

Colloquī

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A journal for restless minds

Credo Et Profiteor Omnia

What Catholics must believe

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.

Credo Et Profiteor Omnia

What all Catholics must believe

Once there was a time, not so far outside of cogent memory, when one was measured

not by what others thought but by the objective record of their living: how one dealt with success as well as failure—did one rise up from the falling down or bemoan their misfortune by wallowing in self-pity—and the quality and devotion honestly met by and in their relationships with family, friends, neighbors, strangers, acquaintances, and above all else, with Almighty God. By all appearances, such memories are fading fast and will soon be lost among the clutter of discarded charities of impeccable manners, good taste, common sense, decency, objective truth, and unshakeable faith in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



Nostalgia recalls long-forgotten memories at the oddest instant, as for no fathomable reason or plausible cause a Bob Dylan song from 1964 suddenly twanged graveled dis-chords across heartstrings woefully out of tune.

*The line it is drawn
The curse it is cast,
The slow one now
Will later be fast,
As the present now
Will later be past
The order is rapidly fadin'
And the first one now
Will later be last
For the times they are a-
changing'*

And a-changin' they were indeed, not at all for the better, too often unnecessarily for the worse, much worse. The growing affluence of the middle class since the end of the Second World War gave rise to a self-indulgent generation lacking nothing yet wanting more; a generation born outside the harsh realities of the Great Depression and the barbaric inhuman cruelties of more recent memory.

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Such dire memory of then was horrifyingly real for those who had had the misfortune of living through and surviving either or both—though none would or could ever rid themselves of those dystopian realities which cost so much in human lives and wretched suffering. The steel forged in the fires of want and war had been tempered by an unquenchable faith in Almighty God.

Society was thus made small by necessity and need; Pope Leo XIII had stated as much in his 1891 encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum*, that society begins and ends within the walls of the home:

Hence we have the family, the “society” of a man’s house — a society very small, one must admit, but none the less a true society, and one older than any State. Consequently, it has rights and duties peculiar to itself which are quite independent of the State.

A family, no less than a State, is, as we have said, a true society, governed by an authority peculiar to itself, that is to say, by the authority of the father. Provided, therefore, the limits which are prescribed by the very purposes for which it exists be not transgressed, the family has at least equal rights with the State in the choice and pursuit of the things needful to its preservation and its just liberty. We say, “at least equal rights”; for, inasmuch as the domestic household is antecedent, as well in idea as in fact, to the gathering of men into a community, the family must necessarily have rights and duties which are prior to those of the community, and founded more immediately in nature. If the citizens, if the families on entering into association and fellowship, were to experience hindrance in a

commonwealth instead of help, and were to find their rights attacked instead of being upheld, society would rightly be an object of detestation rather than of desire.

The contention, then, that the civil government should at its option intrude into and exercise intimate control over the family and the household is a great and pernicious error. True, if a family finds itself in exceeding distress, utterly deprived of the counsel of friends, and without any prospect of extricating itself, it is right that extreme necessity be met by public aid, since each family is a part of the commonwealth. In like manner, if within the precincts of the household there occur grave disturbance of mutual rights, public authority should intervene to force each party to yield to the other its proper due; for this is not to deprive citizens of their rights, but justly and properly to safeguard and strengthen them.

But the rulers of the commonwealth must go no further; here, nature bids them stop. Paternal authority can be neither abolished nor absorbed by the State; for it has the same source as human life itself. “The child belongs to the father,” and is, as it were, the continuation of the father’s personality; and speaking strictly, the child takes its place in civil society, not of its own right, but in its quality as member of the family in which it is born. And for the very reason that “the child belongs to the father” it is, as St. Thomas Aquinas says, “before it attains the use of free will, under the power and the charge of its parents.” The socialists, therefore, in setting aside the parent and setting up a State supervision, act against natural justice, and destroy the structure of the home.¹

Having survived the worst of times, the greatest generation was steadfastly determined to bequeath to the generation

that followed only the best of times. As we have come to learn, such good intentions always come with unintended and too often disastrous consequences.

Despite—one might correctly say, in spite of the Pope’s condemnation of civil government intruding and exercising intimate control over the family and the household—the social cohesiveness of the family prior to the Great Depression and the Second World War did not survive post-war intact. Working parents, technological advances, modern conveniences, and a determination to provide a “better” life for themselves and their progeny all played a part in the disintegration of familial society. Staunch independence, individual liberty and the common good fed by a firm reliance on the providence of Almighty God were no longer pillars upon which natural societies, families, could be reconciled.

Wherever and whenever there is a void, someone or something will inevitably fill it. The “pursuit of happiness” thus became the right to be happy, wealthy and, not necessarily, wise. Whatever was inconvenient, tiresome or nonconducive to achieving personal happiness was relegated to civil society and government to provide.

To deprive it of its rights is to rob people of a great part of what it is to be human. It is repressive. The judgement of Pope Leo could hardly be more sternly expressed: “The Socialists, therefore, in setting aside the parent and setting up a State supervision, act *against natural justice*, and break into pieces the stability of all family life.”

With what indignation, and even nausea, must we then regard the never-ceasing intrusions of the State! In Alberta, the “conservative” government has forbidden *even homeschooling parents* to teach their children that homosexual acts are unnatural. It does not occur to the lawmakers that their own edict is itself unnatural. In no school district in my area do parents have the least authority in determining what their children will learn; they are thwarted by buffers of bureaucrats, those within the schools and their friends on school committees, not to mention by the deliberately inculcated arrogance of teachers, who take it as their sacred mission to *separate* children as best they can from those beliefs of the parents that they do not share. Planned Parenthood, that money pit for the production of porno-twaddle and the destruction of life, peddles salacious “educational tools” to children, and never says, “You had better talk these things over with your father and mother,” or, “You should honor the laws of your faith,” or, “You might wish to take counsel from a wise clergyman.” No, that would be the advice of people who actually understood the harmony between law and love, and the just claims of the society into which we are born.

Mass entertainment, that drivel that trickles from the jowls of leviathan while it snores, has the same end in mind: to render us less human, by separating us from family and faith. After all, just as a strong family is a bulwark against the predations of the State, so too, as the entertainers have finally learned, is it a bulwark against the predations of the media. At least it *can* be a bulwark; its members *can* turn aside from the glaring screen and, rubbing their eyes, glance at one another. Its members *can* ask, after a long muddle, why they should attend to idols so stupid and ugly and impo-

tent, and not to the God who made heaven and earth.²

With each succeeding generation, the slippery slope steepens and we descend evermore quickly toward hell. We have replaced the God who made us with the golden idols of power, fame, fortune and ourselves.

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron, and said to him, “Up, make us gods, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” And Aaron said to them, “Take off the rings of gold which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” So all the people took off the rings of gold which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made a molten calf; and they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!” When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a feast to the LORD.” And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play (Exodus 32:1-6).

When Moses comes down from the mountain and sees the ongoing idolatry and drunken debauchery, in his anger he takes the tablets with the laws written on them by God and throws them down at the base of the mountain. The golden calf is later ground into powder and mixed with water which the revelers are forced to

drink. Other than Aaron’s heterodoxy in this episode, the priesthood in Israel, as represented by the Levites, were faithful to the God of Israel.

Tragically, the Catholic Church in the United States is no longer the Catholic Church in America but has become the *American* Catholic Church with the Church’s culture becoming the American culture.

This idolatry can be observed through different prisms (e.g., Seven Deadly Sins), but, for now, let’s let the Angelic Doctor be our guide in assessing the situation by looking at the four common substitutes for God: wealth, pleasure, power, and honor. As you can see, dancing around the golden calf has never really gone out of style though the time, place, vestments, liturgy, and ecclesiastical structure have changed.³

Not long ago—here I will refer you to my essay *Brambles Among Roses* (Colloqui Vol. 03, Number 32, March 08, 2019)—I teased the question but never asked. Here now is the time to ask, as I have asked numerous individuals: “What does it mean to be Catholic?” I have asked this with all deliberate seriousness because it has become increasingly evident that few—if any—have even the slightest understanding of what Catholics, to truly *be* Catholic, are required to believe, observe and obey. In short, the Catholic Church has become more of a culture club, far afield from the Church founded by Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved

by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him (John 14: 15, 21, 23-24).

For those who may have no memory for Latin, the title I chose for this essay, *Credo et Profiteor Omni*, may seem like Greek to you. Well, it is not Greek, but the official language of the Roman Catholic Church.⁴ The title comes from the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults; it is Latin for the first five words of the profession of faith which every candidate, in the presence of the community, must declare:

I believe and profess all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God.

Perhaps there is a different version floating around, a more modern, more inclusive, more tolerant, more flexible version:

I believe and profess whatever suits me regardless of what the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God.

And yet, there is an even deeper, more profound poverty of faith in which many Catholics profess, brought about by the abject lack of catechetical education, doctrinal and dogmatic discourse and dissemination. In short, we have become Catholic in Name Only (CINO), because we are ignorant of all which we are to believe.

We profess in the Creed to believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

Church but behave as if there are many churches with diverse cultural beliefs and practices. We say:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

Do we really believe it? Really, every word, every syllable? Do we really believe it when we mumble:

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

A significant number (would you believe nearly half of all Catholics) believe that Jesus was a holy man but not God; the Arian Heresy prevails, even to this day.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

What a marvelous story. If you believe it to be true, then, I have some prime real estate just off the coast I can sell you on the cheap. And yes, that is what many "Catholics" believe.

The same goes for the tale we, without thought, profess to believe:

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the

dead and his kingdom will have no end.

And then there is that whole Trinity thing, you know, one God, but three persons:

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

How many Catholics really believe that? How many don't? How many simply do not care a twig or a twaddle, one way or the other?

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Yes, AMEN! How many really look "forward" to the resurrection of the dead? Sounds like Zombie Apocalypse to many? And who really believes that there is life in another world yet to come?

Here is one last question for you to consider, to mull over and spend some time reflecting:

How is it possible for people ever to be truly at one with each other, unless they behold the same object of wonder, and lose themselves in that wonder? Is not *that experience of God*, whose ways are not our ways nor are his thoughts our thoughts, the single most powerful experience of difference, yet an experience that is also made intimate for us, one with us, by the incarnation of the Son of God?

What happens to the other foundational diversity in the order of

Grace, that between the Church and the world? Must not the Church both meet cultures where they are, and stand forth as boldly as the Cross upon that barren rock, opposing the world, because the ways of the world, when they are not baptized, lead to death?

Why should a Catholic institution not then *be itself*, precisely to offer to that increasingly homogeneous and nothing-adoring world a *different word*, the word of Christ and his Church? Have not the secular preachers of *diversity* instead worked their hardest to efface that difference, to muffle all those who speak with the voice of the Church against the vision that those preachers have to offer—a vision that pretends to be “multicultural,” but that is actually anti-cultural, and is characterized by all the totalitarian impulses to use the massive power of government to bring to heel those who decline to go along?⁵

I firmly believe what I profess each time I recite the Creed, every word of it. I believe in One Catholic Church. I believe and profess all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God. I believe it because I must if I am to truthfully and faithfully proclaim myself Catholic.

Some may ask why they never or seldom hear dogma or doctrine taught from the pulpit. Here is what Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has written on this:

The path from dogma to preaching has become very difficult. There are no longer any patterns of thought and assumptions that carry the content of dogma into everyday life; it is too much to demand of the individual preacher, however, that he himself should figure out each time the entire path from the doctrinal

formula to its core and from there back to contemporary language. Should we not instead leave out dogma entirely? With such a radical cure, which appears to many today to be the only way out, preaching becomes speaking in one’s own name and loses all objective interest whatsoever, as Erik Peterson has strikingly and incontestably demonstrated from the painful experiences of crumbling liberal theology (*Was ist Theologie?* [Bonn, 1926]).

Whereas formerly no one doubted that Church was the standard and locus of preaching, now she stands almost as an obstacle to it: preaching, it seems, must become a critical corrective to Church instead of being subordinate to her and allowing her to be normative.⁶

Much more to come.

1. Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter “*Rerum Novarum: On Capital and Labor*”, 1891, §12, §14.
2. Anthony Esolen, “*The State Exists to Serve, Not Usurp, the Family*”, *Crisis Magazine*, January 2, 2013.
3. Jonathan B. Coe, “*When Priests and Prelates Dance Around the Golden Calf*”, *Crisis Magazine*, October 19, 2018.
4. Pope Paul VI, Second Vatican Council, “*Sacrosanctum Concilium, Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy*”, 1963.
5. Anthony Esolen, “*My College Succumbed to the Totalitarian Diversity Cult*”, *Crisis Magazine*, September 26, 2016.
6. Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), *Dogma and Preaching: Applying Christian Doctrine to Daily Life*, First Unabridged Edition (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2011), pp. 7, 15.

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

Thoughtful Theism

Fr. Andrew Younan

Emmaus Road Publishing
2017, 200 pages.

To Change the Church

Ross Gregory Douthat

Simon & Schuster
2018, 256 pages.

Mere Christianity

C. S. Lewis

C. S. Lewis Pte. Ltd.
1952, 228 pages.

PERIODICALS

First Things

Institute on Religion and Public Life

Editor: R. R. Reno

Ten Issues per year.

www.firstthings.com

Touchstone

A Journal of Mere Christianity

Editor: James M. Kushiner

Bi-Monthly.

www.touchstonemag.com

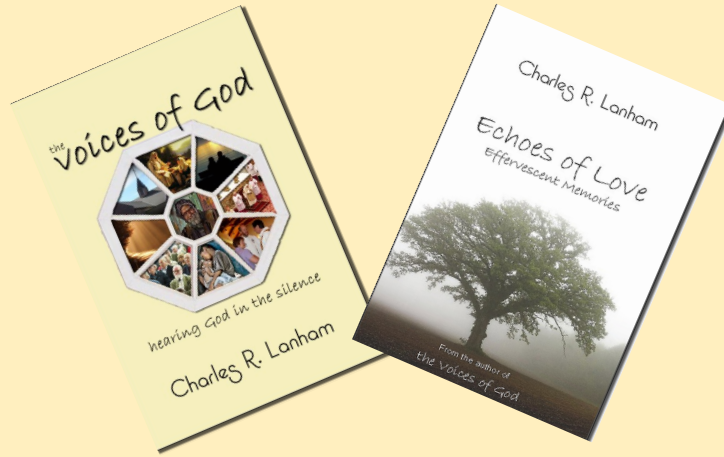
Catholic Answers Magazine

Share the Faith, Defend the Faith

Editor: Tim Ryland

Bi-Monthly.

www.catholic.com



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