Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter

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Fair Game or Foul?

The appointment by the Holy See of Fellowship members William May of the Catholic University of America and John Finnis of Oxford University to the *International Theological Commission* is a well deserved recognition of two scholars whose research talents have been well known for years, not less so than their firm and full commitment to the meaning and integrity of the Catholic faith. They are also obedient sons of the Church, who recognize that the final judge of their work—if it touches the truth of the Catholic faith—is magisterium.

These virtues—intelligence, industry, faith, fidelity, humility, obedience, prayerfullness, are necessary components of anyone who aspires to be a Catholic theologian. One can study the world's experience with religious thought without being a theologian. One can be a scholar in religious matters without being a Christian, certainly without being a Catholic theologian.

But the Catholic theologian, is exercising a "genuinely ecclesial authority," which he usually derives from his canonical mission. He is sent by pope and bishops to preach and teach in a way no different than the apostles who were sent by Christ. Even if this canonical mission has not been explicated, theologizing can only be done in communion with the faith, and this means in communion with the *magisterium*.

Who said this?

The *International Theological Commission* (ITHC) in 1976, following five years of meetings over the relationship of Catholic theology to the magisterium. ITHC, with theologians like Yves Congars, Barnabas Ahern, Philip Delhaye participating, published twelve theses which situated Catholic theologians "in medio ecclesiae," subject to the *magisterium*. During those deliberations Paul VI (December 16, 1973) told the members of ITHC that the Christian moral law relates directly to people's salvation, thus placing grave responsibility on the private and public conduct of those theologians who call themselves Catholic.

In theses 7 and 8, the ITHC established the Catholic rules for the theological enterprise. The freedom of Catholic theologians is exercised only within the Church. Even when they perform a critical function, they must do this positively, not destructively, i.e. they must never impair the content or meaning of revelation.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS ISSUE?

Fair Game or Foul?

These Catholic rules, like laws of any kind, are only as good as their enforcement. Cardinal Ratzinger made this point recently in his September 17, 1985 letter to Charles Curran: "The authorities of the Church cannot allow the present situation to continue in which the inherent contradiction is prolonged that *one who is to teach in the Church in fact denies her teaching*." (Emphasis added.)

Cardinal Ratzinger is conceding that this has been going on for some time, leading to the loss of Catholic unity in matters of faith and morals. It would be temerarious at this time to ponder Paul VI's additional concern for the salvation of those who have been following false teachers.

But if Church authorities have since 1965 allowed large freedom to scholars, the same liberality cannot be said for dissenting scholars, once they secured control of Church institutions—whether these be a diocesan office, a formation center, a classroom, or a newspaper office. All societies reinforce the reigning ideology of their leadership and in recent years dissenters, having captured Church institutions, have bent them to the service of dissent. They insist that their Catholic religious enterprise be governed by secular rules which were originally composed for administrators of a civil society where religious belief or moral conduct was of no statutory account. Dissenters became a class-conscious interest group tending to stand outside of Church authority and to be its critic and judge.

In spite of the ITHC guidelines, dissenters insist on playing by these secular rules. Whether as teacher, catechist, editor, novice master they may choose not to confirm or deepen the truth proclaimed by the magisterium. ITHC member Karl Lehmann asserts (thesis 12) that "Dialogue comes to an end when the theologian clearly contradicts the truth of faith. In this case it is the theologian himself who in the last analysis has refused the dialogue." Yet records show how dissenters consider their pastoral responsibility to include freeing the faithful from restraints imposed by the magisterium. The self-named "mainstream" do not recognize themselves as subject to "outside" authority, reject the idea of canonical mission, demand that their freedom extend as far as American civil law will protect it, use threats and publicity to cow their critics, even if they be bishops, admit no limits in practice to dialogue, act as if all truths they declare controversial to be uncertain, if not unknown. They refuse at times to appear before competent authorities, save on terms common to the secular legal processes, and are more likely to sanction Church authority than to be sanctioned by it.

Those sanctions have included "labelling" supporters of magisterium as "conservative," "ultraconservative," "reactionary," "authoritarian." Even when NC News defines someone as an "advocate of conservative positions on theology and church authority," this is not intended to be a compliment. Bishops who support Rome are called victims of the Curial system or voices for an outdated theology or do not know much theology or are outside the mainstream, etc. It is destructive enough when such stigmata are inflicted by the secular media, but worse when Catholic editors, or members of Priests Councils, or Novice Masters take this labelling seriously to keep out of office or seminary or classroom known scholars or spokesmen for the Church, such as Bill May or John Finnis. Catholic supporters of magisterium are often denied promotion because they are considered "controversial," this in institutions already well staffed by dissenters.

The sanctions imposed by organized dissenting scholars include influencing the publication of articles, books, reviews, news stories which hold dissent up to serious criticism. Controlling the dissemination of assent to the faith is a powerful reinforcement of dissent. Some voices within the Catholic theological community wish to choose the bishops with whom they will dialogue, and have indicated that they would prefer to dialogue without participation by the *American Catholic Philosophical Association* or the *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars*, the two academic groups in the U.S. firmly committed to the magisterium.

The obvious answer of bishops to such a demand is to take charge of scholarly debates which deal with Catholic truth and the life of the Church, seeing that Catholic rules of the academic game are followed. This means, too, correcting error and sanctioning whoever, in Cardinal Ratzinger's words, "denies her teaching."

Bill May and John Finnis will be a credit to the *International Theological Commission*, which is a proper forum for internal theological debate and scholarly judgment. But the objective of theologians engaged in this enterprise must always be as ITHC said in Thesis 5, to "lend their aid to the task of spreading, clarifying, confirming and defending the truth which magisterium propounds." After all, the final mission given by Christ to the apostles included these words: "Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you."

Pick and choose Catholicism does not appear under this rubric.

—George A. Kelly

The Economic Pastoral: Draft Three

One section of the pastoral seems to neglect Catholic doctrine and to contradict standard Catholic policy. The third draft read as follows:

> No. 282—"Hunger is often linked with the problem of population growth as effect to cause. While this thesis is sometimes presented in an over-simplified fashion, we cannot fail to recognize that the earth's resources are finite and that population tends to grow exponentially. Our concern however, must be for the quality of human life as for the numbers of human lives. Whether the world can provide a truly human life for twice as many people or more as now live in it (many of whose lives are sadly deficient today) is a matter of urgent concern that cannot be ignored."
>
> No. 283—"Nevertheless, we do not believe that people are poor and hungry primarily because they have large families; rather, family size is heavily dependent on levels of economic development, education, respect for women, availability of health care, and the cultural traditions of communities. Therefore, in dealing with population growth we strongly favor efforts to address these social and economic concerns. Within this broader framework of integral development, the Church also fully supports the need for all to exercise responsible parenthood."

There are two things to notice about these paragraphs. First, they manifest confidence in standard population projections, which are always of the doomsday variety. While propagandists no longer speak of "population bomb" or "population zero," given the way so many demographic estimates are deflated by subsequent facts, the Catholic bishops are made to say that "population tends to grow exponentially." This phrasing is deceptive because an "exponent" is a variable in a statistical computation and suggests guesswork. It could be understood to mean that population grows even faster than "the algebra of compound interest," which was the expression contained in the second draft. Is the writer using as a guide the classic Malthusian formulation? Church authorities have traditionally been wary of that formula for obvious reasons.

The second thing to notice about No. 283 of the economic pastoral (third draft) is that it suggests "responsible parenthood" as a social responsibility for all. "Need for all" are the words used.

The U.S. Bishops ceased speaking of the so-called population question after 1973, but up to that year they treated population projections as the uncertainties they are and, when they admitted the real pressures of population on a given economy, they advised States (including governments) not to isolate population questions from others of economic development, of migration and so forth. Episcopal judgments on population/development were never pessimistic. Governments, too, were always warned not to do anything that appeared to be coercion in family planning matters, although nations were granted the right to indicate or outline their national interests.

No. 282, in the third draft, is a subtle introduction of the population question into a bishops' letter minus the cautions found in earlier statements. This time it is also tied into the "quality of life," the traditional code word for proposals either eugenic or contraceptive in purpose. Here "quality of life" becomes a backdrop for the introduction of "responsible parenthood." This phrase has a history, and draft writers for the bishops, who cannot weigh every line tendered them, know that history. When used to advance or defeat a cause terminology becomes important. When the Church takes over secular terms, it baptizes them, as it did pagan feasts, in order to serve better her purpose. "Responsible parenthood," like "academic freedom," was coined first to express a viewpoint inimical to the gospel message. In the Planned Parenthood lexicon, "responsible parenthood" means the social obligation to have few babies and the use of contraceptive techniques to further this end. From the beginning abortion was part of the Planned Parenthood package. As the phrase "responsible parenthood" gained currency and filtered into Catholic conversation, it was always defined within that Catholic context, with Catholic cautions about "immoral means." When Paul VI used the term in *Humanae Vitae*, he wrote six paragraphs (in No. 10) to ensure that the term was "exactly understood," one which stressed generosity as well as deliberation, right moral order as well as conscience, and the exclusion of contraception, contraceptive sterilization, and abortion.

What is equally important, "responsible parenthood," even when defined Catholic, has always been offered in official Church documents as an approved option. It is never recommended. (*Humanae Vitae* contained praiseworthy remarks for the large family.) How come, therefore, in this document on economic life, "responsible parenthood" is tied into "quality of life" (a justification for abortion and euthanasia), is introduced without further distinction and is recommended as a need for all?

Unquestionably, there have been priests within the USCC who do not accept *Humanae Vitae*, and who prefer to keep its central doctrine in a public policy limbo. A dozen years ago, J. Brian Hehir wrote an article for *Theological Studies* (March 1974) which advocated silence by the Church on the contraception issue. His thesis was that the Church would fare better in public debates by concentrating her argu-

(continued on p. 4)

1,400 Faculty Support John Paul II

An informal survey of the membership of the *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars* reveals that almost 1,400 members of the Catholic academic community profess themselves "in agreement with the recent efforts of John Paul II to restore authenticity to Catholic theology and to reclaim colleges which call themselves Catholic for service to the intellectual and religious mission of the Church." More than 670 members of the Fellowship were joined by 723 of their associates in Catholic and Public higher education, lending support to the Pope in his dealings with Fr. Curran and the U.S. Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities. The informal survey was conducted by mail May-June 1986.

"It is almost indecent to conduct a poll such as this, since we are dealing with the right of *magisterium* to determine what Catholic theology is, and what makes for a Catholic University." So said Msgr. George A. Kelly of St. John's University, New York City, president of the *Fellowship*, in announcing the results of the survey.

Msgr. Kelly continued:

"The Fellowship became involved reluctantly in this head count by the barrage of press releases from the Charles Currans, the Theodore Hesburghs and Co. suggesting that the Holy See lacked academic support in the U.S. Their assumptions are just not true. Most of the faculty out there in the unknown world, where 25,000 Catholic academics work daily, have no voice either in the *Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities* or in the *Catholic Theological Society of America.*

"What is fascinating in the Fellowship survey is the number of Catholic professors holding important secular university posts who wish Catholic theology and Catholic colleges to remain fully Catholic. Friends of the Holy See can be found at the Universities of Chicago, California, Texas, Utah, Southern California, Georgia, Alabama, etc. One expects small Catholic colleges to be pro-John Paul II, such as Illinois' Mallinckrodt College, where 22 faculty members affirmed their support of Rome, or at Oakland's St. Mary's with 26 declared defenders of Catholic identity, or in New York's Molloy College with 27.

"There is significant support for Rome all over the Catholic University world—at Marquette, San Francisco, St. Louis, Georgetown, Fordham, Creighton, CUA, Laval, Ottawa, Providence, etc.

"The Fellowship survey was rather casual, impromptu and confined to its own membership. Even so, there are clearly Catholic academic strongholds still alive and well, at least evidenced by the amount of faculty signatories given in this small survey—26 at the University of San Francisco, 34 at Steubenville, 43 at Chicago's Loyola, 55 at Houston's St. Thomas, 81 at St. John's in New York City. Approximately 70 individual Jesuits—Leonard Waters, Paul Quay, Joseph Mangan, Francis Canavan, Frank McCool, Richard Roach, Garrett Fitzgerald, Charles Dulles, David Walsh, Timothy McDonnell, John Connery, John Powell, Daniel O'Connell, Leo Sweeney, Earl Weis and scores of others—are on record. Some Jesuits insist that below the Jesuit management structures, a majority of functioning Jesuits stand with the Pope, regardless of what Jesuit dissenters would have us believe.

"The mail also contained discouraging news about the passivity of many faculties, who stand aloof waiting to see who wins before they choose sides, members who think the argument between Curran and Rome is on the order of differences between Democrats and Republicans. Then, of course, letters recount tales of teachers of theology who no longer believe in the magisterium of the Church.

"This dark side to the contemporary world of Catholic higher education is livened by the beacons of blaring light in the still existing citadels of faith."

(Economic Pastoral from p. 3)

ment on the rights of the fetus, leaving "contraceptive practice as an issue of private morality which the Church continues to teach for its members, but not an issue of public morality." Fr. Hehir is a staff writer for the bishops' 1986 economic pastoral.

The Church would not be true to herself, if she permitted a recommendation of "responsible parenthood for all" to enter an episcopal document without explanation and distinction. Contraceptive intercourse is an intrinsically evil act. The Church cannot be silent on the subject, no matter what others say. Events since 1974 have demonstrated how wrong Hehir's political judgment was. Anti-abortion arguments are not successful with people whose moral system already accepts contraception and with their assumed moral right to turn this evil into a good. Factually, abortion, sterilization and contraception are linked philosophically, morally, industrially, and politically. What is more, John Paul II has gone out of his way (July 18, 1984) to speak of the Church's contraceptive norm as that which "belongs not only to the natural moral law but also to *the moral order revealed by* God." This makes it insensible that the Church could remain silent on the subject, even though those who do not believe in that teaching or in the Church's authority to declare this teaching to be true, prefer official silence to repeated ecclesial affirmations. By now it must be clear that local dissention is not going to mute the magisterial and universal voice of the Holy See on this subject.

Items of Interest

• Effective July 1, 1986, the Human Life Center, formerly at Collegeville, is located at the University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio.

A joint announcement of the transfer was made by Father Scanlan and Father Hilary Thimmesh, O.S.B., president of Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota.

Father Scanlan expressed his pleasure over the transfer: "We welcome the Human Life Center and are deeply grateful that the University of Steubenville will be the new site of this most worthwhile apostolate." The Human Life Center's relocation will, in no way, affect subscriptions to the INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING (I.R.N.F.P.).

Correspondence regarding the I.R.N.F.P. should be sent to either Mike and Rita Marker, Publishers, or John and Kathi Hamlon, Editors, at the following address:

The Human Life Center, University of Steubenville, Franciscan Way, Steubenville, Ohio 43952 (Telephone 614-282-9953)

• *The Legionaries of Christ* have spread from Mexico to Spain, Rome, Ireland, the U.S., Northern Italy, Caracas, Chile, Brazil and Australia. Pope Pius XII in 1941 granted it canonical approval, Pope Paul VI made it a pontifical congregation, and Pope John Paul II approved the Constitutions, recognizing in them an embodiment of Vatican II's authentic teaching on religious life, priesthood and apostolate. Vocations increased and kept increasing right through the 60's and 70's. There are 51 Novices in their 2-year Novitiate in Connecticut (one out of every eleven clerical Novices in the Nation). Formation is thorough, deep and demanding. Yet, from a handful of priests in the early 60's, they now have 200, and four times as many students for the priesthood!

Their apostolate has undergone a like expansion, from one school in the early 60's to the direction of three Universities, 35 schools, over 90 Centers for the integral formation of youth, Family Guidance Centers, Pontifical Catechetical Centers, numerous ventures in the media apostolate.

For further information write to: Father Anthony Bannon, L.C., Legionaries of Christ, Cheshire, CT 06410.

• Kenneth D. Whitehead has been sworn in as deputy assistant secretary for higher education programs in the U.S. Department of Education. In his new role, Whitehead is responsible for 37 federal grant, loan and fellowship programs involving three major service areas, including the Center for International Education. These programs totalled nearly $500 million in federal funds during fiscal year 1986.

• Cardinal Silvio Oddi, former Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, and Mother Teresa of Calcutta are two of the four recipients of the Apostolate for Family Consecration's *Family Fidelity Awards*.

• In 1891 Bishop Thomas Francis Brennan determined to found the College of St. Thomas Aquinas in Fort Worth. The College, to be located on The Heights of St. Thomas, was to be an institution "modern and progressive, while thoroughly Catholic."

Bishop Brennan's idea did not die, and from 1921 to 1955 there was a Catholic College in Fort Worth, Our Lady of Victory, sponsored by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namour.

In 1981 several members of the Cathedral Parish, convinced that the intellectual life which is intrinsic to Catholic tradition should be encouraged in Fort Worth, founded the *St. Thomas More Institute*. The Institute has in turn founded the *Common Tradition Program*, ecumenical short courses for adults; the *Trinity Curriculum*, studies appropriate to the Christ College Project; and the *Curriculum in the History of Christian Thought*, post-baccalaureate studies in Christian literature.

For further information write St. Thomas More Institute, P.O. Box 11242, Fort Worth, Texas 76109.

• Rev. Robert H. Aucoin was chosen to be the President of Mater Dei College (Ogdensburg, New York) effective July 1, 1986. Fr. Aucoin has been the acting president of Mater Dei since January 6, 1986.

• Fellowship members William May of the Catholic University of America and John Finnis of Oxford University have been appointed by the Holy See to membership on the *International Theological Commission*

DR. JOSEPH SCOTTINO will be the recipient of 8th Annual Cardinal Wright Award for outstanding service to the Church at the September Convention.

Tracking a Footnote

by Donald J. Keefe, S.J.

On January 27th, 1986, Prof. Daniel Maguire of Marquette University spoke in Albany, New York to a reported audience of approximately a thousand family planning officials; in the course of his talk he attributed to Pope Leo XII (not, as it was reported in the Times-Union, Leo XIII) a denunciation of vaccination. The news of a papal condemnation of a major medical advance was heard as scandalous and of course was widely published.

Upon my request for documentation of this charge, Dr. Maguire referred me to a recent publication by Fr. Richard McComick, S.J., of Georgetown University, entitled *Health and Medicine in Catholic Tradition* (New York: Crossroad, 1984) on p. 17 of which the following statement appears:

> In 1829 Leo XII declared, "Whoever allows himself to be vaccinated ceases to be a child of God. Smallpox is a judgment of God, the vaccination is a challenge toward heaven."

As authority for this quotation, Fr. McCormick had cited an article written by a well known Louvain moralist, Fr. Louis Janssens, entitled "Artificial Insemination: Ethical Considerations," which was published in *Louvain Studies* 8/1 (Spring, 1980), pp. 3-29.

On p. 11 of Fr. Janssens' article the same statement as that repeated by Fr. McCormick appears, again in quotation marks, again attributed to Leo XII, but this time with reliance upon the authority of Fr. Abel Jeannière, S.J., a French Jesuit who in 1968 had inserted this supposed papal quotation in an article entitled "Corps malléable," which he had published in *Cahiers Laënnec* 28/1 (1968).

On pp. 93-94 of this volume of *Cahiers Laënnec*, Fr. Jeanniére's article provides a French version of the same statement, in quotation marks, attributing it to Leo XII:

> "Indeed, throughout the centuries corpses were denied to the surgeon's scalpel. But there are more recent and startling traces of the same mentality. Vaccination, for example, has not been eyed sympathetically by the Church as witness the 1829 declaration of Leo XII: "Whoever goes through with vaccination ceases to be a child of God... Smallpox is a judgment of God, and vaccination is a defiance hurled at heaven."

However, in this article Fr. Jeannière provided no authority for his attribution to Leo XII of this denuncation of vaccination.

Since the line of citation extending from Professor Maguire through Fr. McCormick and Fr. Janssens to Fr. Jeannière ended without having anywhere produced any evidence justifying the attribution, I asked Fr. Jeannière, now resident in Paris, for further information. He promptly replied that all the references to the purported statement by Leo XII on vaccination were available in another article which he had published in the December, 1968 issue of the French periodical *Projet* (no. 30); he included in his reply a xerox of the pertinent page (1235) on which that quotation once more appears, this time with a footnote appended (I have here underlined the quotation):

> "An example well illustrates this danger. Jenner is known to have performed the first vaccination in 1796 and the vaccine quickly enjoyed great success. But has one the right to alter the equilibrium of the human body, even to make it more resistant to illness? The Church did not think so, witness the declaration Pope Leo XII felt obliged to make in 1829, "Whoever goes through with vaccination ceases to be a child of God... smallpox is a judgment of God... and vaccination is a defiance hurled at heaven."

The supporting footnote reads as follows:

> "This statement is cited by Dr. Pierre Simon in *Le Contrôle des naissances* [*Birth Control*], Payot, 1966, p. 164. Leo XII having died on February 10, 1829, I ask myself in what circumstances he made this declaration which is not found in *Bullaire Roman*. But the text agrees precisely with the opinion of Cardinal Annibal de la Genga, the future Leo XII, who in 1823 deesignated vaccination as "bestial" (quest' innesto bestiale) - Cf. Schmidlin, *Histoire des papes*, I, 2, p. 3 and Note 11. For historic trivia one should note that vaccination was suppressed in the Papal States of 1815 at the same time as another revolutionary innovation, street lighting! But under Gregory XVI (1831-1846) whose liberal character no one ever praised, vaccination became the thing in Rome. (Concerning the possibility of altering the human body, cf. *Cahiers Laënnec*, March, 1968, La chirurgie plastique, reparatrice et aesthetique, Reparative and Esthetic Plastic Surgery, especially A. Jeannière, "Corps malleable," p. 92 ff.)"

Tracking a Footnote

Dr. Simon's book is not available to me, but it is evident from Fr. Jeannière's reference to it that neither does this book provide any authority for the quotation, which Fr. Jeannière nonetheless repeats from his earlier article, as a quotation certified to be such by its enclosure in quotation marks, although he is now aware that there is no basis for the attribution, other than his own personal conviction that this pseudo-statement corresponds to what Cardinal della Genga had *thought* before he became Leo XII. The unverified quotation therefore continues to be presented as factual, while at the same time Fr. Jeannière informs us in the footnote that he has upon investigation been unable to verify the supposed quotation.

Consequently, it now must be said that the entire chain of citation from Professor Maguire to Dr. Simon is grounded on nothing at all; there is no basis whatever for supposing that the remark attributed to Leo XII was made by anyone at any time; further, this was admitted by Fr. Jeannière in his *Projet* article of December, 1968.

Yet this supposed quotation has appeared in print five times in two languages and in three countries over the past eighteen years, three of these publications taking place after its lack of documentation had been established and one of them by the very person who on the same page admits its lack of foundation. It was again published orally in the United States last January by a well known professor of moral theology, and has never been retracted by any of those who, having used it, might be supposed to be concerned for its validity and to have taken the minimal care necessary to verify it. It has thus entered as unquestioned fact into the conventional wisdom of the Catholic theological establishment as a thing which should be taken to have been said by Leo XII whether or not he actually said it. No other conclusion is compatible with the complete disregard for its facility exhibited by those who have continued to cite it.

It is of course evident that what Cardinal della Genga may or may not be thought to have thought or said before he became Leo XII is of no relevance to the purpose for which the supposed "quotation" from Leo XII concerning vaccination has been cited, which is that of showing, by establishing a contradiction between the teaching of a 19th century pope and the teaching of the contemporary Church, that the Catholic Magisterium has over the course of time changed its mind on such things as morally appropriate medical interventions and so may be expected to do so again in the matter of its condemnations, repeated at Vatican II and in the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* in 1968, of direct abortion and generally of those practices exhibiting what has come to be called the contraceptive mentality; for the support of such argument the purported remarks of cardinals do not serve.

Additional Historical Note

Fr. Jeanniere uses Joseph Schmidlin's *Histoire des Papes* (II p. 3, n. 11) for his persuasion that, however unsubstantiated the passage he has attributed to Cardinal della Genga may be, it nonetheless represents what, as Pope Leo XII he really thought. The only letter he found in the Schmidlin book is a letter from Austrian Ambassador Apponyi (to the Papal States) to Prince Metternich the Austrian Chancellor, a letter which shows that Cardinal della Genga (the future Leo XII) opposed Austrian influence in the Vatican. Austria was a rival to France during that period, both nations seeking to subordinate the structures of the Church to their respective national interests. During this period of political by-play Cardinal Consalvi and Cardinal della Genga were on opposite sides. Consalvi favored certain reforms such as street lighting, fire departments, vaccination, with the increased taxation that went with them. These reforms were revoked before Leo XII ascended the papacy. Nonetheless, Austrian Ambassador Apponyi passes on to his government the reigning gossip about Cardinal della Genga's conservatism without worrying about their authenticity. When he reports della Genga's supposed remark denouncing vaccination, we learn nothing of its context, clearly not a remark made in Apponyi's presence. Della Genga later tried to refuse his election to the papacy on the grounds of poor health, but as Leo XII he is portrayed by Schmidlin as an aloof and conservative churchman, whose stature was acknowledged by his contemporaries at his death and who ably filled Peter's Chair during an age of revolutionary turmoil. His intelligence was never questioned and his great "sin" seems to have been his distaste for secularism of the French and Austrian governments, and his insistence on a clear and effective distinction between the authority of Church and State. Whatever he said or did not say as Cardinal della Genga on vaccination, there is no scholarly basis for using Leo XII as the basis for moving the Church away from its traditional moral absolutes.

LAST NOTICE FOR FELLOWSHIP CONVENTION

Roosevelt Hotel, New York City, September 26-28th Cardinals O'Connor and Carberry. For last minute arrangements call Msgr. Kelly (718) 990-6394.

The Church and Father Curran

At the business meeting of its annual convention (June 12, 1986) the Catholic Theological Society of America adopted, by a vote of 171 for, 14 against, and 4 abstentions, the following resolution: "For the good of Roman Catholic theology, Catholic higher education, and the Catholic Church in North America, we strongly urge that no action be taken against Charles Curran that would prohibit him from teaching at the Catholic University of America."

Several of the undersigned were among CTSA members at the meeting who voted against this resolution. The other signers of this statement are theologians. We hold a position opposite to that expressed in the CTSA resolution.

The type of dissent defended by Father Curran and his supporters undermines the authority of the magisterium vested, by Christ's authority, in the Pope and bishops who, under his headship, constitute the Apostolic College. Father Curran not only dissents from magisterial teaching on specific moral issues but also claims that this teaching is in fact erroneous and that his views may be regarded as authentically Catholic. His position is that all Catholics have a right to set aside magisterial teaching that has not been infallibly proposed; he also claims that no specific teachings in the area of morality have been so proposed. Thus Curran advises Catholics that they have a right to set aside authoritative magisterial teaching on all specific questions of morality and substitute for it the views of dissenting theologians.

The magisterium must reject this position. It effectively denies the magisterium's right and obligation to speak in the name of Christ on moral questions and to bind the consciences of Catholics.

Moreover, unless the magisterium explicitly and by effective action repudiates this position, the conclusion will inevitably be drawn that the magisterium, by tolerating such dissent, regards it as legitimate. This conclusion, in fact, has already been drawn, and drawn by Father Curran. In an article published in 1978 he argued that the "hierarchical magisterium... tacitly acknowledges in practice" positions contradictory to its own. He went on to argue that this situation, in which the hierarchical magisterium "says one thing in theory while acknowledging another in practice" cannot continue. His conclusion was that the hierarchical magisterium ought explicitly to recognize the right to dissent that it tacitly accepts (see his "Moral Theology in the Light of Reactions to *Humanae Vitae,*" *Commonweal* 105, July 7, 1978; reprinted in his *Transition and Tradition in Moral Theology*, University of Notre Dame Press, 1979, pp. 53-55).

We therefore believe that for the good of Roman Catholic theology, Catholic higher education, and the Catholic Church in North America action be taken that would prohibit Father Curran from teaching at The Catholic University of America.

List of Signers of the Statement, "The Church and Father Curran." An asterisk * before the name indicates those who signed the statement after June 26, 1986.

Kenneth Baker, S.J., S.T.D., editor, *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*

*Robert Barry, O.P., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Theology, University of Illinois

Rev. Edward Bayer, S.T.D., Allentown College

*J. Brian Benestad, Ph.D., Scranton University

Romanus Cesario, O.P., S.T.D., Professor of Theology, Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D.C.

John R. Connery, S.J., S.T.D., Emeritus Professor of Moral Theology, Loyola University of Chicago

Pierre Conway, O.P., S.T.D., Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D.D.

*Giles Dimock, O.P., S.T.D., Associate Professor of Theology, University of Steubenville

Joseph Farraher, S.J., S.T.D., Former Professor of Moral Theology, Alma College

Joseph Fessio, S.J., S.T.D., St. Ignatius Institute, University of San Francisco

Germain G. Grisez, Ph.D., Flynn Professor of Moral Theology, Mt. St. Mary's College and Seminary

Theodore Hall, O.P., S.T.D., Providence College

*John Hardon, S.J., S.T.D., Professor of Theology, Loyola University of Chicago

John Harvey, O.S.F.C., S.T.D., Professor of Moral Theology, Cluster of Independent Theological Schools

Thomas Kane, O.P., S.T.D., Assistant Professor of Moral Theology, The Catholic University of America

*Donald Keefe, S.J., S.T.D., Professor of Theology, Marquette University

Rev. Msgr. George A. Kelly, St. John's University, Jamaica, NY

Ronald Lawler, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D., St. John's University, Jamaica, NY

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(continued on p. 10)

Religion and Traditional Values in Public School Textbooks

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The general purpose of this project was to systematically investigate how religious and traditional values are represented in today's public school textbooks. The general finding is that public school textbooks present a very biased representation of both religion and of many traditional values.

Each particular study (summarized below) was based on a careful reading of a very representative sample of widely used public school textbooks. The books were read and scored by the Principal Investigator. All results were verified by independent evaluators. Studies 1-5 deal with how religion and some social and political issues are represented in Social Studies texts for Grades 1-6; Study 6 deals with the same topics as portrayed in High School American history books; Study 7 investigates how religion and certain traditional values are portrayed in the books used to teach reading, Grades 3 and 6.

Study 1: The Treatment of Religion in Social Studies Textbooks: Grades 1-4

Not one of the 40 books in this study had one word of text that referred to any religious activity representative of contemporary American life. That is, no text referred to any present day American who prayed, or participated in worship or in any other way represented active religious life. One of the specific functions of these social studies texts is to introduce the student to contemporary American society. A few images (without captions) did refer to worship or religious activity. These uncommon images showed Jewish or Roman Catholic religious scenes, e.g. Lighting Sabbath Candles, a priest talking to children. There were a few more images referring to religious life indirectly, e.g. photos of churches, the Pledge of Allegiance, with its expression "one nation under God." There was not one word or image that referred to any form of contemporary Protestantism in these books.

Study 2: Religion in the Introduction to American History Textbooks: Social Studies, Grade 5

Except for coverage of religion in colonial America and the early Southwest Missions, there was little coverage of religion in American history. The treatment of the last 100 years of American history was almost devoid of any reference to religion. Examples of significant religious aspects of American history that were without one reference in any of these books include: the great awakening of the 1700s, of the 1800s, the urban revivals of the 1870s and 1880s, the Holiness-Pentecostal Movement, and the Born Again Movement of the 1960s and 70s. There was no reference to the Catholic school system built in response to the need for religious freedom or to any of today's Protestant schools. The proportion of pages with references of any kind to religion dropped from slightly over 50% for those covering history in the 1600's to 10% for the 1700's, to 4% for the 1800's, to under 2% for pages referring to history in the 1900's. This represents roughly a 25-fold drop.

Study 3: Religion in World History or World Culture Textbook: Grade 6

These books showed the following deficiencies with respect to religion:

1) A serious neglect of the importance of ancient Jewish history
2) A clear neglect of the life of Jesus of Nazareth; an occasional strong emphasis on Islam
3) Little, if any treatment, of the first 1000 years of Christianity
4) Neglect of Eastern Orthodox Christianity and the Byzantine Empire
5) Little, sometimes no coverage, of the Protestant Reformation
6) A neglect of Christianity in the last 200 years.

In conclusion there was not one word or image in all the social studies books (Grades 1-6) that referred in any way to the powerful and active world of contemporary American Protentastism. For example, the world of the Bible Belt, of Gospel Songs, of TV evangelists, of the born again Christian, and of the evangelicals was without reference of any kind.

Study 4: Family Values in Social Studies Textbooks: Grades 1-4

The family was often mentioned in the text directly and indirectly through photos. The notion that marriage is the origin and foundation of the family was never presented in any of these books. In particular, the words "marriage," "wedding," "husband," "wife," "homemaker," "housewife," did not occur *once* in these books. Not one of the many descriptions or comments on family suggested that being a mother or homemaker was a worthy, dignified and important role for a woman.

Study 5: Other Observations on the Social Studies Textbooks: Grades 1-4

There was a strong liberal bias in these texts demonstrated by their failure to even once introduce a typically conservative political or social issue. Thus, none of these texts ever referred to any problems of the modern family, e.g., drugs, divorce, etc.; no references were made to the tax revolt, or the pro-life or anti-ERA movements.

Many of these books picked out certain people to

Religion and Traditional Values in Public School Textbooks

serve as "role models," that is, to represent important people and admirable Americans. These people were given a photo and special coverage on their life and accomplishments. All such role models who had political or ideological significance for American society since World War II were tabulated. (People selected as role models from the arts, sports, and science had less political and social significance and were not investigated.) The results were striking. Of the 23 such role models, 13 were Democrats and 3 were Republicans and all the remaining seven were associated with liberal political or social causes. The few Republicans and conservatives were women—not one contemporary role model was a conservative or a Republican male.

One other aspect about these books should be mentioned. They did not have one mention of people giving time or money to charity, e.g. no family budget included funds for charity, much less for church contributions.

Study 6: U.S. History Textbooks: Grade 11 or 12

These books were much longer and more complex than the 5th grade texts. Of course, they should be since in many cases one or more of the co-authors were prominent U.S. historians at major universities. The best general summary statement of their treatment of religion is to say that none of them came even too close to adequately presenting the major religious events of the last 100 years. For example, not one book gave any information that would allude to the historical origins of today's religious right. There was not even one reference to such prominent preachers as Billy Graham, Norman Vincent Peale, Oral Roberts, or Jerry Falwell.

Even more important was the omission in all these texts of the essential fact that religion has played a significant role in American history. This fact has been mentioned by astute foreign observers since Alexis de Tocqueville.

In addition many of these texts had a pronounced liberal political bias in the treatment of U.S. history since WWII.

Study 7: Religion and Other Values in Readers: Grades 3 and 6

670 stories and articles from widely used Grade 3 and 6 readers were analyzed. Not one story or article in these books (used to teach reading) had a religious or spiritual theme as central to it. A small number of stories had religion as a secondary theme and some others had occasional secondary references to traditional religion. As with the social studies texts, most of the relatively few references were to Catholicism, Judaism or religion in the life of black Americans; there was not one reference to a representative form of Protestantism—in particular Bible Belt, fundamentalist, and evangelical Protestantism was without a reference. Mainline Protestantism was not mentioned. Other notable findings were: American business life was ignored, since only one story featured achieving a business success, and that was a black woman banker born in 1867; and this story's primary emphasis was a feminist one. No story featured an immigrant who made good in America in business or in a profession; there were only five stories with a patriotic theme, but all of these dealt with the War of Independence (over 200 years ago), and four of them were about girls and had more of a feminist meaning than a patriotic significance. No story featured a mother or motherhood as important and positive, nor did a story give any importance or positive significance to babies; however there were many aggressively feminist stories and articles.

(N.B. The full 71 page report is available from Dr. Vitz, New York University (Experimental Psychology), 6 Washington Place (8th floor), New York, NY 10003. $4.00 made out to NYU to cover xerox and mailing)

(on Fr. Curran from p. 8)

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Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

Editor's Note: The controversies around historical-critical biblical exegesis are now world-wide and have drawn regular comments from no less a person than Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, prefect of the Congregation For the Doctrine of the Faith. Raymond E. Brown, has published a new book *Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine* (Paulist Press) defending the method and its relation to Catholic doctrine. In this issue three Fellowship Scholars review aspects of this book. Fr. Gerhard did his biblical studies at the Catholic University of America and presently teaches at St. John's University, NYC; Fr. James O'Connor is a dogmatic theologian on the faculty of Dunwoodie Seminary; and Robert V. Young is an expert in comparative literature and literary criticism for North Carolina State University.

—G.A.K.

John J. Gerhard, S.J.: Criticism and Parallelism

There's a new apologetic making its appearance in Catholic biblical writing. Apologetics used to be a defense of church doctrine against Protestants who used historical critical exegesis as a weapon against the Church. That's the old apologetic. The new apologetic is the defense of Catholic historical critical exegetes, who learned their methodology from the Protestants, against attacks by Catholics.

The new apologetics is manageable for the average reader because it consists at the present time of three articles and a book:

"Again Under Attack," Jerome Murphy O'Connor, The Bible Today, March 1984.

"Danger Also From The Left," Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, and Raymond E. Brown, The Bible Today, March 1985.

"Historical Critical Exegesis, and Attempts at Revisionism," Raymond E. Brown, The Bible Today, May 1985.

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine, Raymond E. Brown, Paulist Press, 1985.

The rapidity with which this body of apologetic writing was formed, and the eminence of the historical critical exegetes called upon to make the defence indicates that defense is a matter of considerable urgency in the historical critical exegetical camp. Some sort of a crisis seems to be at hand for historical critical exegesis as this methodology is practiced in the Catholic Church.

I suppose it could be said that relatively few Catholics care about historical critical exegesis being in a crisis. Few Catholics have understood what historical critical exegetes have been writing for the last thirty years, or so. Historical critical exegetes seem to write for one another, and for the Protestant historical critical exegetes, whose work they emulate. Average Catholics can't follow the swift inferences of historical critical exegetes, and are made unhappy by the lack of certitude in the ultimate conclusions reached by historical critical exegetes. People might be willing to do without the complex reasoning by which a thesis is reached. But they are unwilling to do without certitude. This is one reason why Catholics love the Church: the Church teaches with authority, and in clear statements. This also is one reason people don't love historical critical exegesis. Historical critical exegetes don't teach anything with certitude, and don't make clear statements. Here are a couple of examples of an historical critical exegete being uncertain, and unclear:

On the Trinity:

> "... in the NT era, even if the dogmas of the Trinity and the sacraments were not known, presumably few Christians would have been totally ignorant of or opposed to the building blocks of such dogmas" (R.E. Brown, BECD 34).

On the Virginal Conception:

> "There is no evidence, of course, that any NT author denied the virginal conception; but silence (of the twenty five NT books besides Matthew and Luke) where it might have been appropriate to mention the virginal conception suggests that many did not know this facet of Jesus' origins" (*ibid.* 35).

What is being said here, and with what degree of certitude, I leave the reader to determine.

The purpose of the following pages is to offer a critique of R.E. Brown's defence of Catholic historical critical exegetes as he conducts this defence in his book Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine. Brown's contention in this book, as the title indicates, is that Catholic historical critical exegetes are true friends of both the magisterium pastorale, and true friends of the sheep entrusted to the care of the magisterium pastorale. As Brown visualizes Catholic historical critical exegetes these are a magisterium cathedrae magistralis working with, helping, and even challenging (BECD 28) the magisterium pastorale by "scholarly finds" (BECD 28), which, presumably break down any untrue conclusions the magisterium pastorale has inculcated into the minds of the sheep. The historical critical exegetes thus become servants of the magisterium pastorale keeping the hierarchy from imposing undue burdens on the faithful; and equally servants of the faithful keeping them from being un-

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

duly overburdened by the magisterium pastorale. This image of historical critical exegetes as friendly sheep-dogs barking at the shepherd on behalf of the sheep is exactly the image that has been challenged by the attackers from right and left who have been attacking historical critical exegetes. The attackers think historical critical exegetes are not so much sheep-dogs as wolves scattering the sheep.

Are Catholic historical critical exegetes shepherd dogs, barking at the shepherds, or wolves scattering the flock? Some Catholics think they are wolves, and have said as much in print. Now R.E. Brown mounts a defense against these charges. What is to be said about this defense? I am inclined to think that historical critical exegetes should have gotten a third party, the way Archias got Cicero, to conduct the defense. R.E. Brown is an outstanding, world renowned historical critical exegete, and he is very good at what he does, which is historical critical exegesis. But BECD is not a very good defense of historical critical exegesis. This may not be Brown's fault, however, for historical critical exegesis does not have within it what is necessary for its defense. What is necessary for its defense is a long list of "scholarly finds" (BECD 28), a long list of "uncovered data" (BECD 36), a long list of "historical information" (BECD 12), a series of examples of "modern technology" (BECD 12), which historical critical exegetes claim to have at their disposal. None of these lists are visible in BECD. There is no enumeration of services done, no exhibition of equipment the services were done with. A recent example of services done, and exhibition of what the services were done with appeared in the New York Times 6/17/86 C.1 under the headline Space-Age Methods Explore Art of the Past, by Walter Sullivan. The introductory paragraphs present a clear example of "modern technology" at work:

> "The same computer based image that brought the rings of Saturn into vividly detailed view as well as other modern techniques are giving art historians a new look at the legacy of the great masters.
>
> The new techniques let historians using penetrating illumination, peer deep below a painting's surface, showing how preliminary sketches and hidden layers of paint allowed artists to test their compositions or convey the grace and beauty of flowing garments.
>
> By using the computer processing that allows scientists to enhance photographs, analysts have gathered new insights into the working habits and the individual styles of some masters. And some famous paintings have produced surprises. For example, the methods have led one group of analysts to conclude that the Mona Lisa was once adorned with a necklace, later painted out, most probably by the artist Leonardo da Vinci."

Historical cirtical exegesis cannot make a parade of this kind of "modern technology" because it doesn't have it. It uses the sharp eyes of the critics working on the unproved presupposition that the Gospels as we have them are not art, but rather the still-born remains of writing that suffered much in the womb from editorial incisions, and additions, that destroyed a presumed original order. In short, these critics tell stories about the Gospels, and then make up stories to explain the stories. They first tell one story: the Gospel as we have it has been traumatized by editing so that it now suffers from footnote-in-text disease. Then they tell stories about how the footnote got into th text, and when. None of these stories is supported by hard data, but is turned into secure results of historical critical exegesis whenever a given story gains acceptance by a consensus of historical critical exegetes.

The work that historical critical exegetes have done for biblical readers apart from trying to establish grounds for, and trying the procedures of, historical criticism, has been enormously helpful. No one would deny that the "notes" which appear in historical critical commentaries are a great service. It is the historical critical hypothesizing, and interminable speculating that is hard to defend. The absence of long lists of hard data that historical critics have uncovered in the course of their labors, and the absence of a display of technology they claim to use makes an adequate defense almost impossible.

In the opinion of this reviewer, the defense of historical critical exegesis is too difficult a task for any writer, even a writer with R.E. Brown's rhetorical skills, which under the stress of having no facts to lay before the reader, and in the stress of the haste with which the whole new apologetic was mounted, might be expected to show some unCiceronian lapses. A few of these may be observed in the following sentences:

Internal contradictions:

at the beginning

> "... many did not know of this facet (the virginal conception) of Jesus' origins." (BECD 35)

at the end

> "I have written extensively that the agreement of these two Gospels (Matthew and Luke) on the virginal conception means that this idea antedated

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

both Matthew and Luke, and was an early understanding by Christians." (BECD 81)

Reader's unavoidable reaction:

How is an idea that was an "early understanding by Christians," and was canonized by Matthew and Luke, an idea that "many did not know?"

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at the beginning

"Above all, historical questions must be answered by historical means. The biblical opinions of Church Fathers or spiritual writers are extremely valuable to the development of overall Catholic thought; but unless those writers had historical information they cannot answer historical questions." (BECD 20)

at the end

"Precisely because I see the virginal conception (and perhaps even Davidic descent) as essential to the salvific story of Jesus, I have argued that we may invoke the ordinary teaching of the church as a guide on the historicity of that one particular fact." (BECD 83)

Reader's unavoidable reaction:

Is the virginal conception the exception that proves the rule, or that disproves it. Does the church have more historical information than the Church Fathers?

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at the beginning

"In my judgment, and in that of most other scholars, both authors (Matthew and Luke) literally intended a virginal conception." (BECD 35)

"... I stated that the scientifically controllable evidence derived from a study of the NT left the historicity of the virginal conception unresolved... I have complemented my statement with the judgment that historical criticism *favored* (italics Brown's) the virginal conception." (BECD 37 note 26)

at the end

"Some historical facts such as descent from David, conception through the Holy Spirit, holiness of the parents, and upbringing at Nazareth may have been the subject of reflection in the light of OT motifs—the end product without being either history or fiction, would have consisted of profound insights into the importance of Jesus' origins for an understanding of his identity." (BECD 82)

Reader's unavoidable reaction:

On p. 37 Brown states that historical criticism favors the viriginal conception, which it was the intention of Matthew and Luke (BECD 35) to teach. Why was this favored matter of fact eliminated from the list of historical facts enumerated on p. 82?

The book is overloaded with overqualified sentences, the chief function of which is not so much a defense of historical criticism as such, but a denial that historical critical exegesis has generated groups of Catholic scholars who take positions opposed to Church teaching. I call these "blood-test" sentences. They are not written to make a rhetorically clear statement, but they are so written that while on the one hand they may generate doubts about the resurrection and the virginal conception, on the other hand they do not render the writer liable to be convicted of paternity. They are so guarded by qualification that both they and any inferences that might be drawn from them are virtually meaningless. Still, they are suggestive:

Blood test sentences:

vs. the resurrection (cf. BECD 38 for instances)

"Once again those of us who accept the church's guidance on this issue (the non-corruption of Jesus' corpse) as an infallible interpretation of revelation, have to posit a penetration of the mystery of Jesus Christ, this time not in reference to the beginning of his earthly career (the virginal conception), but to the conclusion of it. (BECD 38-39)"

Just as Brown doesn't place the virginal conception in a list of "historical facts" (BECD 81) but in an end product, which is neither fact nor fiction, so "once again," he makes a placement into an end-product—this time the non-corruption of Jesus' body. What "fact" did the church begin reflection on to arrive at this end-product?

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vs. the virginal conception: (cf BECD 36 for instances)

"There is no evidence, of course, that any NT au-

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

thor denied the virginal conception; but silence where it might have been appropriate to mention the virginal conception suggests that many did not know this facet of Jesus' origins." (BECD 35)

Who fathered the conceptions enumerated on the left? Was no historical biblical critic present? Are these modern day virginal conceptions? If their paternity is rationalism, Brown does not say so.

Good rhetoric or bad notwithstanding, Brown's defence of historical critical exegesis will not keep his attackers at bay. More facts are needed to be displayed as uncovered by historical criticism. If BECD fails as a defence of historical critical exegesis, however, the question is not thereby settled that there are wolves in the sheepfold, namely, historical critical exegetes. Without facts historical critical exegetes are without teeth. They can do no damage at all to Church Doctrine, or to fundamentalistic understanding of it, or any other kind of understanding of it, which Brown enumerates under the heading of "Revisionists" (BECD 15-20). In this enumeration I found a paragraph that has already been most helpful to me in so far as I am one of those teachers who think the idea of chiasm helps to start bible readers on the process of adjusting their minds to the compositional method used by the Gospel writers, namely, "parallelism." I mean the parallelism that was explained by the great Anglican scholar, Robert Lowth (18th century), and used by him in his commentary on Isaiah (1778), and by another Anglican giant B.F. Westcott in his commentary on St. John (1880). Chiasm is a primer for parallelism. Many modern scriptual authorities have been making use of chiasm, and publishing books and articles on it without getting much notice from historical critical exegetes - except for R.E. Brown. Brown has been giving consistent notice to chiastic patterns. The notice is not consistently favorable. Sometimes it is unfavorable. But it is there to be seen in his books. In BECD Brown gives the best notice I have seen from any historical critical scholar, and the best he has given to chiastic patterns. He gives proponents of chiasm as a means of understanding biblical composition a place in the current scheme of things scriptural. He gives them a local habitation and a name, so to speak. He gives them a name and a recognized position - "opposite" historical critical exegesis. The name is "Revisionists," a good enough name, although historical critical exegetes may deserve it more because they dropped Robert Lowth and Parallelism from the second edition of the Catholic Encyclopedia. He does this in the following paragraph under the heading "Revisionists for Hermeneutical Purposes" (BECD 19):

"But on the opposite side, the advocates of other types of biblical criticism (literary criticism, narrative criticism, rhetorical criticism, structuralism, etc.) despite their enthusiasm at the novel insights gathered by their methodologies, should also learn modesty. Too often a new approach is hailed as dispensing with all that has gone before, instead of adding to what has gone before" (BECD 20).

Once the massive irony in the last sentence is allowed, and also the anachronism - contempory literary criticism goes back to John Jebb (1820) for chiasm and to Robert Lowth (1778) and earlier for parallelism - Brown's paragraph becomes an extremely useful starting place for a class on hermeneutics. A teacher may tell his class that a hermeneutical debate is going on, that there are recognized sides, with recognized names. The paragraph is embedded in a short book. The book is not overwhelming, therefore, to the student. Brown gives a good example of what historical critical exegetes do in his chapter on "The Contribution of Critical Exegesis" to an "Understanding of Mary and Marian Doctrine" (BECD 86-100). The teacher can then show what literary critics do - A. Laurentin's The Truth of Christmas (1986), and P.F. Ellis' The Genius of John (1984) are good contemporary sources. The Bible As Literature: An Introduction by John B. Gabel and Charles B. Wheeler, Oxford University Press 1986 will bring you right back to Robert Lowth on p.38. As far as I am concerned Brown has set the stage for some good discussions in classes on biblical hermenuetics with the notice he has given to chiastic patterns. No matter how the larger issues turn out, for this I am appreciative.

Fr. James J. O'Connor: Some Reflections on Methodology

Fr. Raymond Brown has often been well served by some of his critics. So strident have been their attacks—and the charges often so lacking in foundation—that the tendency has arisen to view all his critics as members of the conservative or liberal fringes. Why is it that he generates such emotions, and why is it that so often his critics appear to have so little substance to their denunciations? I suggest that, in part, these questions are explained by Fr. Brown's ability in speaking and writing. This ability manifests itself in a method which often implies more than it is actually saying explicitly. The implications are what cause the anger of many, but—because they are often only implications—are very difficult "to pin down." Instead of writing a "doctrinal critique" of his recent book, I

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

should like to take just two paragraphs of the first chapter of that book, examine what the author is saying, attempt to examine (fairly I hope) what he is implying and then juxtapose his positions with what he claims are his own authorities.

In "Historical-Critical Exegesis," Fr. Brown writes:

> "Even after the guidance laid down by Pius XII another step needed to be taken, for the historical truth of the Gospels remained a particularly sensitive issue. Under Pope Paul VI in 1964 the Roman Pontifical Biblical Commission tackled that problem with a subtle answer, replete with implicit and explicit qualifications. The basic thrust of the response is that, while the Gospels are substantially historical, they are not literally historical in every word and detail. Before being written down, the gospel material passed through three stages of development which thoroughly modified it: (1) Jesus did and said things (2) which eyewitness disciples later incorporated into their preaching, and (3) still later this preaching became the source of the writers who gave us the Gospels." (p. 12-13)

> "This explicit teaching of the 1964 Biblical Commission document, which in a brave but positive way affirmed that the Gospels are not necessarily literal accounts, had two implicit corollaries—. Although the document refers to the Gospels as a whole, it is clear on careful reading that those who composed it were thinking only of that part of Jesus' activity for which the apostolic preachers were witnesses, namely, the public ministry from the baptism to the resurrection. That the historicity of the narratives of Jesus' birth and infancy was another matter was understood by the Biblical Commission which planned but never completed a further study.—Secondly, although the Biblical Commission's statement (and the Vatican II document on Divine Revelation which used the Commission's statement as a guide) allows continued respect for the ancient terminology of 'apostles and apostolic men' in reference to the Gospel writers, the Commission made a clear distinction between the apostles who preached and those who wrote the Gospels in dependency on that preaching. Implicitly, then, the Commission allowed for the view of most scholars today that no one of the evangelists were 'second-generation' Christians drawing their knowledge from the earlier apostolic generation which had seen him and had shaped the tradition." (pp. 13-14)

Now let me make a summary of just a couple of points I think he is making in the above paragraphs.

1. The Pontifical Biblical Commission, in its document *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*, holds that the Gospels are "substantially" historical, but not "literally historical in every word and detail." This statement becomes in the second paragraph quoted, "Gospels are not necessarily literal accounts."

2. The 1964 Instruction and Vatican II, following it, respect the "ancient terminology" which speaks of the Gospels being written by Apostles and Apostolic men, but implicitly allow one to hold that none of the Gospels were written by eyewitness Apostles.

3. The Gospel material was "thoroughly modified" by the three stages through which it passed.

4. The historicity of the "infancy Narratives" was considered by the 1964 decree of the Biblical Commission to be "another matter," i.e. different from what was affirmed of His public life (the events of the public life as recorded being, of course, "not necessarily literal accounts."

Now, let us examine what is being implied in the two paragraphs. This is a more difficult matter than simply repeating what is being said, and it involves more subjectivity on the part of the interpreter.

a) The 1964 Instruction is the interpretative key for understanding *Dei Verbum*. This would seem to be clear because, although it is referred to, *Dei Verbum* is never cited and the author's argument is almost exclusively drawn from his interpretation of *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*. (1964 Instruction.)

b) Both documents are allowing us to believe that the Gospels are not necessarily literal accounts of what Jesus did and said. Indeed, when one considers the three stages and the thorough modification undergone by the matter, one can see that all that can be hoped for from the Gospels is a somewhat vaguely defined "substantial" historicity.

c) Both documents at least implicitly permit us to deny the apostolic origin of the Gospels. By implication, despite explicit denials, this position, like the one which speaks of "thorough modifications" of the material, further challenges the historical value of the documents. Indeed, on the question of historicity, the affirmations are such that they always limit the notion of historicity, never giving us a positive presentation of what their actual historical value is.

What In Fact Do the Documents Referred to by Fr. Brown Say?

1. The 1964 Instruction nowhere contains words which teach that the Gospels are "substantially historical" but "not literally historical in every word and detail." Fr. Brown indeed doesn't claim that the document does contain such words; he speaks of the "basic thrust" of a document which gives a "subtle answer, replete with implicit and explicit qualifications."

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

Now to speak of the "basic thrust" of a document is to involve one in interpretation and to dispute Fr. Brown's interpretation would take more time and space than available here. Pope Paul VI, who ordered the publication of the document, gave us his own *in globo* assessment of the document: ". . . last May's Instruction of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, while paying honor to the efforts of modern exegesis in behalf of an ever better understanding and appreciation of the sacred texts, also points out the dangers and the limits involved, and defends the historical truth of the holy Gospels in particular, with a calm and vigorous clarity" (*The Pope Speaks*, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 20; the same volume also contains an English translation of the Biblical Commission's Instruction). Certainly, it would seem, *prima facie* that the Pope and Fr. Brown find a different "thrust" in the Instruction.

But the 1964 Instruction was hardly the Church's last word on the historical value of the Gospels - nor its most authoritative word. Vatican Council II takes up that question - and does so much more explicitly than does the earlier curial Instruction. *Dei Verbum*, no. 19 teaches that the Church affirms "without hesitation the historicity of the four Gospels," clarifying this affirmation by teaching that the Gospels "faithfully hand on what Jesus really did and taught while living among men." The "really" in that sentence is significant. Such an affirmation is much clearer than the somewhat ambiguous statement that the Gospels are "substantially historical."

2. The 1964 instruction did not mention the four evangelists by name. It referred to the authors of the Gospels as "Evangelists" and "sacred authors," although its lengthy citation of St. Irenaeus (cf. *Instruction*, the end of section II) indicates that, at least in some cases, it is the same Apostles who preached the message who also wrote it down. Again, the Council is more explicit. It says that the Gospels were written by "Apostles and apostolic men" as Fr. Brown rightly notes. This was not simply a matter of showing "continued respect for ancient terminology," however, as he should know. The terminology "apostles and apostolic men" was explicitly objected to at the Council as being too restrictive. A less restrictive way of putting the teaching was desired, one that would say the Gospels were written by "Apostles *or* Apostolic men" thus leaving open the possibility that the first and fourth Gospels were not written by Apostles. The theological commission of the Council refused to accept such a suggestion, and the full Council approved the text as it is, teaching namely the Apostolic authorship of at least some of the Gospels (presumably Matthew and John). (For the Council's discussion of this, cf. *Acta Synodalia*, vol. IV, pt. 5, p. 722.)

One can note, in passing, that Fr. Brown, in his synopsis of *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*'s description of the 'three stages of development' of the Gospel material, speaks of the third stage this way: "still later this preaching became the source of the writers who gave us the Gospels." *Sancta Mater* itself says of the third stage: "Indeed it was not long before many attempted 'to draw up a narrative' etc." The "still later" of Brown and the "not long before" of *Sancta Mater Ecclesia* can actually be said to be speaking of the same time frame, but the connotation of the phrases is certainly different. One seems to imply a long period between the actual preaching of the Apostles and the writing of the Gospels (by "second-generation Christians" says Brown), whereas the other seems to signify a short interval, perhaps even one that is concurrent with the Apostolic preaching. This short interval accords better with *Dei Verbum*'s affirmation that Apostles wrote at least some of the Gospels and thus could draw "from their own memory and recollection" of what Jesus "really did and taught for the sake of our salvation while living among us" (*Dei Verbum*, 19).

3. As for the Gospel material being "thoroughly modified" by the stages through which it passed, neither *Sancta Mater Ecclesia* nor *Dei Verbum* makes such an assertion or anything like it. Both of them clearly indicate that the Gospels are no "video tape" presentation of the life of Jesus, and that the human authors were given great freedom in the way they selected, arranged, synthesized and explained material in view of the needs of the Churches, but they did all this, says Vatican II, "in such a way that they might always communicate to us things true and sincere about Jesus" (*Dei Verbum*, 19) or, as they taught earlier in the same paragraph, "what Jesus really did and taught etc."

4. Whether *Sancta Mater Ecclesia* implicitly presumes a difference in the historicity of the "Infancy Narratives" and the rest of the Gospels is a conclusion one can come to only by external evidence, since there is nothing in the text to indicate that. It would appear to be true, as Fr. Brown remarks, that a study group was set up to prepare an instruction on the "Infancy Narratives." Fr. Rene Laurnetin was, I believe, either a consultor or member of that study group. At any rate, nothing came of it, and so one is left to interpret a presumed silence - always a risky undertaking. To claim this silence (if silence it really is since to claim it as a silence one must presume that Vatican II, whenever it speaks of the historicity of the Gospels is not intending to include Mt. 1 and 2 and Lk. 1 and 2 - a presumption which finds no support in the discussions as recorded in the *Acta Synodalia* of Vatican II) as an implicit recognition by the Church that the historicity of the Infancy Accounts is "another

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

matter" (cf. # 4 above) is to be more than a little free with what evidence (or, in this case, non-evidence) indicates.

And that, in conclusion, is the problem: how one uses or mis-uses evidence. From the viewpoint of literary criticism, I think one may defend the position that no Gospel was written by an Apostle, that the "Infancy Accounts" are a special kind of history or even a special form of writing, that the Gospels are not necessarily literal accounts etc. From the viewpoint of literary criticism one may defend such positions - although I don't think one can do it very successfully, especially when one takes into account what historical information we have (i..e. external sources). (And it is important here to distinguish between literary analysis and historical criticism. They are different sciences. To refer to a method as "historical critical" and then use a form of argumentation which relies almost exclusively on internal literary indications while discontinuing all or most of the external historical evidence is itself frequently giving the wrong impression as to what kind of analysis of the Scriptures is actually taking place.) But to say or to give the impression that the Catholic Church is countenancing such positions is simply inaccurate. In fact, in some cases, she is teaching what at least appears to be the exact opposite. Fr. Brown notes, at the end of this same chapter, that "revisionists" have a dislike "of a relatively unimpassioned, hard-headed look at history" (p. 24). If that is true it is unfortunate. A hard-headed unimpassioned look not only at history but also at any real or supposed historical methodology is always a good thing. And it is demonstrably the approach of the Church's Magisterium.

Professor Robert V. Young: Biblical Criticism and Literary Theory

Raymond E. Brown's *Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine* is a very peculiar book which, in the end, may reveal more about current ecclesiastical politics than about the interpretation of Scripture. Although he is a professional exegete, today's Fr. Brown—unlike Chesterton's—is more interesting for the mystery he generates than for any he solves. His new book seems the work of a man in a somewhat uncomfortable situation, struggling with a delicate problem. Fr. Brown is deeply indignant over "ultraconservative" challenges to his Catholic orthodoxy and fidelity. He insists vigorously that he is not only a loyal son of the Church, but that he is in the mainstream of Catholic institutional life, faithful to and favored by hierarchical authority. At the same time he is evidently worried lest anyone question his vanguard position at the cutting edge of the contemporary Catholic intellectual venture. Hence the publisher's blurb on the back of the book gives a fair indication of Fr. Brown's own view of himself when it stresses both "the novelty of contemporary scripture interpretation" and also its "centrist" moderation in the service of doctrinal stability.

At the risk of scandalizing those ubiquitous "ultraconservatives," I submit that Fr. Brown's claim to orthodoxy is generally more convincing than his claim to novelty. From a superficial perspective his biblical criticism may seem to have the same destabilizing effect on the text of Scripture as much current literary criticism has on fictional and poetic texts. His methodological approach, however, remains firmly rooted in the nineteenth century, and he draws back from the more radical implications which the method can produce. His constant recourse to the "nuanced" interpretation—at times he sounds less like a biblical scholar than an interior decorator—is not really a means of covert doctrinal subversion; it is rather a kind of ecclesiastical "saving the appearances." Fr. Brown seems to be very much a company man: he is loyal to academic scholarship with its critical and potentially disruptive methods, but he is also loyal to the Church institutions which make his work possible. It is no wonder that Fr. Brown is troubled both by "liberals" and "ultraconservatives" (or "fundamentalists"): he is at home in a clerical establishment with its bureaucratic procedures, whether of university or chancery. His antagonists are generally gripped by a vision of the truth so compelling as to make institutional inertia irrelevant if not downright immoral. Seen in the context of contemporary literary theory, Fr. Brown very much resembles the kind of literary scholar who takes up the most novel and potentially subversive critical methods, only to assimilate them to the continuity and strengthening of the established academic system.

For the most part Fr. Brown's treatment of the New Testament seems to offer few significant departures from the mode of the "higher criticism," which originated more than a century ago. He thus seems wedded to a naive empirical historicism, such as is rarely found in literary studies today outside the most unenlightened Marxist circles. (*N.B.*: there is no insinuation intended here regarding Fr. Brown's political views, about which I know nothing.) The only real advances over the nineteenth century are technical advances in archaeology, philology, and textual criticism—not advances in the study of textuality as such. Fr. Brown's examples of the work of the historical critical method generally involve the subjecting of fragments of the New Testament to an analysis in the light of archaeological evidence or contemporaneous documents, or to comparisons with other parts of the

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

New Testament. The Infancy Narratives of Matthew and Luke, for instance, are regarded as of questionable historicity because of inconsistencies between the two stories, because "neither Luke nor Matthew tells us whence he got his information about Jesus' birth," because "most of the information given in the two Infancy Narratives is not confirmed elsewhere in the NT," and because they are not corroborated by other historical records:

> In Josephus' detailed listing of the horrors wrought by Herod the Great there is never a reference to his slaughtering children at Bethlehem. Neither Roman nor Jewish records mention a Roman census during ther reign of Herod the Great, nor a worldwide census under Augustus, nor a governorship over Syria by Quirinius as early as the reign of Herod the Great—all of which are affirmed explicitly or implicitly by Luke. There is no record of a star such as Matthew describes. Again, there have been strained attempts to confirm any or all of the above from historical or astronomical records, but none has proved convincing to the large body of scholars. The argument that these things are not implausible does not suffice when one argues for historicity.

Insofar as this is merely an argument that the Infancy Narratives do not meet closely defined modern standards for historical writing, Fr. Brown has said nothing at all shocking—no one has ever tried to equate Matthew and Luke with Barbara Tuchman or J. H. Plumb. When he suggests, however, that St. Matthew made up (in some sense of the term) the Star of Bethlehem because, given the beliefs of the era, it "would have sounded plausible to an ancient audience"; then he is speculating quite as recklessly as anyone who maintains that the information in the Infancy Narratives came from the Blessed Virgin herself. Besides, even if one accepts the proposition that Matthew made up the Star as a bit of imaginative popular poetry ("or some other less-than-history genre") as befitting the occasion of the birth of the Messiah, why on earth would Luke make up a census?

Ironically, it is just this scrupulous sifting of the historicity of various scriptural passages that makes Fr. Brown's exegesis seem not "moderate" or even "conservative," as he sometimes claims, but downright old-fashioned in the wake of poststructuralist literary theory. A deconstructionist might well question the basis for *privileging* the text of Josephus over the text of Matthew. The historical reality against which any text is judged for historicity is at best a hypothetical construct derived from other texts. To arrive at conclusions about the thoughts of New Testament authors and contemporaneous readers, and the world they experienced, as data accessible to us apart from the text(s) in which the data are (re)presented is to rest one's exegesis on an unverifiable (hence unhistorical) assumption. The deconstructionist would put in question the very existence of an independent historical reality, or at least of any that can be grasped outside the network of aporetic textuality. Hence he would regard Fr. Brown's stress on the meaning of a text for its *original* author and readers as a fruitless quest for originary presence which is bound to vanish into the differential structure of the sign.

A new historicist, on the other hand, would point out that every text subject to interpretation is itself an interpretation with a latent ideological agenda, and every interpretation is itself a text. To evaluate a text according to the standard of "historicity" is thus to establish an unsupported polarity of "literary" and "historical" texts, when in fact all texts (including, again, that of the interpreter) are products of their ideological matrix. It is curious, then, that Fr. Brown lauds Grelot's attack on "Laurentin's dichotomy between history and fiction." Despite Fr. Brown's assertion that "there is a whole range of intermediary possibilities between fact and fiction," his own routine comparative evaluations of the historicity of diverse scriptural texts (e.g., St. Luke's account of the Passion is *more* historical than his account of the Nativity) have precisely the effect of dichotomizing history and literature. To be sure, Fr. Brown's questioning of the historicity of certain passages in the New Testament hardly seems radical in the face of contemporary theories which put in question the very existence of history itself and redefine the nature of a text. The problem with the historical-critical method of exegesis is that it yields up the text of Scripture as hostage to rationalist, secular norms of interpretation. Fr. Brown begins by surrendering, even if only provisionally, the Bible's "privileged" status as revelation, and this inevitably diminishes its integrity as the "Master Text" of Western civilization—the embodiment of the living Word of God. As von Balthasar puts it, according to modern Biblical research, our spiritual response to Scripture "must remain suspended until 'exact' research has passed its more less definitive judgment concerning the historical meanings and contexts of the *littera*."

Fr. Brown is probably correct in denying that he can be fairly accused of heterodoxy; he can, however, be accused of insipidity. When he tells us that his exegesis cannot verify the historicity of the virginal conception of Jesus, but that he accepts it because he *thinks* it infallibly taught by the Magisterium, there is no need to question his sincerity. What is questionable—the real Fr. Brown mystery—is why a

Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine: Review Essays

mode of Scriptural interpretation which is so barren of significant insights regarding a central mystery of the Faith, and so encouraging—even if only superficially—to unbelievers, should be so venerated by Catholic academics. The only answer, I think, is that the historical-critical method is *their* method; it is the going consensus which enables them to be both loyal Catholic clergymen and "reputable" scholars. Hence as scholars they find the meaning of Scripture indeterminate, but as they are Catholics the deficiency is compensated for by Magisterial tradition (which, Fr. Brown's disclaimers notwithstanding, is expressly treated as discrete from the Bible). Here Fr. Brown's viewpoint parallels an influential current in current literary theory, which amounts to the abandonment of theory altogether in favor of the institutionalized authority of expert hermeneutic practitioners. In his earlier theoretical pronouncements, Stanley Fish—surely one of the shrewdest minds on the current literary scene—played a major role in the development of the reader-response approach to written texts. He worried about the response of Milton's contemporaries to *Paradise Lost* much as Fr. Brown worries about what the gospels meant to their human authors when they "wrote at a particular moment in time" and to their initial readers. But this approach threatens anarchy if it is extended to contemporary readers: if the meaning of a work subsists in the response of the reader, then an undergraduate's interpretation is as good as a full professor's. Fish's way out of this dilemma is to establish the concept of "the authority of interpretive communities." This means, to put it quite simply, that the meaning of a work of literature is determined by the consensus of ("reputable"?) literature professors in major universities. What is more this is not relativism. So long as a progressor can persuade enough of his colleagues to go along with him, he is even free to change his mind: "An awareness that one's perspective is limited does not make the facts yielded by that perspective seem any less real; and when that perspective has given way to another, a new set of facts will occupy the position of the real ones." Of course Fr. Brown would point to the Church's Magisterium as the final authority, but there is a formidable brigade of theologians and biblicists standing between the Magisterium and the ordinary Catholic. "There exists no universally accepted list of all the doctrines taught infallibly by the Roman Catholic Church," and no one can tell for sure when the teaching of the ordinary Magisterium is infallible. Hence "there can be honest dispute among theologians, none of whom are rebellious against church authority, over the infallibility of doctrines in this category." Why should the theologians be rebellious against church authority? In the terms of their own "interpretive community," *they are church authority*. As the great masterpieces of Western literature are there for the reader, so the Sacred Scriptures are there for the faithful. But interpretation is in the hands of the Scribes and Pharisees.

Books Received

Paulist Press

• Ibn'Abbad of Ronda, Letters of Sufi Path (translated by John Renard, S.J.) 328 pp. $9.95.

This is a guide to spiritual life written by a Moslem religious leader in the fourteenth century. Ibn'Abbad, a Moroccan, challenges the religious formalism of his day in letters to his devotés.

Regnery Gateway, Inc.

• *Linking the Human Life Issues*, Russell Hittinger, Ed., 197 pages, paperbound, $10.95.

The Catholic bishops of the United States achieved international attention with their powerful letter, THE CHALLENGE OF PEACE: GOD'S PROMISE AND OUR RESPONSE. For the controversial issue of nuclear weapons and deterence, the political letter of 1983, guided theological, moral, and political viewpoints. Joseph Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago, after the publication of the letter, called for a more wide ranging discussion of the human life issues. He stated that it is the obligatory duty of Catholics to profess a "consistent ethic of life" or a seamless garment." Since Catholicism has stood firmly behind the belief of "consistent ethics," regardless of the specific issue or problem, it was the expression concerning the "seamless garment" which brought about debate and controversy.

In LINKING THE HUMAN LIFE ISSUES, an international panel of scholars, contributed their beliefs to discuss the various philosophical, historical, and practical dynamics which bear upon the problem of respecting human life. How are the various life issues linked together to make up a "consistent ethic of life" in our lives? Is this the standard of ethics that should be used to guide our lives in search of moral principles or is it meant to guide our attitudes about political and social policies?

Fellowship member Russell Hittinger is Chairman of the Department of Philosophy at Christendom College, Front Royal, Virginia.

Requests for review copies and/or interviews should be addressed to: Eileen Sayurin, Promotion/ Publicity Associate, Regnery Gateway, Inc., 950 North Shore Drive, Lake Bluff, IL, 60044; or call 312/ 295-8088.

Books Received

Ignatius Press

Fr. Fessio has turned out some more winners.

• Henri de Lubac, *The Christian Faith* (355 pp. $12.95)

In this book Cardinal de Lubac reflects on the three-fold structure of the Apostles Creed, especially as it reveals the mystery of the Trinity. He has here a "summa" of Christian belief as professed by the Fathers, the Scholastics, the Liturgy, and modern theology. Fr. Louis Bouyer believes de Lubac will emerge as "the great Christian thinker of our century."

• Joseph Ratzinger, *Feast of Faith*, (175 pp. $8.95)

This book is a theology of the liturgy. The German-born Cardinal writes about the meaning of Corpus Christ, parish liturgy, content and form of the eucharist, change and permanence. The proper form of worship, he maintains is central to our concern for man himself.

• *Love is for Life*

The Irish Bishops' masterful pastoral on love and its sexual expression. Up-to-date and genuinely Catholic. $3.95 for 100 pages and a study guide.

• Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Prayer*, (311 pp. $10.95)

Called "the best and most comprehensive book on prayer ever written," this volume is Balthasar at his spiritual direction best for those who realize that prayer is contemplation. Three hundred pages of solid piety, newly translated.

• _____, *New Elucidations*, (305 pp. $10.95)

The Swiss theologian here treats women priests, *Humanae Vitae*, the laity, lay theologians, and "the flight to community." These essays are the fruit of his research and experience.

• Coleen Kelly Mast, *Love and Life: A Christian Sexual Morality Guide For Teens*

With all the controversy over sex education even within the Church here is what good pastors and believing parents need—a student text/workbook, Parents Guide, Teacher's Guide, cost $7.95, $5.95, $10.95 respectively.

How does Fr. Fessio do it?

• Von Balthasar, Becker, et al., *Faith in Christ and the Worship of Christ*, (225 pp. $9.95)

Highly respected world renowned writers consider devotion to Christ from the viewpoint of different theologies. Subjects such as Christ's suffering humanity, devotion to the Sacred Heart are favorite themes. The book aims to plumb the center of the Divine-Human mystery of Jesus. Say the authors: "In all the endless gyrating around the historical Jesus, theology seems to lose the figure of Christ completely.

• Ratzinger, Von Balthasar, Schurmann, *Principles of Christian Morality* (104 pp. $6.95)

This compendium is largely the fruit of studies by the International Theological Commission—a concise summa of Christian moral life.

• Joseph Pieper, *On Hope* (96 pp. $6.95)

A well known author of *The Cardinal Virtues* takes up what he calls the forgotten virtue of our time. His message: "Hope cannot exist except through, with, and in Christ."

Franciscan Herald Press

• John M. Huels, *The Pastoral Companion*, (355 pp. $15.00)

This is the third study by Fr. Huels based on the 1983 Code of Canon Law—the others concerning canons of special concern to the laity, and the new approaches to Religious Life.

The Pastoral Companion is aimed at providing priests and seminarians with a handy reference of Church laws and relevant commentary on the parish and liturgical ministry.

Fr. Huels writes clearly, a virtue for those who sometimes have difficulty working their way through the casuistry of canonists.

• Gerard McGinnity, *Christmen: Experience of the Priesthood Today*, Christian Classics 94 pp. $7.95

This is a delightful little book, overpriced to be sure, but almost worth the cost by the way a joyful Irish priest writes about the priesthood. Irish in its literacy and the tales it spins about how to get the most out of the priesthood—for Christ. Obviously, Fr. McGinnity had his fun, too. It shows.

• H. Vernon Sattler, *All About Love*, (Anastasia Press, Box 279, Stafford, VA 22554)

A new book is justified if the author has something to say, says something old in a new way, or reaches a new audience. *All About Love* rephrases Catholic wisdom with modern psychological insights and fresh applications of how love works out in practice.

Fr. Sattler is one of the most experienced family life experts in the Church.

Book Reviews

Benedict M. Ashley, O.P. *Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian*. The Pope John Center (186 Forbes Road, 1 Braintree, Mass. 02184), 1985. Pp. xii, 770. Paper, $20.95.

This is a book of major importance. It faces the most important philosophical and theological questions of the time from the point of view of one intelligently devoted to a freshly thought out Thomistic realism and to the vision and teachings of Catholic faith.

The scope of the work is breathtaking. On the one hand, it is a Christian anthropology. Facing the radical challenges that come from the humanism dominant in the West (a humanism expressed, for example, in *Humanist Manifesto II*), the author spells out the reasons why the principles that underlie theistic and Catholic thought seem to many to be outmoded. With patience and skill he works through the many strands of an approach to establish creatively an intelligent realism in our times: a realism sensitive to all modern science reveals and to the difficulties born out of modern and contemporary philosophy. It is a realism faithful to the earth. Aware of the charms of the secular philosophy that dominate our times, the author points out persuasively that the realistic and religious thought of classic Christianity also patiently draws all its wisdom from sources that are of the body. It too celebrates the creativity of man, who is a bodily reality, not a Platonic soul caught in an alien body. It too can interpret all the scientific, historical, cultural data of our times as faithfully as humanism can (and, indeed, with greater coherence)—and yet remain strong in both its human hopes (that tend so tragically to fade in contemporary humanism) and in the entire integrity of its faith.

But this theology of the body treats not only questions commonly called "philosophical." So many other questions central to a Christian vision, questions rooted in principles that a "theology of the body" must discuss, are treated that this book becomes virtually an encyclopedia of "difficult contemporary theological questions." Happily, in this book that set of questions is treated with astonishing skill by one both sensitive to every difficulty, and firmly rooted in both his Catholic faith and in a creative and vigorous appropriation of the Catholic intellectual heritage.

He treats with care more questions than it seems possible to treat well even in so large a book. He faces the central questions of contemporary ethical theory (that are clearly grounded in the philosophical issues he probes so deeply). He treats the problems of historicism and cultural relativism and the priceless worth of modern Christian biblical criticism, as well as the roots of certain regrettable failure in some forms of it. He speaks of modern Christologies, new theories of the Church, problems about the origin of Church structures and of priesthood in the Church. He probes into old doubts about the reality of angels and more radical doubts about the possibility of believing today in the God of Christianity, who is so near to his people as to make a living faith intelligent. He speaks of the problem of evil, of heaven and hell, and of how the most sublime issues are related to basic principles: to forms of knowing that we bodies must approach with such patient care.

While his work spans so broad a field, it is far from superficial. All the questions he treats arise from the fundamental principles that he handles with depth and care. He seems to have "read everything"; he enters each question with the care of a scholar who has read, understood, and appreciated the force of positions he cannot accept, and who knows how to profit well from the best work that defends the vision he has come to grasp as his own. The notes and rich (but selective and annotated) bibliographical helps of this book are themselves more than worth the substantial price of the volume.

Each reader may have his own special reasons for liking this study. For example, his treatment of the approach of those Catholic biblical scholars who loyally affirm (because faith teaches it) doctrinal positions taught by the faith, but hold that we do not have sufficient grounds for affirming critically the historicity of events grounding that faith position, is superb.

First of all, he clearly acknowledges the necessity of using such sophisticated tools of literary criticism in scriptural study. But he gets sensitively at the deepest weaknesses of their treatment of many biblical questions: the virgin birth, the Easter apparitions of Jesus, and the like. Many excellent points are made in his extended treatment of these problems (pp. 483-506; 579-595). Ashley points out for example that historical truth is known in more ways that in those probed so well by historical and literary criticism. Raymond Brown admits that Luke believed that Mary conceived Jesus virginally; Luke presents it in his Gospel as a revelatory sign to establish something important about Jesus' mission.

But Brown fails to ask a question that cannot be evaded. Does Luke *assert* the viriginal conception as an historical fact to be believed by Christian faith? If so, the Christian (with a complexus of reasons for accepting Catholic teaching on biblical inerrancy) has an excellent reason for believing that Luke's account is *not* merely a "theologoumenon," "merely a 'non-historical dramatization' of some theological truth [other than the virginal conception] known in some other way." (p. 504.) Again, Brown asserts that though no certainty can be had from studies of scrip-

Book Reviews

ture that Jesus was conceived virginally, "Christian belief in it is governed by factors other than what can ascertain by careful exegesis." But, Ashley asks, what are these "other factors." If we did not learn it from scripture, where did we learn it? Especially in days when theologians are not inclined to appeal to extra-biblical tradition in such matters (and it would be hard to see how they could in this case), "it is difficult to see how if 'careful exegesis' cannot find some basis for the virginal conception in the Scriptures, it can still be asserted as an article of faith." (p. 503). Ashley's account of why the Christian has intelligent grounds for finding in scripture evidence for and assertions of Catholic teaching in such matters is very rewarding.

Certainly the book is not without its flaws. But I found it a study of exceptional worth. The author faces boldly many of the most sensitive contemporary questions, and defends authentic Catholic teaching on every side with calm and gracious scholarship. He does not write at all as an embattled conservative: he is open to all that intelligence can say, and he is generous to all positions that he finds he must oppose. It is a joy to find so attractive a statement of Catholic positions, a statement full on new insights, and mindful of so much of the Catholic intellectual theological and philosophical heritage.

In reading this book, I frequently remembered how vigorously Vatican II called for an excellent philosophical education for students for the Catholic priesthood. It called for a study of philosophy that would be broad and deep, that would relate *The Christian study of philosophy* to modern science, to contemporary philosophical and cultural problems, to the root questions that underlie the most crucial issues of our time. For the most part, that call of Vatican II has been left unheeded. But a book like this is a loud cry for a more excellent pattern of education in our seminaries. Indeed, it is a cry for a more earnest and responsible treatment of questions that rend the Church too much in our time. In some ways, this is a difficult book; but it more than repays all the energy that the reader gives to the study of it.

—Ronald Lawler, O.F.M. Cap

Free From All Error. Authorship, Inerrancy, Historicity of Scripture, Church Teaching, and Modern Scripture Scholars. By William G. Most (Franciscan Marytown Press, 1600 West Park Ave., Libertyville, Ill. 60048, 1985), 180 pp. PB $11.95.

Fr. William G. Most has prepared a refreshing little book on the basic issues in biblical studies. It is refreshing because it is short, directly to the point on each issue, and free of biblical jargon. He explains inspiration and authorship, the different senses of Scripture, inerrancy, literary forms, form criticism and redaction criticism. Also he offers a short and balanced explanation of the historical-critical method of studying the Bible; he points out its strengths and its weaknesses in a very readable fashion.

Fr. Most's book is easy to read. In fact, I found it hard to put the book down. There are twenty-six short chapters, none of which exceeds ten pages in length.

The book offers an excellent introduction to the study of Holy Scripture for anyone who wants to penetrate more deeply into God's Word. It is also useful as a summary of biblical studies for those who are more advanced.

The basic thesis of the book is that the Bible, in all its books and in all its parts, is "free from all error," both religious and historical, because God is its author. Fr. Most is truly a fearless scholar and defender of the Bible. He takes up many accusations of error in the Bible, some by famous Scripture scholars, and answers them calmly but firmly. He is never rude; rather, he is respectful of his adversaries and takes their objections seriously.

It amazes me that Fr. Most could get so much contemporary scholarship on the Bible in such a short space. Sometimes I am asked to recommend a good book on the Bible. In the past it has been difficult to know what to recommend. From now on it will be easy: *Free From All Error.*

—Kenneth Baker, S.J.

Receiving the Promise: The Spirit's Work of Conversion by Thomas Weinandy, OFM, Cap. Washington: The Word Among Us Press, 1985. 121 pages. $3.95 paperback.

Fr. Weinandy's book makes thought-provoking spiritual reading for priests, religious, and laity. *Receiving the Promise* can also serve well as a text for college level religion classes, catechumenical instruction, or prayer groups.

The central point of the work is that the heart of the Church's mission is conversion. There are many issues on which the Church has spoken out and ought to speak out. But the message of conversion goes deeper than issues like breakdowns in marriage and the family, war and peace, poverty, racial discrimination, abortion, or homosexuality. Tragic as these are, they are but symptoms of a deeper disorder. Fr. Weinandy argues that it is only as people come to the Lord Jesus and are converted that the bonds of sin that enslave today's world can be broken.

Book Reviews

Receiving the Promise is divided into three parts, each consisting of three chapters. The first part describes how all men and women are called to share new life in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Part Two discusses the elements of conversion. The final three chapters examine the sacraments of initiation.

Fr. Weinandy insists that unbelievers, nominal Christians, regular churchgoers, and even dutiful Christians all need conversion or deeper conversion to Christ, and each group requires different pastoral treatment. A particularly effective section of the book is the chapter which contains case histories of men and women (now active and practicing Cathoclics) who exemplify one of the four categories. Even the regular churchgoer and dutiful Christian acknowledge that they had not fully experienced conversion to Christ. Fr. Weinandy draws his examples from the Christian community of which he is a member, adding credibility to his points and strength to the book.

Another issue developed by Fr. Weinandy is that there is too little appreciation of the need for converted Christians to experience strong fellowship with other Christians. Catholics who are received into the Church as adults too often feel isolated and disappointed once the instructions are finished. As catechumens, they take part in instructional as well as social gatherings; afterward they are left on their own.

Fr. Weinandy has included a section on how parents can work with their baptized children. He notes (quite rightly) that it is a great mistake for parents to assume that baptized children living in a Christian family will automatically become Christians. Children must be constantly encouraged and taught the truths of the Gospel by their parents. With this and other pastoral problems in mind, Fr. Weinandy presents a number of suggestions to help parents to nurture the spiritual life of their children.

This book was not intended to be a scholarly treatment on conversion and does not contain extensive footnoting, cross references, or system of notation. But for pastors, instructors, counselors, or concerned parents who want to impart the life of Christ to those under their care, this book should be a useful tool.

—John J. Dillon, Ph.D.

Saint Vincent de Paul, *Correspondence, Conferences, Documents, I*, Correspondence, Volume I (1607-1639), newly translated, edited and annotated from the 1920 edition of Pierre Coste, C.M. 604 pages with 34 pages of introductory material and index, New City Press, 206 Skillman Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11211, $28.00.

Henri Bremond complained in the early part of the century that the spirituality of St. Vincent de Paul as revealed in his conferences to his priests and sisters and in his many letters had not been shared with the general public. He was assuaged by the monumental 13 volume critical edition fo the saint's writings compiled and edited by Vincentian Pierre Coste which appeared in 1920 and was capped with a 3-volume life of the saint and crowned by the French Academy. The present work is substantially the translation into English of Coste's first volume, although it is actually a new edition, since the footnotes have been thoroughly overhauled, updated and added to, letters have been relocated into their proper chronological order, and new-found letters published for the first time. The joint work of American Vincentians and Daughters of Charity, the volume is the first of a projected set of eight volumes (now in progress) of the saint's correspondence, plus occasional pertinent letters of others. The 416 letters contained here are addressed to saints, popes, prelates, priests and religious, laymen and laywomen and, of course, members of Vincent's own religious families the Vincentian Fathers and Brothers, The Daughters of Charity and the Ladies of Charity. They are of special interest because they embrace the earliest years of his priesthood, the beginnings and spread of his communities, and spiritual advice to his co-worker and dear friend St. Louise de Marillac and to St. Jane Frances de Chantal, whose director he was. For this age of the laity there is much wisdom in the saint's letters to the first Ladies of Charity whose 300,000 spiritual descendants fill the Church worldwide today. Here, to sum up, is a firsthand account of the fascinating spiritual world of 17th Century France from the pen of one of its giants and makers. The book is available from the publisher.

—Joseph I. Dirvin, C.M.

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Special Notice

Dr. Scottino to retire as President of Gannon University

Dr. Joseph P. Scottino will conclude his appointment as President of Gannon University effective June 30, 1987, but continue his appointment as a member of the Department of Political Science.

Appointed the third President of Gannon University in 1977, Dr. Scottino will complete 10 years of service in that office in 1987. Major developments during his tenure as President include the designation of Gannon as a university in 1979 and the successful conclusion of the $21 million Investment in Excellence Program in 1984.

Dr. Scottino is a Founding Member of the *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars* and Executive Secretary Treasurer since 1981.

Msgr. Clark to St. John's

Fr. Joseph T. Cahill, C.M., President of St. John's University, New York City, has appointed Msgr. Eugene V. Clark to be John A. Flynn Professor in Contemporary Catholic Problems. He succeeds Msgr. George A. Kelly, who will remain at St. John's as University Research Professor.

Msgr. Clark will take over as Editor of the Fellowship Newsletter effective September 1, 1986. He becomes *ex officio* a member of the Fellowship's Executive Board. Mgsr. Kelly continues as President until 1988.

Ordained in 1951, Msgr. Clark, whose doctorate in history was earned at Notre Dame, did research for Cardinals Spellman and Cooke over two decades. For many years he was Director of New York's Bureau information. He also gave the Keynote Address ("Magnetic Fields of Theology") at the 1985 Fellowship Convention in Chicago.