



A journal for restless minds

LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU

We'll have a real good time

ECUMENISM RUN AMOK

That which defines us

JUST LIKE ME

The chasm that divides

TRADITION: TO THE EAST

Praying with, not prayed at

DEACON'S DINER

Food for a restless mind

Colloquī is a Deacon's Corner weekly journal. Its mission and purpose: to encourage serious discussion, to promote reasoned debate, and to provide serious content for those who hope to find their own pathway to God.

Each week Colloquī will contain articles on theology, philosophy, faith, religion, Catholicism, and much more.

Be forewarned! Articles may and often will contain fuel for controversy, but always with the express intent to seek the Truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help us God.

Let Me Entertain You

We'll have a real good time

Believe it or not, there once was a time before television. While difficult as it may seem to many to think such an unthinkable thought, life did exist and even thrived quite nicely without constantly being connected.

A question often asked of those born in the dark ages is "What did you do for entertainment?" As I can clearly recall we were seldom bored because we found ways to entertain ourselves.

I can clearly recall performing the Mass with my brother when we were 8 or 9.

This was conducted with great solemnity and in Latin no less. The altar was generally a box with a sheet to cover it along with a crucifix and candles, carefully shaped flattened bread for hosts, and a sheet for the chasuble. While it was play it was serious worship in its own way for we knew even then what the Mass meant: the worship of God.



It is difficult to imagine youth of any age today engaging in such *faithful* play for most have no clear idea of why they are *asked* to attend Mass. There is a common belief that worship must be entertaining; that in order to attract youth to worship we must use worldly methods to beat the world at its own game. We are kidding ourselves if we believe we can ever compete with pop concerts and video games. Worship is not a competition.

A. W. Tozer wrote: "Every great spiritual work from Paul to this hour has sprung out of spiritual experiences that made worshipers. Unless we are worshipers, we are simply religious dancing mice moving around in a circle getting nowhere.... God wants worshipers first."

A young man recently asked why we didn't offer Adoration at our parish. Having just attended an OnFire Catholic Youth Day he described how those who attended Adoration were greatly moved by the spiritual experience. The lesson to take from this: Worship is a spiritual experience with God; it is not entertainment.

Ecumenism Run Amok

That which defines us

In a web exclusive article (firstthings.com, 9.19.16, Lund and the Quest for Christian Unity,) Timothy George, founding dean of Beeson Divinity School of Samford University wrote:

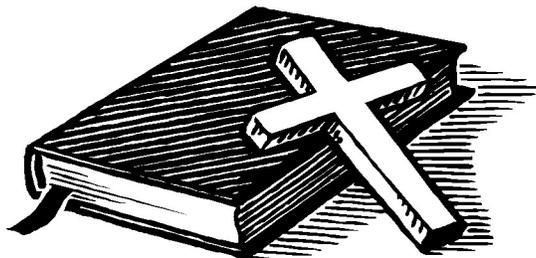
“Next month, on October 31, the eve of All Saints Day, Pope Francis will visit Lund, Sweden, to participate with Lutheran church leaders in a joint ecumenical commemoration of the Reformation. October 31 is Reformation Day on Protestant church calendars, and this year it will mark the 499th anniversary of Martin Luther’s posting of the 95 Theses on the Castle Church door at Wittenberg. The Pope’s presence at the prayer service in Lund Cathedral (Domkyrka), a church where Christians have worshiped for more than one thousand years, will be followed by a larger gathering at nearby Malmö. This historic occasion, which will launch a full year of Reformation remembrances, will doubtless be the most talked about ecumenical event of 2016.”

When I read this my heart stopped; I couldn’t breathe; my mind screamed with unfathomable violence and horror.

For the Supreme Pontiff of the Holy Catholic Church to celebrate a heresy seems beyond the pale, yet there it was in black and white. Not willing to accept such a travesty from a single source, I proceeded to search for others to confirm it. It didn’t take long to find other reliable sources.

A post by John Vennari (Catholic Family News, *Celebrating an Apocalyptic Plague: Pope Francis to Lead “Common worship service” to Commemorate 5th Centenary of Lutheran Revolt*, January 25, 2016) reported:

“It is now official what many of us expected. Pope Francis will participate in ceremony commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The January



25 Vatican Bolitano announces: ‘The Holy Father Francis in Lund, Sweden, to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. His Holiness Francis intends to participate in a joint ceremony of the Catholic Church and the World Lutheran Federation to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, scheduled to take place in Lund, Sweden on Monday, October 31, 2016.’ The Pope will lead the ‘common worship service’ along with two Lutheran leaders: Lutheran World Federation (LWF) President Bishop Dr. Munib A. Younan and LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr. Martin Junge.”

What so churns the stomach is the sheer lunacy of Catholic leaders, especially Popes, celebrating the 500th anniversary of a man who spent his life debasing Christian revelation. Yet it isn’t the first time. Pope St. John Paul II in 1983 praised Luther for his “deep

*religiousness,”*¹ voicing the highest public esteem for a man whose warped religious views led him to reject the true Church, deny his priesthood, and teach that the Mass was an abomination worse than the most loathsome brothel.²

“Forgotten in this ecumenical maelstrom is the fact that Protestantism is heresy, and heresy is a sin. In the objective order, it is a mortal sin against Faith that sends souls to hell for eternity. The revered Father Frederick Faber explained that heresy is ‘the sin of sins, the very loathsome of things which God looks down upon in this malignant world. ... It is the polluting of God’s truth, which is the worst of all impurities.’

Thus, Father Faber observed, ‘where there is no hatred of heresy, there is no holiness.’³

Likewise, Saint Alphonsus Liguori spoke of the duty to fight heresy because it kills our souls and the souls of others: ‘Heresy has been called a canker: ‘It spreadeth like a canker.’ (2 Tim. 2:17) As a canker infects the whole body, so heresy infects the whole soul — the mind, the heart, the intellect and the will. It is also called a plague; for it not only infects the one contaminated with it, but others who associate with him. Truly the spread of this plague in the world has injured the Church more than idolatry.’⁴

Blessed Pope Pius IX recognized Protestantism as “a revolt against God, it being an attempt to substitute a human for a divine authority, a declaration of the creature’s independence from God.”

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The Catholic historian Hilaire Belloc wrote that heresy not only affects the individual, but has a negative impact on society; man must live his life according to a Creed, a system of beliefs, but when it is distorted away from God's truth, life will become distorted as well. Thus when large masses of people fall into heresy, and live accordingly, it will change the entire structure of their society away from the Divine Program of Our Lord. It will create an environment that is not conducive to living a life of sanctifying grace but rather a society where evil is institutionalized.⁵

Thanks to the Protestant heresy, we now have legalized divorce, contraception, abortion, and the inordinate rise in the power of the State. This last because Protestants do not look at their "church" as an authority established by Christ to teach and govern all men. According to Protestants, Christ never founded such a Church. Thus, the highest authority on earth is the State.

Protestants do not hold to a Divine Faith received from Heaven through a teaching Church established by Our Lord. For the Protestant, there is no visible Church, there is only the individual and his Bible, subject to individual interpretation. Father Michael Müller said as much: "*The main spirit of Protestantism, then, has always been to declare every man independent of the divine authority of the Roman Catholic Church and to substitute for his divine authority a human authority.*"⁶

But apparently for many of today's Catholic leaders (including re-

cent popes,) the heresy of Protestantism no longer presents a problem. "*Have these leaders no love of Catholic doctrine? If they did, they would publicly oppose the Protestant heresies that disfigure it. Have they no love of souls? If they did, they would not pretend that a Protestant can be saved by remaining in his own man-made religion that teems with errors against the express teaching of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

Saint Teresa of Avila called Lutheranism "*that wretched sect.*" She established her first Carmelite foundation of nuns at Avila to help "*cure this terrible evil*" by bringing "*some comfort to our Lord.... Thus, being all of us employed in interceding for the champions of the Church and the preachers and theologians who defend her, we might, to our utmost, aid this Lord of mine Who is attacked with such cruelty ...*"⁷

As a Catholic I was taught that Martin Luther was a Catholic priest who dissented against the abuse of indulgences. That was the sum total of my knowledge of the man. I suspect most Catholics own much the same understanding.

But that tidbit of dissent is nothing in comparison to Luther's vitriolic hatred for the Church and her teachings. Luther denied the binding force of the moral law: "*We must remove the Decalogue out of sight and heart*" and elsewhere, "*If Moses should attempt to intimidate you with his stupid Ten Commandments, tell him right out: 'Chase yourselves to the Jews.'*" Luther was an ordained priest who broke his vow of celibacy to God and married a nun.

The Orthodox writer Rod Dreher expressed his befuddlement at the anticipated Catholic-Lutheran rapprochement in Lund: "*How can this or any pope do this, or approve of it? It makes no sense to me. It's as if a man and a wife got together to commemorate the occasion of their divorce!*"

Dreher is far too easy on the Pope. Perhaps a more accurate portrait of the seriousness of the betrayal to our beloved Catholic Church and to our faith by the Supreme Pontiff would be of Pope Francis standing next to Martin Luther as he hammers his 95 theses onto the door of All Saints' Church in Wittenburg. It is Ecumenism run amok—aiding and abetting a heresy.

Jesus said, "*you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.*"⁸ One can only wonder for how much longer can Christ's church prevail against such ecumenical rapprochement. One can only ask: "*Is the Pope still a Catholic?*"

1. New York Times, *Pope Praises Luther in an Appeal for Unity on Protestant Anniversary*, Nov. 6, 1983.

2. Of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Luther said that no sin of immorality, nay not even "manslaughter, theft, murder and adultery is so harmful as this abomination of the Popish Mass." He said further that he would have "rather kept a bawdy house or been a robber than to have blasphemed and traduced Christ for fifteen years by saying the Masses." *Luther*, by Hartman Grisar, S.J. (English translation, Herder), Vol. 2, p. 166; Vol 4. p. 525.

3. Father Frederick Faber, D.D., *The Precious Blood: The Price of Our Salvation*, 1860.

4. St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The History of Heresies*, English translation taken from the No. 1-2, 2000 edition of *Christ to the World (Rome)* in its first installment of serializing the book.

5. Hilaire Belloc, *The Great Heresies*, 1936.

6. Father Michael Müller, C.S.S.R., *The Catholic Dogma* New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1888.

7. Saint Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*, English Translation by the Benedictines of Stanbrook, [First published in 1911. Republished by Tan Books, 1997.

8. Mt 16:18.

Just Like Me

The chasm that divides

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is an intriguing one for while what we would surmise of it is important and true, we seldom gaze upon the jewel hidden behind its more obvious facade.

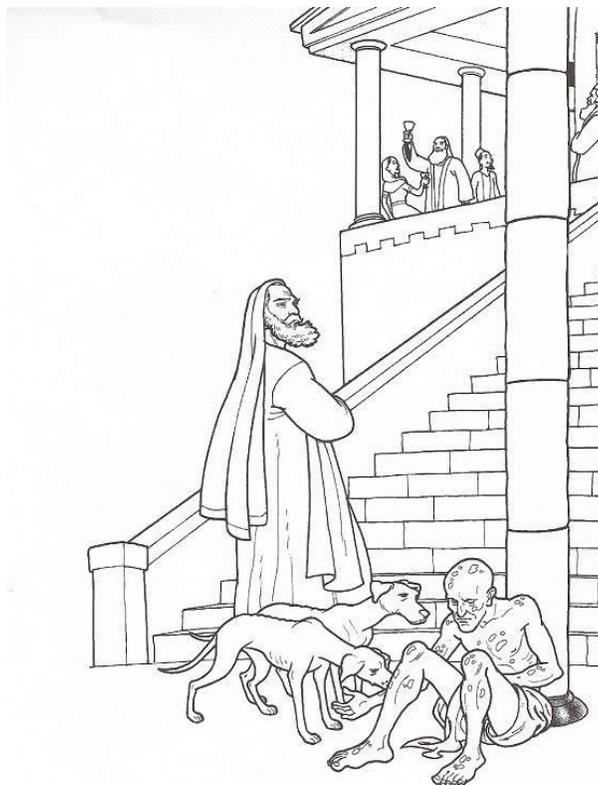
On the face of it, the message sings a common song, of rich and poor and the chasm that divides one from the other. What is to be made of this? What moral connotations may we discern which through countless episodes have yet to learn? What have we never heard before? Let us venture toward the new by first beginning with the old.

We have heard the stories and been admonished many times and in many ways: those who have must give to those who have not, in order to see God.

Jesus spoke of this many times. He said to the rich young man who asked what he lacked in order to gain eternal life:

"If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come follow me. When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions. Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."¹

Another time Jesus spoke of a rich man who tore down his barns and built larger ones in order to store all that he had; he then congratulated himself for having so many good things stored up for many years to come and was ready to sit back, rest, eat, drink and be merry.



"But God said to him, 'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?' Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God."²

We can recount many such parables. We have heard them many times before as we have heard of the inherent dangers that wealth and the desire for it can impose upon our immortal souls. Likewise we have been subjected to stern admonishments to give a portion of what we have to meet the needs of

the poor. And it is truly right and just that we do so. It is indeed our duty and responsibility to do as Jesus commanded us: to love our neighbor as ourself.

But in a larger sense this parable is not about the rich and the poor nor is it about helping those in need. No doubt it would appear to be just that and more often than not the message we will hear is one that follows what Jesus tells us will be said to those on his left at the final judgment:

"Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me. Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me."³

Yet there is a richer vein, a larger nugget to be gleaned from this parable, one which hold a greater truth for us to discover.

In their earthly lives, the rich man is well dressed and lives a life of ease and comfort, eating and drinking lavishly, enjoying the good life that his possessions provide him; the poor man is in rags, covered with sores which the dogs lick, and emaciated from hunger. When they die, the rich man goes to hell and the poor man to heaven. But we must ask ourselves: Why? What did either man do to get to

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where they end up? Certainly there must be more to the story than one of wealth and poverty? If that were the case then wouldn't we all be clamoring to be among the poorest of the poor?

What is missing from the parable is ... sin. What terrible sin or sins did the rich man commit to earn him eternal damnation? What good did the poor man do, outside of poverty—is poverty a good—to earn him his eternal reward with God? The parable doesn't tell us, on these matters it is silent.

Of course we could surmise that perhaps it was the rich man's failure to feed the poor man that earned him the trip to hell but the parable doesn't say whether the poor man ever asked for food nor does it say whether the rich man refused to give him any. So where is the sin? Again, the parable is silent.

So, what are we to make of this? What lesson is Jesus teaching that we can't see? Let's dig a little deeper.

After the rich man died and was buried, *"from the netherworld, where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus by his side. And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.'"*

Notice how the rich man speaks to Father Abraham, not to the poor man, Lazarus. Abraham is a revered ancestor, the poor man not worthy of a single thought. Even in death and torment, the rich man wants Abraham to make the poor man leave the comfort of his side, find his way into the flames

of hell, and bring a bit of water to himself. The rich man clearly thinks it no trouble for the poor man to do something for the rich man.

When Abraham refuses his request, the rich man asks for another, to send the poor man to his brothers, to warn them. And again, he speaks to Abraham, not to the poor man. He thinks of him only in how he can make use of him.

He was not asking for help for the people he had neglected during his life, but only for himself. He couldn't see nor understand that in hoarding his wealth while on earth he came to be possessed by it to the point where it became his god.

Now we can begin to see what the sin of the rich man must be. The poor man is a human being, a person just like the rich man. Both are creatures of God, unique individuals but with the same humanity, the same personhood.

The rich man's sin is that he can't see it; he doesn't see the poor man as a person in his own right. Insofar as he thinks of the poor man at all, it is only to calculate how the poor man can be used for his own benefit.

It would not have mattered in the least if the rich man had in fact fed the poor man when they were both living. His sin was his failure to ever think *"He is a man just like me."*

Pope Paul VI pointed this out in *Populorum Progressio* when he wrote:

"It is not simply a question of eliminating hunger and reducing poverty. It is

*not enough to combat destitution, urgent and necessary as this is. The point at issue is the establishment of a human society in which everyone, regardless of race, religion, or nationality, can live a truly human life free from bondage imposed by men and the forces of nature not sufficiently mastered, a society in which freedom is not an empty word, and where Lazarus the poor man can sit at the same table as the rich man."*⁴

Ron Rolheiser writes: *"Wealth that is hoarded always corrupts those who possess it. Any gift that is not shared turns sour. If we are not generous with our gifts we will be bitterly envied and will eventually turn bitter and envious ourselves. We know from experience that when we give of ourselves to others we experience a certain joy in our lives, just as when we selfishly hoard or protect what is ours we grow anxious and paranoid. Once our wealth reaches a certain point we need to begin to give some of it away—not because others need it but because our own health and happiness will begin to deteriorate if we hoard all of those possessions ourselves."*⁵

We are challenged to give to the poor—not because they need our charity, though they do—but because our giving to them is the only way we can stay healthy. Amen.

Homily for
26th Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle C
Amos 6:1A, 4-7
1 Timothy 6:11-16
Luke 16:19-31

1. Mt 19:21-24.

2. Lk 12:16:21.

3. Lk 25:41-43, 45.

4. Pope Paul VI, *Encyclical Populorum Progressio*, 1967:47.

5. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, *In Exile: Our need to share our riches with the poor*, The Sunday Website of St. Louis University.

Tradition: To The East *Praying with, not prayed at*

The great Broadway musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, with music by Bock and Hamick, begins with Tevye, the father of five daughters, singing of *Tradition*, a lament for the vanishing Jewish religious and cultural traditions that he has always known.

In the Introduction to *The Meaning of Tradition*, Yves Congar wrote that “for many, tradition is simply a collection of time-honored customs, accepted, not on critical grounds, but merely because things have always been so, because ‘it has always been done’.”¹

He contended that attempts to innovate were often opposed in the name of tradition, generally by conservative forces as a safeguard against novelty; that tradition was favored because it prevented change. According to Avery Cardinal Dulles, S. J. who penned the foreword:

“Regarded in some circles as a dangerous innovator, he was treated with suspicion and had to endure suspension from teaching and occasional banishment from France during the 1950s.”

In 1959 Pope John XXIII restored Congar’s good name by appointing him a theological consultant to the preparatory commission for the Second Vatican Council. At the Council itself, Congar’s influence was equal to, and perhaps

greater than, that of any other Catholic theologian. His influence is manifest in the Council’s teaching on Revelation, on the Church, on the laity, on ecumenism, on missiology and on many other topics.”

Later he mentions that “*Tradition is memory, and memory enriches experience. If we remembered nothing it would be impossible to advance; the same would be true if we were bound to a slavish imitation of the past. True tradition is not servility but fidelity.*”



Tradition comes from the Latin *traditio*, the noun of the verb *tradere*, which means to transmit or to deliver. *Tradere*, *traditio* meant to hand over an object with the intention, on the one hand, of parting with it, and, on the other, of acquiring it. *Tradere* implied giving over and surrendering something to someone, like passing a torch in a relay race.

Protestants claim the Bible is the only rule of faith, meaning that it contains all of the material one needs for theology and that this material is sufficiently clear that one does not need apostolic tradition or the Church’s magisterium (teaching authority) to help one understand it. According to the Protestant view, the whole of Christian truth is contained within the pages of the Bible. Anything not found within the Bible is simply non-authoritative, unnecessary or wrong—and may in fact hinder one’s relationship with God.

Catholics however hold a different view; one in which the Protestant view is rejected, contending that it is neither endorsed or validated in Scripture. The true ‘rule of faith’—as expressed in the Bible itself—is Scripture plus apostolic tradition, as manifested in the living teaching authority of the Catholic Church, to which were entrusted the oral teaching of Jesus and the apostles, along with the authority to interpret Scripture correctly.

Sacred Tradition differs from the normal understanding of tradition. As Congar wrote: “*Usually, when it is a question of handing over a material object, the donor loses possession of it and can no longer enjoy it. But this is no longer true when it is a question of spiritual riches—when a teacher transmits a doctrine, he commits it into the keeping of another, to be enjoyed by him, without losing any of it himself.*”

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I will expound more on Sacred Tradition in future issues but I wish to address a current controversy that has been the topic of some debate over the past few months. In the June 12 edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, Cardinal Sarah, the prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship wrote:

"The liturgy is essentially the action of Christ. If this vital principle is not received in faith, it is likely to make the liturgy a human work, a self-celebration of the community....To speak of a 'celebrating community' is not without ambiguity and requires real caution. The participatio actuosa [active participation] should not therefore be understood as the need to do something. On this point the teaching of the Council has often been distorted. It is instead to let Christ take us and associate us with his sacrifice.

It is entirely consistent with the conciliar constitution, it is indeed opportune that, during the rite of penance, the singing of the Gloria, the orations, and the Eucharistic prayer, everyone, priest and faithful, should turn together towards the East, to express their will to participate in the work of worship and of redemption accomplished by Christ," he continued. "This manner of doing things could opportunely be put into place in cathedrals, where liturgical life must be exemplary."

What the Cardinal was speaking of is *Ad Orientem*, Latin for "to the east" which, simply put, has traditionally been the direction Catholic churches were built. It also refers to the traditional way the priest faced during the Mass. The priest facing the altar is also referred to as *Ad Deum*,

which is Latin for 'to God' rather than the current way which is referred to as *Versus Populum*, that is 'facing the people'. While ancient liturgies did speak of the priest turning and 'facing the people' during certain parts of the mass, celebrating the entire mass *versus populum* is a novelty of the 1970's, a novelty that stands in direct contradiction to the Church's ancient traditions.

There is much confusion as to precisely what *ad orientem* means in today's liturgical environment. As one writer opined, it is "as if *ad orientem* and *versus populum* were matter and anti-matter, so antithetical that disaster would result from their combination....In reality, of course, the celebrant...faces the people much, if not most of the time—specifically (1) at the greeting, (2) during the readings, (3) during the homily, (4) to introduce the intercessions, (5) at 'Pray, brothers and sisters,' (6) at the exchange of peace, (7) at 'Behold, the Lamb of God,' (8) at Communion, (9) to introduce the prayer after Communion, and (10) at the final blessing and dismissal."²

As one priest reflects "after five years of offering Holy Mass *ad orientem*, I can say that I never want to have to return to the *versus populum* position." He lists ten advantages to *ad orientem* on his blog, *Vultus Christi*,³ which are both compelling and instructive. I will list them next week along with further commentary on *Ad Orientem*.

1. Yves Congar, O.P., *The Meaning of Tradition*, Translated from the French by A. N. Woodrow, Ignatius Press, 2004.
2. Charles Shonk, *Ad Orientem And Absolutism*, *First Things*, September 20, 2016.
3. Fr. Mark Kirby, Silverstream Priory, Stamullen, County Meath, Ireland, *Vultus Christi*.

Deacon's Diner

Food for a restless mind

For those restless minds that hunger and thirst for more. Each week this space will offer a menu of interesting and provocative titles, written by Catholic authors, in addition to those referenced in the articles, for you to feed your restless mind.

BOOKS

Subtracting Christianity

Joseph Sobran

FGF Books

June 20, 2016, 428 pages.

Practical Theology

Peter Kreeft

Ignatius Press

November 28, 2014, 400 pages.

Disorientation: How to Go to College Without Losing Your Mind

Edited by John Zmirak

Ascension Press

December 21, 2010, 188 pages.

PERIODICALS

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Touchstone

A Journal of Mere Christianity

Editor: James M. Kushiner

Bi-Monthly.

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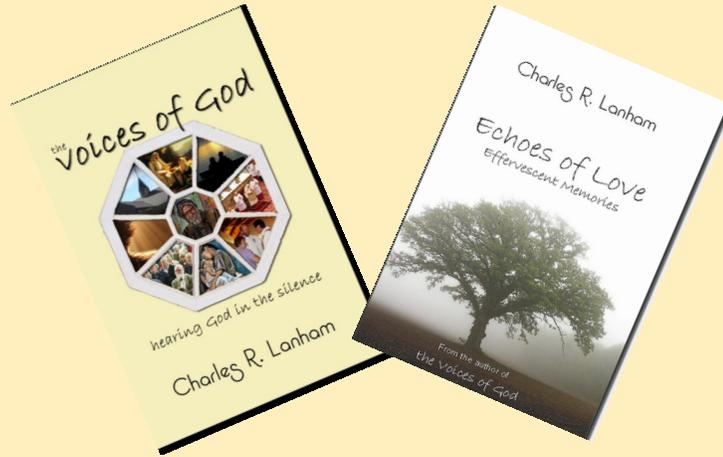
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