scandals. But how can we understand Catholicism as a cultural as well as a religious system without knowing more about the clergy?

Hispanic Catholics are an equally under-researched population, despite the good offices of people like Timothy Matovina and David Badillo, whose work examines the reli-

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gious experience not just of Mexican immigrant Catholics, hitherto Matovina’s specialty, but Puerto Ricans and Cubans, as well. We need more studies of this sort, given the growing ethnic variety in the Hispanic population. Studies on religious variety would also be helpful. For example, do Hispanics cease to be of interest to us once they embrace a religion other than Catholicism? We especially need studies — and these would be truly pioneering — that compare the experience of recent Catholic immigrants to those in the past ... to the Irish, Italians, Poles, or even French-Canadians, who like Mexican immigrants shared a border with the United States. Research of this sort would be time-consuming — hard especially on junior faculty who need to produce a book under tight deadline — and require more formidable language skills than many American historians possess. I can’t think of a more important reform to our graduate

programs than a reinvigorated emphasis on language acquisition. But given that we're not apt to change the culture of the profession any time soon, we might usefully think in terms of team research for projects like these, no matter how individualistic a species we historians tend to be.

What other subjects need further research? I've already mentioned Catholic education and the period after 1945. Sexuality and the body is another enormously rich subject that's been surprisingly little studied. So is the history of religious inter-marriage, a phenomenon that since the 1960s has reached levels for Catholics comparable to those among American Jews. How has the leadership of these two religious communities responded to this development and the obvious threat it embodies? Regional variations in Catholic experience merit greater attention — inter-marriage rates, for example, were always higher in areas where Catholics were a small minority in the population, and the tone and texture of Catholic life was apt to be different, as well. We need to know more about Catholics and popular culture — as consumers, producers, and would-be censors. We'll never know all we should about the elusive history of lay spirituality. And I think the time has come for a new synthesis in the mode of Jay Dolan's *The*

*American Catholic Experience* — by which I mean a similarly ambitious social history of American Catholicism that incorporates the vast amounts of new research done since Jay's book was published in 1985.

I've described the aforementioned areas of research as essentially "internalist" — having mainly to do with the dynamics of change among Catholics themselves. But isn't this an agenda that threatens to confine us to a scholarly ghetto? I would respond to this question in three ways. First, though the danger is real, it should not keep us from learning what we need to know about the tradition that

is our specialty. Next, it's possible to write about many ostensibly Catholic topics in a way that establishes their relevance for a larger American story. That's much easier to do with topics like immigration, politics, and popular culture than with, say, spirituality. But connections can be made and it's up to us to make them. Finally, as historians of American Catholicism we are ideally situated to model a comparative approach to history for a discipline that pays lip service to the virtues of comparison but seldom practices it. The tradition we study in its American incarnation is part of the oldest and largest multi-national body in human history. We all know that, even if that reality doesn't typically inform our work. For perfectly legitimate reasons, we've emphasized the Americanizing dynamic inherent in our history — the multiple ways in which a church of foreign-born laity and clergy adapted to the American environment and became something new. But as the late Peter D'Agostino pointed out, "...Catholicism (or better, the Catholicisms) in the United States were never independent, autonomous, and unconnected to Europe, which itself was dynamic and profoundly heterogeneous." We need to be much better grounded than most of us are in the European — and now Asian and

Hispano-American — backgrounds of the people and cultural traditions we study and more adept at casting the history we write in a larger-than-national context.

One way to achieve this is by means of international scholarly cooperation, along the lines of the Cushwa Center's recent conference on the French role in North American

Catholic history. At this conference keynoter Thomas Kselman, a noted historian of 19th-century French culture, highlighted the barriers to such cooperation — lack of adequate language skills, especially on the American side, and the cost of for-

eign travel chief among them. He also betrayed a certain impatience with the ongoing individualism of historical scholarship. It's hard to think systematically about comparative strategies when the data you're working with isn't really comparable — when scholars, to be blunt, simply offer a précis of their latest research, which may be only tangentially related to the project at hand. When I organized a conference in 2003 to compare the trajectories of Catholicism since 1950 in the United States, the Republic of Ireland, and Québec, I tried my darndest to get my contributors on the same page: please provide information on the following, I asked them innumerable times — tell me as specifically as you can, with regard to the place about which you're writing, about trends in Mass attendance, reception of the sacrament of Penance, vocations to the priesthood and religious life, the role of the Catholic Church in politics, and the status of Catholic charities and schools. But even with a generous honorarium, a long lead-time for research, and the prospect of publication, only about half of my contributors complied.

Despite the difficulties, however, I see scholarship with a strong comparative dimension as the single greatest contribution we can make to the American historical profession. It's quite literally a natural mode for us, given our subject. Few of us, in all likelihood, will become full-blown comparativists. But we can educate ourselves more deeply about Catholicism in other parts of the world and resolve to gain reading fluency in at least one more language. We can also encourage centers like Cushwa to forge ahead with a comparative agenda. Our scholarship will be better as a result and perhaps in some cases sufficiently cosmopolitan to command attention beyond the still limited boundaries of our specialty. Beyond the margins, in other words.

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## *Exhibit Review*

### *Women and Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America*

**P**irates. This may not be the first thing that jumps to mind when you think of the history of American women religious, yet in my first five minutes in the touring exhibit *Women and Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America*, I had already come across two references to them. On the opening wall of the exhibit, we read that “12 Catholic sisters — muddy, mosquito-bitten, but bursting with hope for the promise of the New World — arrived in New Orleans in 1727, having narrowly escaped pirates during their transatlantic crossing.” The next panel introduces us to Carmelite Sister Clare Joseph Dickinson, whose journal entries, we are told, “made light of stormy seas, encounters with pirates, and the attentions of a would-be suitor.” These two references to pirates so early in the exhibit are not, I think, coincidental, and they indicate quite early that this history presented in words, images, and material culture will give us a new perspective on America’s women religious.

The exhibit itself is quite large, 6,000 square feet and consists of a series of themed panels in rough chronological order making heavy use of primary source texts and artifacts. Also featured are three short videos used primarily to include the voices and experiences of present day sisters. The panels are handsomely, and lovingly, constructed. After many years of viewing dusty displays of habits in dark, subterranean academic and congregational

archives I was delighted to see American women religious getting their due in this beautifully and professionally designed showcase. The Leadership Conference of Women Religious, which sponsored the exhibit, and the exhibit’s creators and consultants, are to be commended for their fine work.

The people who put this history together clearly set out with a purpose in mind, which helps explain the many references to intrepid nuns facing the dangers of piracy (and small pox, and cannon, and outlaws). In addition to describing the tumultuous voyage of the first 12 sisters to arrive, the opening panel invites us to “Meet the spirited women who helped build this country. These are the characters with whom we’ll be spending the next hour: courageous, bold, American women.” The theme



is carried throughout the exhibit from the 18th century to the present. We see sisters as pioneers, institution-builders, and outspoken advocates for justice, as battlefield nurses, inventors, and organic farmers. We are told almost wherever you turn in the exhibit that these women were and are leaders.

I do not think the exhibit allows itself to get too carried away with this theme. The creators try to balance their obvious relish for bold, adventurous sisters with two other themes. The first is also present on the opening panel. “Over the next 300 years,” it tells us, “successive generations of Catholic sisters quietly contributed to American life.” We also read a

quote from a 19th century sister of the Daughters of the Cross: “Need brings out our talent.” So we are presented with another side of the sisters. They are women of enormous talent in many fields, who worked — hard, but with humility — to serve the needs of their fellow Americans. The other theme tempers the obvious pride over these women’s accomplishments by outlining past errors, including slave ownership and attempts to assimilate Native Americans, and the sisters’ efforts to redress them.

I will talk about both of these threads, but first I must address the overarching theme of the entire exhibit; sisters’ Americanness. The historians who worked on the exhibit have done an admirable job of weaving sisters into the well-known narrative of American history. Small insights, like the effort to situate sisters as immigrants, as opposed to simply those who served immigrants, are very helpful reminders that sisters were part of the great trends and events of American history, and not just witnesses to them.

A focus early in the exhibit on the theme of adaptation is also useful for situating these women in the American experience. We learn about sister pioneers adjusting their work, their rules, and the patterns of their daily lives to fit the unique circumstances of their particular times and places in the United States.

Great care has been taken to show that the transplantation of sisters was not always successful, an under-explored theme in the history of American immigration. Under a panel on adaptation a wicker travelling trunk is displayed, along with a German sister’s immigration documents. We are told that Sister Engelharda (Clementine) Wilmes arrived in the United States in 1938 at the age of 47. But this is no cheerful story of a plucky sister founding a community or building a net-

work of hospitals. "Sister Engelharda had difficulty adjusting to her new life in the United States," we read. "Prior to her death in 1974, she worked for several decades as a kitchen assistant at academies run by her community." I spent a long moment standing before this display, contemplating this sister who left Nazi Germany only to find that she never really fit in the United States, or found fulfilling work.

Other panels repeat the theme of sisters' essential Americanness, showing sisters responding to several centuries' worth of America's natural and manmade disasters, and sisters' enormous contribution to America's healthcare network. A silent, but insistent, "We were here too!" hangs over all, and rightly so. However, the theme can border on parody at times, as when visitors stand before a panel on sister pioneers amid swells of what I'll call generic patriotic "Westward Ho!" music.

This emphasis on sisters as Americans is hugely important not only for understanding sisters' experiences, but for getting Americanists to embed sisters into the history that is taught in the classroom. Since the history of American women religious is rarely taught at any level, the only people who keep it alive are either Catholic historians or the women religious

themselves. Too often, both groups create a parallel track for this history, bound up tightly in the narratives of American and global Catholicism, and congregational histories. It's easy to do this, mainly because the lives of women religious are so hard to explain without background knowledge of Catholic history and religious practice. The exhibit's creators explore how to tell these stories of women religious as Americans without getting bogged down in Catholic minutia.

An example is the running vocabulary lesson embedded into the top of each panel. Enough basic terms ("nun," "religious," "habit," and "horarium" — a new word for me, I confess) are defined throughout without having to spend too

much time on the details; therefore the designers avoid constantly emphasizing sisters' essential otherness. They acknowledge that otherness from the outset, at the very beginning of the video at the opening of the exhibit. A sister talks about how odd these women must seem, wearing habits and not choosing marriage or a home of their own. But they follow this with a young sister who says that she became a woman religious when she realized that they were real people, just like everyone else. The message for visitors is clear: Nuns are normal; nuns are "us."

As I said, I welcome this approach, but it creates the most curious history of women religious I have ever encountered, a narrative that is extremely disorienting for a Catholic historian. What's apparent from the first is the church's absence (I use this term to mean both the hierarchical church and the larger Catholic community outside of congregations of women religious). This might seem like an odd claim about an exhibit full of Catholic artifacts, but it's

true nonetheless. Congregations of women religious come across as entities in and of themselves, self-supporting and self-led. Foundresses are emphasized, as are sisters' efforts to raise funds and support for their own enterprises.

Sisters are shown working in their own endeavors, and not as part of a larger church body. I could easily imagine a non-Catholic visitor with little knowledge of Catholicism walking away from the exhibit believing that sisters made all of the most important decisions that governed their lives on their own.

The hierarchy is almost completely, shockingly, absent. Being a feminist historian, I am not one to insist on giving the church's male leadership equal time. My difficulty with this omission is that it creates a giant hole in the history of women religious in this country by ignoring both the partnerships, and more commonly, the conflicts that existed between women religious and the men that were appointed to

supervise and control them. I find the decision to exclude this part of the story really curious, since including it does not necessitate changing the larger narrative. You could still portray sisters as strong leaders by explaining that they often chafed against the reality that ultimate authority over their own lives did not rest with them. As I will explain later, the exhibit does briefly mention sisters challenging male authority, but not until the 1960s. Where are the wonderful, rich stories of 19th century superiors battling with their local bishops, or successfully appealing to the Vatican for control?

The absence of the larger church goes beyond ignoring the hierarchy, however. We also get little sense of sisters' relationships with lay Catholics. In this exhibit lay Catholics exist for two purposes: to be served, and to praise sisters' service. Again, women religious often worked in partnership with laypeople, both men and women. We get a glimpse of this in the story of the sisters who invited a family of doctors to join them in founding a new hospital, an enterprise that would become the Mayo Clinic. Of course this exhibit represents the sisters' story, but as in the case of the hierarchy, we do not get a full sense of the work of women religious without understanding their relationships with people outside of their communities.

The section on education is a case in point. It presents us with more praise for sisters' leadership, a slideshow of sister teachers and their smiling pupils through the years, and a glowing testimonial from Maria Shriver. It does little to explain the complex relationships between sisters and those they served as part of a larger church community. The exhibit mentions in passing that some Americans have bad memories of nuns from Catholic school, but it never really delves into the roots of those memories. I'm not talking about bruised knuckles here but about long-standing conflicts between sisters and laypeople (particularly lay women) over questions of authority, status, and, yes, leadership. The second half of the 20th century revealed simmering resentment on the part of laywomen who were forced to defer to nuns' authority, work in Catholic schools at starvation wages, or be passed over for leadership because they did not wear a

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habit. The flipside of leadership is the exercise of authority; how lay Catholics might have reacted to that authority is altogether missing here.

These weaknesses do not substantially detract from the truly compelling aspects of the exhibit. The majority of the exhibit is dedicated to describing sisters' work, shown mainly in the three distinct areas of nursing, education, and social service. These sections of the exhibit will be most intriguing for visitors. Here we see individual acts of courage, sacrifice, and determination. I left with a sense of sisters as faithful women with enormous energy, talents, and a seemingly unlimited capacity for risk-taking. The designers also want us to see that sisters contributed to the development of America through the work of serving those in greatest need. The designers get carried away in a few places while supporting this idea, as when a sister claims on a video that women religious set out to educate the poorest, neediest girls in this country. Let's not forget that many communities supported themselves by doing just the opposite, educating affluent girls who could afford to pay their tuition fees.

Continuing the theme of sisters as Americans, the exhibit goes out of its way to show how sisters were a product of American culture, and shared in Americans' worst prejudices and crimes against minorities and people of color. The exhibit claims that sisters "hold equality and justice in high esteem," but that "as ordinary people they have at times failed in practice." I particularly appreciated a panel on "Slavery and Prejudice," explaining the history of sisters and slave ownership. Here the story is told in a series of documents and images including a photograph of an elderly enslaved man who, we are told, was owned by a community of Ursulines in New Orleans (as were five generations of his family). The grouping also includes a liturgy handout from a 2000 reconciliation service held by three communities who wished to acknowledge and apologize for their history of slave ownership. An adjoining panel addresses "Segregation and Sisterhood: A Paradox." Here the history of the Oblate Sisters of

Providence is highlighted to show how women of color founded their own orders when excluded from white communities (although thankfully that order's history is not confined to this section alone). This section also boasts a wonderful and disturbing artifact, a miniature cotton bale.

The bale, sent to the 1893 Columbian Exposition by students of the Colored Industrial Institute (Pine Bluff, Arkansas), is a powerful reminder of how white sisters contributed to the segregation of African-Americans into vocational training in the Jim Crow era.

The exhibit's confessional tone continues across the way at a panel on Native American assimilation. The panel chronicles sisters' participation in "away schools" which aimed to eradicate native languages and cultures from the lives of young Native Americans. This section contains a quotation that you could spend a year parsing: "While being true to their own values, sisters took part in a system now seen as cruel and insensitive." Were their own values cruel and insensitive? Did they participate in this system despite their values? Are we supposed to admire them for being true to themselves even if it ended in cruelty?

The exhibit is historically grounded by these acknowledgements of past errors, but it really soars in its use of material culture. Because I am already familiar with the narratives presented here, it was the artifacts that really sucked me in (and I imagine this would be true for the casual visitor as well). The primary artifacts on display for Katherine Drexel are a couple of pencil stubs. A note explains that Drexel habitually gave brand new pencils to her students in exchange for their stubs, the ones shown here sharpened nearly



down to the eraser. These Drexel saved for her own use. What a simple, creative way to showcase Drexel's renunciation of her

own wealth and privilege and her love of those she served. Nearby is a fluting machine, an industrial looking gadget used to fold tiny pleats into the more

elaborate of sisters' habits. As this is really the only panel dedicated to habits, the contemporary quote that accompanies the displayed headdress and fluting machine is noteworthy: "The very little time that is daily left to them — time that should really be given to rest and relaxation — must be laboriously spent in buying, sewing, and especially in fluting their frills." It's easy to imagine sisters' frustration when you can see this piece of equipment sitting right in front of you.

My favorite artifacts by far can be found near the panel on the New York Foundling Hospital. I will admit being moved to tears by a collection of the notes written to accompany infants left at the hospital's doors. Who knew that mothers actually did leave half lockets or broken rings so they might eventually come back to claim their children? "I choose you, merciful sisters, as guardians to the child," one mother wrote. Others simply noted the child's name and requested that he or she be baptized. Equally moving is the beautiful wicker cradle that stood in the entrance of the hospital to receive the infants. Someone made an effort to show that these children were valued.

The exhibit does begin to stumble a bit as it moves into the latter half of the 20th century. Part of the problem is that it relies on a video to document the events of the 1960s and 1970s, and that video tries to accomplish far too much. It ends up being a muddle of overused (if iconic)

1960s imagery, followed by a rapid-fire recital of major events. There is little time to absorb, let alone reflect. The key theme that does emerge, if you can catch it, is that sisters were “deeply affected” by the tumultuous upheavals of this period, but ultimately embraced change. The video chooses to interpret this time as a period when sisters turned more toward social justice. It even suggests that social justice is a continuation of the pioneering spirit of the past.

My difficulty with this section is that it both overreaches and underplays the reactions of women religious to the events of this period. It overreaches by suggesting that sisters were of one mind about change. The only dissenting voice on the video is a rather snippy 1960s-era laywoman who complained that nuns didn’t wear habits anymore. Certainly many women religious objected to the changes brought both by Vatican II and “the ‘60s” in general, and had no interest in being pioneers for social justice; their voices don’t seem to have a place in this narrative. Conflict among sisters is not mentioned anywhere in the exhibit.

It also underplays sisters’ involvement

in change by soft-pedaling sisters’ challenges to the hierarchy in this period. For example, the video shows Theresa Kane’s controversial welcome to Pope John Paul II in 1979. We see Kane asking that the pope treat women as “fully participating members” of the church. Strangely, however, it does not show her previous sentence, the one that made the speech so shocking in the first place: “Our contemplation leads us to state that the Church in its struggle to be faithful to its call for reverence and dignity of all persons must respond by providing the possibility of women as persons being included in all ministries of our Church.” Kane was calling for women priests, but you would never know it from watching this film.

The exhibit draws to a close with several thoughtful displays on present-day sisters. I particularly liked a film that showed seven sisters speaking about their current experiences as women religious. Equally powerful is a silent statement about sisters’ continuing presence in the United States: a massive round kiosk listing every active congregation of women religious in America. The last panels pick up the larger themes of the exhibit, show-

ing individual sisters notable for their leadership or pioneering spirit.

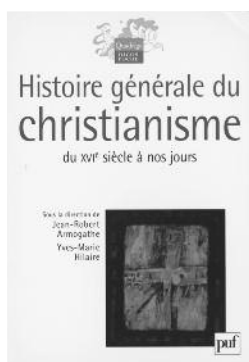
It must be acknowledged that the exhibit chose not to address the elephant in the room: it does not discuss the declining numbers of new women religious over the past 50 years, or the large exodus from congregations starting in the 1960s. Again, if I were a non-Catholic viewing the exhibit I would be left wondering where they all went. The exhibit also does not open a conversation about how the church has had to adapt to the loss of these dedicated women.

In the end I was content to let the exhibit be what it chose to be: a celebration of extraordinary American women, dedicated to their faith and the service of others. Even if you are steeped in the history of women religious, you will leave with a fresh perspective, one that sisters’ themselves want us to see. I, for one, will be contemplating the marvelous thought of sisters in habits staring down pirates.

Mary Henold  
Roanoke College  
Salem, Va.

## Recent publications of interest include:

Jean-Robert Armogathe and Yves-Marie Hilaire, eds., *Histoire générale du christianisme. 2 vols.* (Quadrige/Puf, 2010). These collected essays - from 80 collaborators from nine countries - argue that Christianity is a religion deeply embedded in specific contexts. The study goes



beyond the history of the Catholic Church, or of Christian churches and its institutions, to include a more general history of society and

Christianity’s role therein, beginning with the early church up until the 21st century. Of special interest for readers of this newsletter is Jay P. Dolan’s article,

“Religion et Société Américaine (1870-1914),” which examines the important changes that occurred in the United States during this significant 44 year period. Factors such as war, demographic growth, immigration, urbanization, industrialization, the introduction of electricity, the telegraph and telephone, and other scientific advances provoked a creative phase of American Christianity. Dolan argues that the era of industrialization profoundly changed Christianity in America. He examines how the immigrant Church was one of the most durable and important intuitions. Dolan concludes with an analysis of the social injustices that arose because of industrialization and how this climate, which led to *Rerum Novarum*, also produced a spirit of reform within American Christianity. He concludes with his thoughts on Christianity and modernism.

Michael Baxter, *All the Way to Heaven: The Selected Letters of Dorothy Day* (Marquette, 2010). Baxter presents a sequel to *The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day* (Marquette, 2008) by Robert Ellsberg. In *Selected Letters* Baxter continues to sort through Day’s private papers archived at Marquette University. He begins with “A Love Story,” publishing Day’s correspondence with her common-law husband Forster. The book also focuses on letters documenting the many trials and tribulations that Day experienced, especially in the early years she led the Catholic Worker. Baxter provides a unique glimpse into her spiritual journey through Fr. John J. Hugo, a secular priest of the Pittsburgh diocese who directed the eight-day “famous” silent retreats that Dorothy Day made throughout her life. He explores Day’s adamant pacifist stance through her correspondence to self-described “Christian-anarchist-pacifist” Ammon

## Recent publications of interest include:

Hennacy and to Day's daughter, Tamar Hennessy.

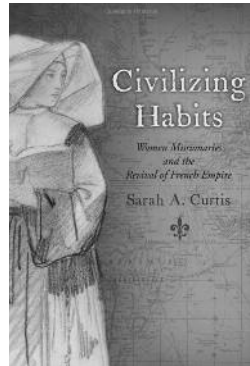
Patrick W. Carey, *Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.: A Model Theologian, 1918-2008* (Paulist, 2010). This religious and intellectual biography focuses on Dulles' contributions to the development of American Catholic theology and to the larger arena of American Catholic life. Born to a prominent and politically involved Presbyterian family, Dulles converted to Catholicism while at Harvard University. Carey traces Dulles' life from his childhood to his World War II experience in the Navy, ordination as a Jesuit, and career as one of America's most prominent theologians in the post-Vatican II era. He argues that Dulles is unmatched in influencing American Catholic thought in the 20th century because of his prolific publications and the wide distribution and reading of his published theology. Carey centers Dulles' contributions to theology within the wider context of his religious life and the cultural and religious transformations in the United States during the last half of the 20th century.

Lawrence S. Cunningham, *Things Seen and Unseen: A Catholic Theologian's Notebook* (Sorin Books, 2010).

Cunningham presents a notebook of quotes, anecdotes and reflections about life as a theologian. The book begins with a quote from Karl Rahner upon which Cunningham has based his own reflections. "I did not lead a life. I worked, wrote, taught, and tried to do my duty and earn a living. I tried this ordinary way of serving God." Cunningham offers reflections on his life as a scholar, passages of scripture, specific liturgical times of year, the pope, and the world at large. This collection of thoughts and inspirations serves as a capstone to Cunningham's impressive life and vocation as a theologian.

Sarah A. Curtis, *Civilizing Habits: Women Missionaries and the Revival of French Empire* (Oxford, 2010). Curtis

examines the lives of three French women missionaries who pioneered education,



charity, and health care services around the globe. Curtis argues that Philippine Duchesne, Emilie de Vialar, and Anne-Marie Javouhey were empire builders of the 19th century, after the French Revolution and the fall of Napoleon. Duchesne evangelized among the Native Americans of Missouri beginning in 1818, focusing on girls' education on the frontier. Vialar accompanied French troops to Algeria and opened missions throughout the Mediterranean basin, working discretely among Muslim populations. Javouhey evangelized among Africans in the French slave colonies, including French Guiana. Curtis focuses due attention on how these women exercised power from within church institutions. By embracing the church, Curtis argues that they were able to challenge church power and evangelize, two roles typically ascribed to men.

Robert Dallek, *John F. Kennedy* (Oxford, 2010). As an abridged version of Dallek's national bestseller, *John F. Kennedy: An Unfinished Life*, Dallek focuses on Kennedy's political career, especially his time as President. He covers key foreign affairs concerns such as the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile crisis, the nuclear test ban, and the race for space. The book also highlights the problems Kennedy encountered in the domestic sphere, such as passing tax cuts and civil rights. He concludes with Kennedy's assassination and his enduring popularity despite his limited days in office.

Ennis Edmonds and Michelle A. González *Caribbean Religious History: An*

*Introduction* (New York University, 2010). Edmonds and González survey the religious history resulting from encounters between indigenous peoples, Europeans, and Africans in the Caribbean beginning in the 15th century. Just as multiple indigenous and African peoples manifested a wide array of religious practices, there were also multiple Christian and European groups staking claims in the area, such as Spanish and French Catholics along with Dutch and English Protestants. The authors also show how Hinduism and Islam were manifested in the Caribbean, established by Indian indentured laborers.

David M. Emmons, *Beyond the American Pale. The Irish in the West, 1845-1910* (University of Oklahoma, 2010).

Emmons argues that Irish immigrants to America did not confine themselves to industrial cities of the East, as is often thought, but rather spread throughout America and had a strong presence in the West. Through his analysis of the western-bound Irish, Emmons offers a new perspective on American expansion. He analyzes the tensions between the Protestant American West and the Irish Catholics. The Irish were often labeled as the backward outcasts of the West, yet Emmons shows how they were an integral part of both the frontier and the American Protestant movement toward industrial capitalism.

Andrew Greeley, *Chicago Catholics and the Struggles within Their Church* (Transaction, 2010). Greeley turns his gaze away from the "great men" of church history towards the Catholic people in the Chicago area. He argues that, despite the recent clergy sex abuse scandal and divisive debates about birth control and abortion, faith is vibrant among Chicago-area Catholics. He surveyed 524 Catholics in Cook and Lake Counties revealing many surprising findings, among them that Chicago youth have deep faith and that 78 percent of those surveyed said Catholicism was either "extremely important" or "very important" in their lives.



Thomas S. Kidd, *God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution* (Basic Books, 2010). Surveying many denominational voices along the Atlantic seaboard, Kidd uses religious testimonies to describe how Christian thought influenced the American colonists before, during, and after the American Revolution. He argues that religion was inseparable from the American Revolutionary movement and that without the various roles of religion the Revolution would have charted a different course. Kidd contends that although church and state are separate in American life, morality and the pursuit of freedom reinforce each other. Particularly interesting is his analysis of how the providentialism of military chaplains contributed to the success of the Continental Army.

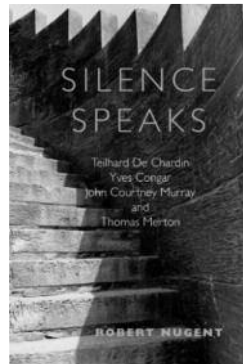
Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp, *American Scriptures: An Anthology of Sacred Writings* (Penguin Classics, 2010). "Scripture" has come to mean any work in which the author claims to have received wisdom from an outside source, be it God, revelation, philosophy or an archive. Maffly-Kipp gathers 15 scriptural texts from religious movements originating in the United States. With an emphasis on mystical elements in America's past, this anthology allows the reader to learn about scripture's role in American life.

Thomas A. McCabe, *Miracle on High Street. The Rise, Fall and Resurrection of St. Benedict's Prep in Newark, N.J.* (Fordham, 2010). Presenting a truly uplifting story of St. Benedict's school in Newark, McCabe shows how a prep school has the power to transform the lives of America's underprivileged students and even to revitalize a city. McCabe begins tracing the foundation of the school over 150 years ago. He then shifts to the trouble it encountered as it was located amidst the 1967 riots, to its closing in 1972, and finally its reopening in 1973. In less than 40 years the prep school has risen to a position of prominence as one of the most successful prep schools in the nation to bridge the gap between rich and poor, and between blacks, Hispanics and whites. For its success as an institution where 95 per-

cent of its graduates attend college and for its role in revitalizing a dwindling community, St. Benedict's has been hailed as a "miracle on High Street."

Lynn S. Neal and John Corrigan, eds., *Religious Intolerance in America. A Documentary History* (University of North Carolina, 2010). Neal and Corrigan chart the history of how intolerance manifested itself within American religious history and culture from the colonial era to the present. Combining over 150 primary documents along with the authors' critical introductions, this volume is innovative for being the first documentary survey of religious intolerance. Looking at hate speech, discrimination, expulsion, various forms of violence, the Ku Klux Klan and many other facets of American religious intolerance, Neal and Corrigan present the other side of the common narrative of American religious freedom.

Robert Nugent, *Silence Speaks: Teilhard de Chardin, Yves Congar, John Courtney Murray, and Thomas Merton* (Paulist, 2011). Nugent presents the stories of four internationally recognized 20th century theologians, each of whom became subject to disciplinary actions by Catholic Church



authority. With an introduction by Richard Gaillardetz, Nugent describes the effects of these actions on their personal and spiritual lives.

Gina Perez, Frank Guriy, and Adrian Burgos, eds., *Beyond El Barrio* (New York University, 2010). Exploring the many nuances of the word "el barrio" from a marginalized neighborhood to a metaphor for robust and active Latino communities in the United States, this volume contends the concept fails to fully bring these communities to life. With recent demographic shifts in New York, Chicago, Miami and

Los Angeles, the book analyzes how Latinos are portrayed in the media, public policy debates, and popular culture. As the title signifies, this collection of essays attempts to move beyond stereotypes of Latino/as and "el barrio" toward a more comprehensive understanding of the lives of Latino/as in the United States.

George Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War* (University of North Carolina, 2010). How did people make sense of the Civil War? Written over the course of nine years with the extensive use of journals, politicians' letters and denominational records, Rable shows how people on both sides of the Civil War turned to their Bibles and to faith in an attempt to understand the conflict as part of a divine plan. Focusing on Catholics and various Protestant groups, Rable demonstrates how both Northerners and Southerners addressed theological issues associated with war and interpreted life through the lens of Divine Providence.

Barabara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie Schemo, eds., *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960* (Duke, 2010). Examining religious female American missionaries from several denominations from the early 19th to the mid-20th century, *Competing Kingdoms* argues that women missionaries greatly contributed towards shaping a Protestant empire based on American values and institutions. This collection of essays examines female involvement in American imperialism and how gender played a role in empire building. The contributors study female American missionaries both within the United States and abroad, and this international perspective increases our understanding of women's role in the spread of American culture internationally.

Stacey M. Robertson, *Hearts Beating for Liberty. Women Abolitionists in the Old Northwest* (University of North Carolina, 2010). Robertson shows how women in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin worked to build a strong anti-

slavery movement in the Old Northwest. Unlike other histories which focus on the East as a locus of abolition, Robertson shows how northwestern women worked in Liberal Party politics, supported a Quaker-led boycott of slave goods, and aided fugitives and free blacks in order to build a collaborative effort against slavery and racism. Robertson compares and contrasts abolition in the East and the Old Northwest, with particular attention to the role of gender in the development of abolitionism in the latter region.

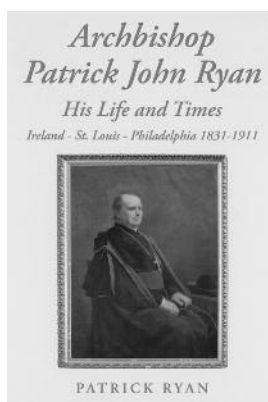
S. Scott Rohrer, *Wandering Souls: Protestant Migrations in America, 1630 to 1865* (University of North Carolina, 2010). In response to historians who view the motives for the westward expansion of Europeans in North America before the Civil War as related predominantly to the quest for land, Rohrer argues that religious motives were equally important and at times even dominant. While acknowledging that arable/farmable land did play a large part in the movement west of Protestants, he examines the religious side. He looks at individuals and families seeking refuge and the migration of church congregations. North America provided a religious refuge where German Moravian pietists, for example, could feel safe to practice their religious purity. Rohrer puts this migration in the perspective of a worldwide missionary endeavor. Examining Puritans, Virginian Anglicans, Presbyterians, Moravians, Methodists, Baptists, Inspirationists and Mormons, Rohrer shows how migration shaped these communities of American Protestant believers.

Patrick Ryan, *Archbishop Patrick John Ryan. His Life and Times. Ireland- St. Louis- Philadelphia, 1831-1911* (Author House, UK, 2010. Available at [www.thurlesbooks.com](http://www.thurlesbooks.com)). Ryan presents the biography of his grandfather's cousin, Archbishop Ryan, "not because of the family connection, but out of a conviction that his contribution to the Roman Catholic

Church and wider society in America deserved to be better known and acknowledged on both sides of the Atlantic." Archbishop Ryan, who journeyed to America from

Ireland and developed his priestly vocation in the United States after the famine in his homeland, contributed to the building of the Catholic Church in America. The author traces Ryan's formation in Ireland and then his experiences in America. He deals with the many challenges that Ryan had to overcome, particularly the rapid growth of the Church due to European immigration. His life stands out for his improvements in Church-state and inter-church relations, his support for Native Americans and African Americans, and his reputation as a preacher and orator. The biography examines not only the history of a leader in the story of the American Catholic Church in the 19th century but also the insights the author brings to the social conditions both in Ireland and America at the time.

Edward R. Schmitt, *President of the Other America: Robert Kennedy and the Politics of Poverty* (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2010). While historiography and the media have tended to focus on Kennedy's opposition to Vietnam as a reason for his candidacy, his role in anti-poverty campaigns has recently come under consideration. Schmitt shows how Kennedy, morally outraged, approached the problem of poverty primarily through a political angle. Besides the moral need to reach out to the disenfranchised, he had a keen awareness that poverty would threaten the nation's long-term stability and thus saw political elites and business owners an integral part of the fight on



poverty. Although his vision was never realized, Schmitt sheds light on the life and mind of Robert Kennedy.

Raymond A. Schroth, *Bob Drinan: The Controversial Life of the First Catholic Priest Elected to Congress* (Fordham, 2010). Tracing the life of Congressman, priest, and social activist Bob Drinan, Schroth portrays how Drinan actively opposed the Vietnam War, called for the impeachment of Richard Nixon, and, surprisingly, supported abortion rights on legal grounds. Drinan believed that *Roe v. Wade* took the government out of this decision process and put the responsibility rightly with the medical community. During this intense period of American politics, Schroth portrays the debates, challenges, and setbacks that shaped Drinan's life.

John Frederick Schwaller, *The History of the Church in Latin America: From Conquest to Revolution and Beyond* (New York University, 2011). In his sweeping history of the Catholic Church in Latin America throughout its 500 year history, Schwaller examines the forces that shaped the church and crafted the unique Catholicism of Latin America. This work can serve as an up-to-date sequel to the classic works of scholars such as Enrique Düssel. Particularly interesting is Schwaller's treatment of the church's role in political conflicts in Latin American republics. Schwaller offers a series of landmarks for the reader to navigate the history of Catholicism from the Reformation through Liberation Theology.

Sean A. Scott, *A Visitation of God: Northern Civilizations Interpret the Civil War* (Oxford, 2010). Scott argues that the faith of the northern laity influenced their views on politics and slavery before and during the Civil War. Abraham Lincoln expressed his gratitude for the northern churches, not for their religious practices, but for their support of the war. Drawing on the collected works of Lincoln, news-

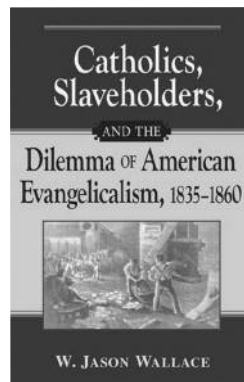
papers, writings from clerics, and church records, Scott shows how the Civil War was intimately tied up with religious meaning and how for many the war became a struggle for a Christian American.

Dennis C. Smolarski, S.J., *Eucharist and American Culture: Liturgy, Unity, and Individualism* (Paulist, 2010). Smolarski studies the works of secular authors such as Alexi de Tocqueville, Robert Bellah, Robert Putnam, and Jean Twenge, and their evaluation of the the challenges of American life, especially in the contemporary era. His interest is exploring individualistic behavioral aspects of contemporary life and the unifying role that the liturgy can play. Smolarski addresses the problems faced in making unity a reality in contemporary American culture.

Michael F. Steltenkamp, *Nicholas Black Elk: Medicine Man, Missionary, Mystic* (University of Oklahoma, 2009). As an abridged version of his previous book, *Black Elk: Holy Man of the Oglala*, Steltenkamp focuses on the life of Nicolas Black Elk (1863-1950) as a Lakota catechist. The updated version contains new photographs, more historical background and a "Note on Sources." He explains how he privileged the interview with Black Elk's daughter, Lucy Looks Twice, as a locus of historical knowledge. Steltenkamp takes the reader inside Catholicism on the reservation through the figure of Black Elk.

W. Jason Wallace, *Catholics, Slaveholders, and the Dilemma of American Evangelicalism, 1835-1860* (Notre Dame, 2010). Examining three antebellum groups — northern evangelicals, southern evangelicals, and Catholics — Wallace argues that divisions among them were caused, in part, by disagreements over the role of religious beliefs in a free society. Both Catholics and southern evangelicals' morality was attacked in northern evangelical presses in the decades preceding the Civil War. Through examining newspapers, sermons, books and private correspondence, Wallace shows that differing

opinions over American and Christian ideals contributed to what he calls the American evangelical dilemma of being both an American and a Christian.



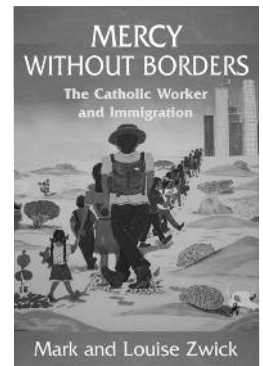
Margaret Washington, *Sojourner Truth's America* (University of Illinois, 2009). With the rise of abolitionism in the 1830s, the slave Isabella "Bell" Hardenbergh (1797-1883), who eventually changed her name to Sojourner Truth, tirelessly preached and traveled advocating antislavery activism. Washington chronicles Truth's life from slavery through her freedom in New York and finally to her many travels and speeches around the country. The author's main contribution to the life of Sojourner Truth is an analysis of Truth's rhetorical techniques. She also focuses on Truth's political genius and her acute awareness of the political debates that surrounded the anti-slavery vanguard. Washington carefully charts how the antislavery circuit made ground on multiple fronts in the decades leading up to the Civil War.

Steven R. Weisman, *Daniel Patrick Moynihan: A Portrait in Letters of an American Visionary* (Perseus, 2010). Based on papers archived in the Library of Congress, Weimer portrays the political career of Moynihan (1927-2003), which lasted for more than 40 years as he took on various roles such as adviser and speechwriter for Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford. He also served as senator from New York and ambassador to India and the United Nations. Weisman compiled Moynihan's letters to cardinals, presidents, senators and theologians such as Reinhold Niebuhr, along with Moynihan's diary entries, reports to his

New York constituents and state papers for four presidents.

Lauren F. Winner, *A Cheerful and Comfortable Faith: Anglican Religious Practice in the Elite Households of Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (Yale, 2010). Looking at the material culture of elites in colonial Virginia, Winner shows how household objects reveal insights into the daily lives and religious practices of the 18th-century gentry, who were largely Anglicans. Through an examination of items such as bowls, needlework, jewelry, baptismal gowns, cookbooks, among other quotidian objects, the reader gleams the pervasiveness of religious practices among the gentry.

Mark and Louise Zwick, *Mercy Without Borders: the Catholic Worker and Immigration* (Paulist, 2010). The Zwicks returned from Central America after witnessing war and repression in the 1970s. Responding to the needs of Central American refugees arriving in Houston, they opened a Catholic Worker House of Hospitality and named it Casa Juan Diego, after the man to whom Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared. They have continued this work for 30 years. In this book they chronicle their work and the stories of the immigrants guests at Casa Juan Diego.



## Recent journal articles of interest include:

Collette Madeleine Bloom, "A Catholic Negro Child in the Segregated South of the 1950s and 1960s: A Postmodern Retrospective on St. Katherine Drexel's Mission in New Orleans," *Catholic Southwest: A Journal of History and Culture* 21 (2010): 23-33.

Patrick W. Carey, "American Catholic Ecumenism on the Eve of Vatican II, 1940-1962," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 2 (spring 2010): 1-17.

Erik J. Chaput, "Battle over the Books in Rhode Island: The Case of Bowerman v. O'Connor," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 3 (summer 2010): 101-16.

Robert Emmett Curran, "'Wave Her Colors Ever': Writing Georgetown's History," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 3 (summer 2010): 65-78.

Andrew Essig, "Faithful Citizenship," *The Catholic Social Science Review* 15 (2010): 237-51.

Vanden Eykel, "Scripture in the Pastoral Letters of the Provincial Councils of Baltimore," *American Catholic Studies*, 121 (fall 2010): 55-79.

Kimberly Flint-Hamilton, "When Church Becomes State: Electioneering and the Culture of Fear and Race in the 2008 Presidential Election," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no.1 (winter 2010): 41-52.

Richard Fossey and Stephanie Morris, "Courage Under Fire: St. Katherine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Confront the Texas Ku Klux Klan," *Catholic Southwest. A Journal of History and Culture* 21 (2010): 7-22.

Michael F. Funchion, "Ties that Bind: Ethnic and Religious Factors in the Marriage Choices of Irish-American Catholics on the Dakota Frontier," *New Hibernia Review* 14, no. 3 (autumn 2010): 121-42.

Mario T. García, "Liberation Correspondent: the Preachings of Moises Sandoval," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 4 (fall 2010): 9-30.

Philip Gleason, "An Academic Conversion Story," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 3 (summer 2010): 79-92.

C. Walker Gollar, "The Historical Methodology of John Tracy Ellis," *The Catholic Historical Review* 97, no. 1 (January 2010): 46-75.

Ramón González, O.P. "Liturgical Music on the Cusp: A Parochial Close-Up," *Catholic Southwest. A Journal of History and Culture* 21 (2010): 63-76.

Brother Jeffery Gros, "The Unity of Christians: The United States Catholic Witness," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 2 (spring 2010): 55-80.

Tyler V. Johnson, "Punishing the Lies on the Rio Grande: Catholic and Immigrant Volunteers in Zachary Taylor's Army and the Fight against Nativism," *Journal of the Early Republic* 30, no. 1 (spring 2010): 63-84.

Karen Kennelly, C.S.J., "An Immigrant Drama: The College of St. Catherine and Phi Beta Kappa," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 3 (summer 2010): 43-64.

Jerome Kodell, O.S.B., "The Gospel Wagon of Father Boniface Spanke, O.S.B.," *American Benedictine Review* 61 (September 2010): 257-85.

Timothy Matovina, "Remapping American Catholicism," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 4 (fall 2010): 31-72.

Thomas A. McCabe, "The Duke, Divine Comedy, and Discipline at St. Benedict's Prep, 1905-1972," *American Catholic Studies* 121 (fall 2010): 25-54.

James P. McCartin, "Engendering Faith: American Catholics and Gender History,"

*American Quarterly* 62, no. 4 (December 2010): 977-88.

Cecelia Moore, "Conversion Narratives: The Dual Experiences and Voices of African American Catholic Converts," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 1 (winter 2010): 27-40.

Kristy Nabhan-Warren, "Blooming Where We're Planted": Mexican-descent Catholics Living Out Cursillo de Cristiandad," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 4 (fall 2010): 99-125.

Mark Newman, "The Catholic Church and Desegregation in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, 1961-1976," *Louisiana History* 51 (summer 2010): 306-32.

David J. O'Brien, "American Catholic History and American Higher Education: Memories and Aspirations," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 3 (summer 2010): 93-100.

Donna Porche-Frilot and Petro Munro Hendry, "'Whatever Diversity of Shade May Appear': Catholic Women Religious Educators in Louisiana, 1727-1862," *Catholic Southwest: A Journal of History and Culture* 21 (2010): 34-62.

Bishop Ricardo Ramirez, C.S.B., "Reflections on Moises Sandoval," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 4 (fall 2010): 1-4.

Juan Romero, "Musings on Moises Sandoval," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 4 (fall 2010): 5-8.

Olivia T. Ruiz Marrujo and Alberto López Pulido, "Dismantling Borders of Violence: Migration and Deportation Along the U.S.-Mexico Border," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 4 (fall 2010): 127-43.

Thomas F. Rzeznik, "The Parochial Enterprise: Financing the Institutional Growth in the Brick-and-Mortar Era,"

*American Catholic Studies* 121 (fall 2010): 1-24.

Todd Scribner, "Negotiating Priorities: The National Catholic Welfare Conference and United States Migration Policy in a Post-World War II World, 1948-1952," *American Catholic Studies* 121, no. 4 (winter 2010): 61-86.

Geoffrey Simmins, "Women Religious as Architectural Patrons: Three Case Studies—One Franciscan and Two Benedictine," *American Benedictine Review* 61 (September 2010): 225-56.

Douglas J. Slawson, "The Vincentian Experience of the Civil War in Missouri," *American Catholic Studies* 121, no. 4 (winter 2010): 31-60.

C. J. T. Talar, "Seminary Reform and Theological Method on the Eve of the Modernist Crisis: Transatlantic Reception of J. B. Hogan's Clerical Studies," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 3 (summer 2010): 1-18.

Samuel J. Thomas, "Immanence and Transcendence: John Cardinal Dearden's Church of Tomorrow," *American Catholic Studies* 121, no. 4 (winter 2010): 1-30.

Eric Vanden Eykel, "Scripture in the Pastoral Letters of the Provincial Councils of Baltimore," *American Catholic Studies* 121 (fall 2010): 55-79.

Joseph M. White, "A Seminary for the Nation's Pontifical University: The Founding of the Theological College of the Catholic University of America," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 3 (summer 2010): 19-42.

Robert E. Wright, O.M.I., "Mexican-Descent Catholics and the U.S. Church, 1880-1910: Moving Beyond Chicano Assumptions," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 28, no. 4 (fall 2010): 73-97.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **Museum Exhibit**

*Women and Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America*

Dates: September 3 through December 31, 2011

Place: Northern Indiana Center for History

This traveling museum exhibit (please see Exhibit Review beginning on page 12 in this publication), a project of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), has been on tour for four years including a display at the Smithsonian Museum. The exhibit is sponsored by the Cushwa Center, Notre Dame's departments of History and American Studies, the Saint Mary's College Center for Spirituality and the Northern Indiana Center for History. Events exploring the exhibit's theme include an inaugural lecture on September 24, by Sister Sandra Schneiders, I.H.M., professor of New Testament studies and Christian spirituality at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in Berkeley.

The following three events will address themes related to the history of women religious and will be linked to the Women and Spirit exhibit mentioned here:

## **Cushwa Center Lecture**

*The Oblate Sisters of Providence*

Diane Batts Morrow, University of Georgia

Date: Friday, November 4, 2011

## **Seminar in American Religion**

*Civilizing Habits: Women Missionaries and the Revival of the French Empire* (Oxford, 2010)

Sarah A. Curtis, San Francisco State University

Commentators:

Angelyn Dries, O.S.F., St. Louis University  
Thomas Kselman, University of Notre Dame

Date: Saturday, November 5, 2011

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Place: McKenna Hall, Center for Continuing Education

## **American Catholic Studies Seminar**

Shannen Dee Williams, Rutgers University

Commentator:

Diane Batts Morrow, University of Georgia

Date: Thursday, November 3, 2011

## **Hibernian Lecture**

*"All Changed, Changed Utterly": Easter 1916 and America*

Robert Schmuhl, University of Notre Dame

Date: Friday, October 28, 2011

Please see the Cushwa Center Web site ([www.nd.edu/~cushwa](http://www.nd.edu/~cushwa)) for details on these events.

## Archives Report

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Last July Judith Church Tydings wrote to ask if we would be interested in having her papers in our archives. We said that we certainly would.

Tydings was an early leader in the Catholic charismatic renewal movement and co-founder of the Mother of God Community in the Washington D.C. area. Born Judith Church in Chester, Penn., she earned a bachelor's degree from Chestnut Hill College and a master's degree from St. John's University in New York. She taught religion at Ursuline Academy High School in Bethesda, Md., and at Georgetown Preparatory School in Rockville. She married John Tydings, and they had four children.

In 1966 she joined Edith Difato and other members of Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Potomac, Md., in meetings after daily Mass to study the documents of Vatican II and consider the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The Mother of God Community traces its origins to a prayer meeting that took place at the parish on June 7, 1968, with approximately 90 people in attendance. The group incorporated in 1971 as the Potomac Charismatic Community, Inc., and adopted the title "Mother of God Community" in 1972. At its height, it had 500 members.

In 1974 Tydings served as a member of the National Advisory Committee on Catholic Charismatic Renewal and on the steering committee for the International Conference on Charismatic Renewal. She spoke at charismatic conferences, and published *Gathering A People: Catholic Saints in Charismatic Perspective* (Logos, 1977). As a female, Tydings was a significant leader in a movement that generally emphasized subordination of wives to their husbands; her own husband was an unenthusiastic Protestant, typically regarded by charismatics as "unsaved." Eventually she left the Mother of God Community.

In 1994 the Mother of God Community conducted a self-assessment to become a private association of the faithful in the Washington Archdiocese. Current and past members were invited to participate. Some criticisms alleging cult-like characteristics resulted in a group of former members meeting with the Cult Awareness Network.

In 1997 and 1998 Tydings interviewed former members of many American Catholic charismatic communities for a 98-page article, "Shipwrecked in the Spirit" (*Cultic Studies Journal*, 16:2, 1999). Bishops have since used this article in deliberations about charismatic communities in their dioceses. At an age when most people retire, Tydings returned to school and earned a Ph.D. with a dissertation on women and aging.

The Tydings collection amounts to three linear feet and consists of correspondence, clippings, conference programs, transcriptions of meetings, books, articles, annotations, and audio and video recordings.

This new collection joins several others in our archives concerning the Charismatic Renewal: James E. Byrne, James T. Connelly, John and Kathleen Ferrone, Edward O'Connor, Adrian and Marie Reimers, and True House have all contributed collections. We also have related periodicals, ephemera, and individual files in various other collections.

Sources: *American Catholic Who's Who, 1978-79*, Wikipedia article "Mother of God Community," and e-mail messages from Judith Church Tydings.

— Wm. Kevin Cawley, Ph.D.  
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