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A journal for restless minds

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## Got Them Screaming Memes

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**M**EMES ARE SUDDENLY ALL THE RAGE in this day of self-absorbed selfies and all things me-me. The young are especially fond of them; the old wonder whether they are fish or fowl, animal, mineral or vegetable or something easy to swallow. For those who have long ago passed the age of pubescent juvenility, the official definition of a meme is this: it is “an element of a culture or system of behavior that may be considered to be passed from one individual to another by nongenetic means, especially imitation.” If your reaction is as was mine, “Say whuh?”, welcome to Generation G/G (Geriatric/Geritol). A more apt definition, perhaps is “a humorous image, video, piece of text, etc., that is copied (often with slight variations) and spread rapidly by Internet users.”

Text memes, often accompanied with an image, convey in brief a thought or idea, too often dishonestly, because their brevity precludes exposure to the broader context. Often, a quote meme will credit a well-known person but a search will find the quote attributed to more than one individual or to no one so peculiar. Take for example, the image front and center on this page. A quick search will find references to Dr. Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, and the ubiquitous Anonymous.

This is a popular meme wafting vaporously on the winds of social media but likes and shares don't make it sensible, rational or true. It is understandable why it is popular and why people are posting, reposting and sharing it. It is populist and quotable, it takes note of a problem (poverty), attributes the problem to a villain (the rich), and draws us in with that all-inclusive but nebulous *we*. It is also politically-charged, meaning, according to prevailing demagoguery, anyone who dares disagree or argue against it is automatically adjudged a racist, bigot, homophobe, xenophobe, genderphobe, sexist, fascist, hate-monger or whatsoever evil lurks in the hearts of men, and

thus, must be promptly taken out and horse-whipped, tarred and feathered, rode out of town on a rail headlong into an onrushing express locomotive.

**B**ut, upon closer examination it simply falls apart, it makes no sense at all and it is undeniably fallacious, teasing the sentimentality of the disaffected unwashed masses looking for a handout rather than a hand up. What first may appear to be a well-constructed expression of truth is actually—like so many other memes—an oversimplification tailored for those unwilling to make any effort to truly understand the whys and wherefores of such complex human issues. These days, effort is limited to memes such as this one and 30-second soundbites; much more is too much to ask or reasonably expect; the mob has neither the time nor the energy to waste on such foolishness; reading the meme qualifies anyone as a subject matter expert.

**Poverty exists not because we cannot feed the poor, but because we cannot satisfy the rich.**

In order to try to make sense of it, one must begin at the beginning and try to come to some logical agreement on the words so casually bandied about by the dullest of bulbs; too often even the brightest are equally gullible. “It is,” as Macbeth would say, “a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury. Signifying nothing.”

The first two words tell the tawdry, sordid tale. “Poverty exists” is on its face and by definition an oxymoron, a contradiction of terms, for existence presupposes life or a thing that belongs to objective reality. Man exists, animals exist, trees exist, the earth exists insofar as it is objectively real. Poverty, however, does not exist, it is not an object, it is not objectively real; it is subjective and relative. Poverty is a human construct predicated upon artificially determined criteria, the most common being the amount of material wealth one has or lacks thereof. An object, someone or something, that objectively exists *may* or *may not* be in a state or condition of poverty. To claim that “Poverty exists” makes no more sense than to say the poorest day of the week is Monday or that moonlight is short or tall, thin or fat, wears a feather in its cap and calls it a doodle dandy moonbeam.

Poverty is both global and individual, large-scale and small-scale, but this meme, like others of a similar ideological mindset, heaps all of the responsibility upon that ever-present, ubiquitous, undefined and annoyingly unidentified *we*. It ignores reality, ignores what actually determines whether and why a person is in such a poor state. It narrowly focuses on the micro and ignores the macro, focusing on the empty refrigerator and the mess on the floor while ignoring that very large bear, now stuffed up for the winter, comfortably hibernating on your recliner. It ignores contributing elements such as economics, politics and even geography. It ignores resource availability to raw materials and technology. It ignores the personal side of the tale, such as, individual creativity, ambition, decision-making, risk-acceptance, and yes, even luck. It ignores all of these factors; instead, it places the onerous causation for poverty on the very ones who have demonstrated an ability to rise above and out of it.

Inexplicably, it is apparently *we* who are negligent, *we* who are to blame, *we* who are incorrigibly corrupt because *we* cannot feed the poor. Who decided that *we* are the cause of global impoverishment? Who is this *we* that has been relegated to the universal food kitchen? A more salient question would be who is *not we*? Who, *not we* of course, gets to decide who are the *we*, who are the poor that *we* by diktat are required to feed? But, wait just a minute, who gets to decide who and what are *poor*? What happens if *we* and *poor* are one and the same, if *we* is *poor*? It is as Pogo once complained, “We have met the enemy and he is us.” This sounds all too familiar a refrain. I believe I may have said this before and if I have, it bears repeating, so I suppose I must and so I will repeat myself.

There is an unsettled familiarity to Orwell’s imagined future, now thirty-five years past, vividly illustrated in this brief dialogue between Winston Smith and O’Brien who is trying to convince Winston that “whatever the Party holds to be truth, is truth.” O’Brien holds up four fingers, but wants Winston to see five.

“You are a slow learner, Winston,” said O’Brien gently.

“How can I help it?” he blubbered. “How can I help but see what is in front of my eyes? Two and two are four.”

“Sometimes, Winston. Sometimes they are five. Sometimes they are three. Sometimes they are all of them at once. You must try harder. It is not easy to become sane.”

Before the head of *we* spins completely free of the neck, let us try to follow that discombobulated head and see where it might bounce. Before composing a reasonable syllogism, we must correct the aforesaid statement. Since we have shown that poverty cannot of itself exist but is rather a state or condition of someone or something that does indeed exist, let us replace the subject of the premise to now submit that “the poor exist” which is logically and factually true, no matter how miserably poor the *poor* are poorly determined.

We must then remove the double negative (not / cannot) which leaves us with “*we* feed the poor” which may or may not be true; to paraphrase a former president, it all depends on what the definition of *we* is and whether all *we* necessarily, always and everywhere, feed the poor—which at the very least is questionable and at worst undeniably and quite verifiably untrue.

For a logical conclusion to be true every premise must be true; herein providing us with our first logical problem. Since the premise “*We feed the poor*” may be or most certainly is untrue the conclusion necessarily fails because at least one premise is untrue.

*The poor exist.*

*We feed the poor.*

Therefore, *the poor exist because we feed the poor.*

Obviously, there is something amiss here. Could this really be logical? If we reintroduce one of the negations would that make the premise true?

*The poor exist.*

*We cannot feed the poor.*

Therefore, *the poor exist because we cannot feed the poor.*

Is this logical? Does this make sense? Of course not, as anyone—even lacking a basic university course in logic—with the ability to think the simplest thought can tell you, it is putting the cart before the horse, it is merely making no sense out of nonsense. It is imputing the reason some people exist in a state or condition of poverty is because *we* cannot feed them! It is a fallacious inference for it puts effect before cause; the effect—poverty and the existence of the poor—are not caused by *we* feeding them or not.

**T**he poor have been and will always be with us, regardless of how much or how little *we* feed them. In the fifth book of the Torah, *Deuteronomy*, the Lord said to the people of Israel, “For the poor will never cease out of the land” (Deut 15:11). Jesus said much the same when Mary of Bethany anointed his feet with costly ointment.

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Laz’arus was, who Jesus had raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Laz’arus was one of those at table with him. Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. **But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said, “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it.** Jesus said, “Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. **The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me**” (John 12:1-8). (*emphasis added*)

Nevertheless, there are those who would deny what has been written in Scripture—primarily socialists who assert, as did Marx, religion to be “the opiate of the masses” and those who believe government interventionist policies can reduce and eliminate poverty. Lyndon Johnson was of the latter persuasion, and as part of his Great Society, he pushed for the expansion of the federal government’s roles in education and healthcare as poverty reduction strategies. Johnson’s war on poverty led Congress to pass the Economic Opportunity Act which included forty programs which were collectively aimed at *eliminating poverty* by improving living conditions for residents of low-income neighborhoods and by helping the poor access economic opportunities long denied them. In the decade following the introduction of the war on poverty, poverty rates in the U.S. dropped from 17.3% in 1964 to 11.1% by the end of 1973; more telling is that the steep decline in poverty rates actually began in 1959 (22.4%), 5 years before the introduction of the war on poverty. Perhaps, most telling is they have remained between 11 and 15.2% ever since despite pouring hundreds of billions of federal tax dollars each year into social welfare programs (\$851.1 Billion in 2018).

**And, yet, the poor are still with us**, along with an overreaching bureaucracy, a leviathan of an elitist political machine and a government disposed toward controlling every aspect of human life, from preconception to infinity and beyond. Rather than eliminating poverty, the war on poverty and the plethora of never-ending social welfare programs have turned human life into mass quantities of readily available raw material available for manipulation and exploitation. In effect, we have met the poor and he is *we*. Those in power have no real interest in reducing or eliminating poverty for to do so would reduce or eliminate the raw material which they so enjoy manipulating and exploiting to their advantage. There is nothing new here, just manipulation and exploitation on a incredibly larger scale; a quick glance back at John 12:6 makes this obvious: Judas was a thief who cared not a fig for the poor, his only interest was for the money he could steal.

**N**ow, before someone—and there will be someone—cries foul, arguing that Jesus also called us to charity and mercy for those less fortunate, let us consider first the passage from Matthew’s gospel which is almost always cited as the foundational premise of their argument.

When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ... Then the King will say to those on his right hand, “Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee?” And the king will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those at his left hand, “Depart from me, you cursed, 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, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer, “Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?” Then he

will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me” (Matthew 25:31, 34-45).

And, let us not forget the sermon on the mount and the beatitudes! Blessed are the poor, blessed are those who mourn, blessed are the meek, the merciful, the pure of heart, and the peacemakers. Somehow, the beatitudes always seem to get twisted and tortured into the social justice warrior’s mantric mantra. Everything they preach is the gospel truth—for the bible tells us so—, on the last day we will be judged by how we treated the least of our fellow human beings. None of this should be dismissed, ignored or condemned. They are right to a point, however, it is always to a point which is to a point where even angels refuse to dance. But, they do try, they always do.

The problem is such purveyors of the gospel truth go too far, and yet, never quite near enough. It is not what was said but what is not said; not what was mentioned but what is left out; not what Jesus meant but what fits the narrative. It is, to borrow a phrase, the “inconvenient truth” that must not be uttered, the inconvenient truth that the words of Jesus were directed to *me*, never to *we*. The collective *we* will not be judged by how *we* treated the least of these. Consciences cannot be salvaged nor souls saved by groupthink and endless government programs. It is the individual *me* who will face the King in judgment, not the indeterminate *we*.

But wait! There’s more! There is one more, one more “because”, nestled snugly in a second clause. Should we omit it, we would not dare, for someone, we know not who, cared enough to put it there. Could this make sense out of all this nonsense or will it merely make matters worse? I suspect the latter, oh, much, much, every bit much the worse for wear. The double negative nullifies the premise “we feed the poor” thus, it is null nonsense and can be removed without price. Let us replace it with “*we cannot satisfy the rich.*”

*The poor exist.*

*We cannot satisfy the rich.*

Therefore, *the poor exist because we cannot satisfy the rich.*

Try as I might, that bone has no meat. Let us try a

slight variation, acquitting *we* from the indictment leaves us with the premise “*the rich cannot be satisfied.*”

*The poor exist.*

*The rich cannot be satisfied.*

Therefore, *the poor exist because the rich cannot be satisfied.*

Oh, this is good! Marvelously, wonderfully, stupendously good! The first is true, *we* know it is; just so, the second, or so it should. That must mean two trues justifies the end, does it not? Finally, *we* have got it right. But wait! Not so fast! What, in truth, has one to do with the other? Could it be mere coincidence, a chance meeting of unrelated thought? NOOOOOO! No, no, no, no, no, it must not be! Two trues cannot be wrong, they must be right just as two wrongs cannot be right, as everyone who is anybody knows.

Houston, we appear to have a problem. It should be obviously obvious; a broken clock is right at least twice a day. That the *rich* cannot be satisfied, some will insist, proves their case. They argue that the dissatisfaction of the *rich*—as indeterminate as *we*—robs from the poor what is rightfully theirs—unearned—to satisfy their insatiable appetites for more, and perhaps worst of all, they argue, is that the *rich* greedily refuse to share equitably their selfish ill-gotten loot. The conclusion ignores the innate nature of all men, that all, whether poor or rich or somewhere in the middle, are by nature, dissatisfied with their lot in life. The founding fathers got it right when they wrote:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are **created** equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the **pursuit** of happiness. That, to secure these rights, **governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.**

Too many have forgotten or simply choose to ignore these words. Our Creator God **created** every human being in his image and likeness with a body and a soul. Every human being is created equally by God but like fingerprints, all are unique. Perhaps, if the founders had written “all men are created equal, but unique as to their appearance, their talents, and their gifts, ...” their intent would have been clearer. Perhaps. But then, perhaps not.

God created man with the freedom to *pursue* happiness; God did not create man happy. Those unalienable rights gifted to every human person by their Creator recognize the inestimable value of each and every human life whether rich or poor, whether unborn, young or old, whether healthy, disabled or infirm. Each individual person has the unalienable right to liberty, the freedom to make the most of one's talents and interests so long as the freedoms of others are not infringed. Satisfaction is not an unalienable right; neither is happiness. As one pundit recently observed:

People are poor because of gigantic, global, economic forces that are bigger than any of us (and other people are rich because of those forces, too). People are poor because of localized economic situations (and other people are rich because of them, too). And, people are poor because of their own limitations—they may be incapable of, or unwilling to pursue wealth. Let's face it, we're not all born with the same intelligence, ambition, creativity or even the same priorities or goals.

And, people are poor because, somehow, they haven't realized that poverty is the default status for humans—even here in our American land of opportunity. For those who simply go through the motions of life, there is very little economic reward. **To rise above poverty and live in the middle class takes planning and it takes the intentional pursuit of career goals, and to become truly wealthy—aside from those few who inherit gold mines—usually takes some pretty hard work. Not everyone understands this.** (*emphasis added*)

But, I understand the temptation to blame poverty on the rich—it's easy and it's obvious. Poor people are defined as poor because they don't have money, while rich people have a bunch of it. If "the rich" would just share a little bit there'd be more for everyone else, right?

Not exactly.

To say that "the rich" have made all the money and are hoarding it so that the poor can't have it is to display a misunderstanding of how value is created and how wealth is accumulated. Economics is not a zero-sum game at least not here, in the free and developed world. We're not on the gold standard anymore. **One person "having" does not necessarily preclude another from also having.** Building personal wealth is a matter of an individual figuring out how to add value to the economy, or, how to invest in someone else who is doing so. The rich are those who understand this and have done it well.

The rich are the ones who have invented new products or provided new services that others demand. Or, the rich are those who have taken existing products and services and made them, somehow, better or more accessible. And because the rich are the ones who employ us, I would go so far as to say that we need their leadership, their vision, and their drive to make our economy work. I would further say that without the rich and the opportunities they create, there would actually be more poverty.

...

So, I disagree with the premise of this meme, and I also have real concerns with its presentation and its tone. The meme has labeled a classification of our fellow citizens as "the rich", but not defined exactly who they are. And then the meme has hung an accusation upon the entire class without any consideration for the individuals' merits or shortcomings. **It's an accusation which holds them responsible for the misfortunes of others, so it's serious, but no evidence is presented, and that, I think, violates the spirit of fairness—it's a problem with social media memes in general and this one in particular.**

I think most other moderate-thinking, well-grounded people would be uncomfortable with our meme if the villain were any other classification than "the rich", so ... instead of "the rich", substitute a label for any other classification of people—"the French", "the Christians", "the Fat Ladies", etc. See if it remains the kind of statement that we would like to share on social media. See if we remain comfortable accusing an entire classification of people that way.

Instead of "the rich", try putting "the blacks" in there. It just got more uncomfortable, didn't it? And instead of "the rich" try putting "the Jews" in there. Now say it out loud so someone else can hear you. It's downright creepy.

That's the fairness test, and this meme fails not just miserably, but spectacularly. It is just one word—one word—away from the kind of hate speech that launched our last world war. And if we wouldn't make this kind of categorical accusation against the fat ladies or the Jews, why would we do so against the rich? It is something to think about.

Disclaimer time: I've just spent the last two thousand words defending this undefined class who we call "the rich". But let's be clear that I'm not insinuating that all wealthy people are angels, because they aren't. I'm also not saying that there's no such thing as economic injustice perpetrated by the rich against the poor, because there's plenty of that in the world, and it should be confronted.

What I am saying is that we should be very careful in how we talk to each other and *about* each other. We should take a second look and a third look before we hit the share button on these snappy one-liners that populate our social media feeds. Most of them have a small element of truth, but leave a bigger one unsaid. We should pause and ask, “is this correct” and “is this fair?”. We should think deeper about who is identified as a victim or a villain before sharing the insult down the line to our friends and followers. And remember that productive discussions, the kind where ideas and deeper opinions are shared, can’t happen in sound bites.<sup>1</sup>

All too often people choose to be stupid rather than wise because pressing the “Stupid” button is far easier and demands little effort or thought. While, just as another writer recently penned, “I am rather uncomfortable using the word ‘stupidity’.

Nonetheless, its presence surrounds me and I cannot deny that I am more than occasionally afflicted by it.”

Among the writings of Annie Kraus is a treatise entitled *On Stupidity*. She regards it as a vice not of the intellect but of the will, not part of man’s natural endowment but a consequence of the Fall. To be stupid, according to her view, is to be deaf and dumb toward being, to refuse to do justice to reality. It is a withdrawing into the self and failing to acknowledge the wide world that stubbornly exists beyond the ego.

Reason is the universal faculty through which we make contact with reality. We are free, as Mortimer Adler has reminded us, in *How to Read a Book*, not when we are *from* reason, but when we are free *through* reason. Some people refuse to suppress reason and are willing to look at reality the way it is rather than the way they would prefer it to be. Such individuals, we may say, possess a philosophical temperament. The Catholic Church has always been insistent on the use of reason in order to better appreciate God’s creation. This fact is nowhere better illustrated than in the Church’s founding of the university. Therefore, the Church has always been attractive to those who want to engage reason in order to improve their understanding of reality.

We need not look very far in today’s world to find evidence of stupidity. There are politicians among us who seem to thrive on it. Napoleon had advised us that “In politics, stupidity is not a handicap”. One current presidential hopeful promises, if elected, to promote abortion “fiercely” and do what he can to suppress religion. Here we may cite Catholic convert Christopher Dawson who, as an astute historian, has pointed out in his book, *Progress and Religion*, that “A society which

has lost its religion becomes sooner or later a society which has lost its culture.”

Meditating on the reality that God has created may be the surest way of cutting down on stupidity. It is an impairment, we should remember, that is more easily spotted in others than in one’s self. In the final analysis, the harmony between faith and reason is of invaluable assistance in helping us to remain sane and productive.<sup>2</sup>

Wisdom and common sense are seldom seen strolling together these days. There is an old story that is remarkable in proving this to be true. Like so many of us, John was having to do some fancy footwork to make ends meet. Tax time was coming up. His kids were in college. He had a hill of past-due bills. His wife had a root canal scheduled for next week. Oh, and the mortgage!

He went to church, made the sign of the Cross, knelt before the altar, and prayed, “Lord, I’m having a rough time with money right now. Please let me win the lottery.” That week when the numbers were drawn, John did not win and the jackpot went up. He went back to church, knelt, made the Sign of the Cross, clasped his hands together, and prayed, “Lord, I could really, really use your help. Please, let me win the lottery.” Again, the numbers were drawn, John came up empty-handed and the jackpot rose. A third time, John returned to church, clasped his hands together, squeezed his eyes shut, and prayed, “Lord, the creditors are on my tail. I’m desperate. Please, PLEASE let me win the lottery. And again, John did not win. John stomped back into church, knelt, made the Sign of the Cross, clasped his hands together, squeezed his eyes shut, gritted his teeth together, and sighed. “What the heck, Lord?”

A booming voice came down from the sunlit dome of the church: “John, BUY A TICKET.”

This story should be a reminder that God is neither our own personal genie nor our fairy godmother. We don’t get to sit back and have God do all the work.

1. Chris Congdon, *Commentary: bad meme*, <https://www.upstairsproject.com>.
2. Donald DeMarco, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus/ St. Jerome’s University, *Faith & Reason: The Rejection of Worldly Stupidity*, Catholic Exchange, March 4, 2020.

# A Catholic Moment

## II—You shall not take the name of your God in vain

**W**hat do you hear when the name of God is spoken. Do you hear something mundane like a job title or a role? Or is the name of God something infinitely more, a name above every other name?

The religious nature of man means that the duty of praising God's name is not under discussion because it is a demonstration of our recognition of the personal nature of divinity and of its attributes. Turning toward God is a necessary expression of the religiosity that is just as obligatory as worship and is based on the capacity to recognize God in all of creation. This duty, which is based on our condition as creatures of God, is elevated to a demonstration of our condition as children of God through grace. Prayer, therefore, is a demonstration of piety and filial love.

The CCC expands upon the contents of this commandment in three paragraphs. The first regards the holiness of God's name and the obligation to glorify it, including the most obvious sin against this commandment, blasphemy. The second mainly addresses the moral value of a promise made in God's name. The final paragraph refers to the name of each Christian, both the one that we receive during baptism and the name that God has given to each human being, personally identifying us in all of eternity and for all of eternity.<sup>1</sup>

Saint John Henry Cardinal Newman described the importance of respecting God's holy name and to the sacred reality it evokes:

Are these feelings of fear and awe Christian feelings or not? ... I say this, then, which I think no one can reasonably dispute. They are the class of feelings we should have—yes, have to an intense degree—if we literally had the sight of Almighty God; therefore they are the class of feelings which we shall have, if we realize His presence. In proportion as we believe that He is present, we shall have them; and not to have them, is not to realize, not to believe that He is present.<sup>2</sup>

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states unequiv-

ocally, "The second commandment forbids the abuse of God's name, i.e., every improper use of the names of God, Jesus Christ, but also of the Virgin Mary and all the saints" (CCC §2146).

**U**tterances against God—inwardly or outwardly—words of hatred, reproach, or defiance; in speaking ill of God; in failing in respect toward God in one's speech; in misusing God's name are all instances of the sin of blasphemy. Blasphemy extends to language against Christ's Church, the saints, and sacred things. It is also blasphemous to cover up criminal behavior, to reduce people to servitude, to torture persons or put them to death. Blasphemy is contrary to the respect due God and his holy name. It is in itself a grave sin (CIC, can. 1369).

God calls each one by name. Everyone's name is sacred. The name is the icon of the person. It demands respect as a sign of the dignity of the one who bears it (CCC §2158).

The name one receives is a name for eternity. In the kingdom, the mysterious and unique character of each person marked with God's name will shine forth in splendor. "To him who

conquers...I will give a white stone, with a new name written on the stone which no one knows except him who receives it" (Rev 2:17). "Then I looked, and Lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads" (Rev 14:1) (CCC §2159).

Names are important. Just as your name is the icon of your person, so, even more so the name of God. Both your name and God's name must be respected because they are sacred and holy.



1. José M. Galván, *The Second Commandment*, Commentary on the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
2. Saint John Henry Cardinal Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons V*, 2 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), 21-22.

**A Catholic Moment** is an regular feature of Colloqui. The intention is to catechize Catholics on authentic Church teaching, rubrics and ritual. If you have a question, never hesitate to send it to Deacon Chuck.

## Deacon's Diner

*Food for a restless mind*

**F**or 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

**Salvation: What Every Catholic Should Know**

*Michael Patrick Barber*

Ignatius Press

2019, 189 pages.

**Faith and Politics**

*Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI)*

Ignatius Press

2018, 269 pages.

**The Day Is Now Far Spent**

*Robert Cardinal Sarah*

Ignatius Press

2019, 350 pages.

**Socrates' Children, Volume I: Ancient Philosophers**

*Peter Kreeft*

St. Augustine's Press

2019, 169 pages.

**G.K. Chesterton Collected Works: Volume XXXVI**

*The Illustrated London News 1932-1934*

Ignatius Press

2011, 613 pages.

**Return of the Strong Gods: Nationalism, Populism and the future of the West**

*R. R. Reno*

Regnery Gateway

2019, 182 pages.

**The Irony of Modern Catholic History:**

How the Church rediscovered itself & challenged the modern world to reform

*George Weigel*

Basic Books

2019, 322 pages.

### PERIODICALS

**First Things**

[www.firstthings.com](http://www.firstthings.com)

**Touchstone**

[www.touchstonemag.com](http://www.touchstonemag.com)

**Catholic Answers Magazine**

[www.catholic.com](http://www.catholic.com)

**Catholic Herald**

[www.catholicherald.co.uk](http://www.catholicherald.co.uk)

**Chronicles**

[www.chroniclesmagazine.org](http://www.chroniclesmagazine.org)

**Gilbert!**

[www.chesterton.org](http://www.chesterton.org)

**The National Catholic Register**

[www.ncregister.com](http://www.ncregister.com)

**Our Sunday Visitor**

[www.osvnews.com](http://www.osvnews.com)

### ONLINE

**Crisis Magazine**

[www.crisismagazine.com](http://www.crisismagazine.com)

**The Imaginative Conservative**

[www.theimaginativeconservative.org](http://www.theimaginativeconservative.org)

**Catholic Exchange**

[www.catholicexchange.com](http://www.catholicexchange.com)

**Intellectual Takeout**

[www.intellectuالتakeout.org](http://www.intellectuالتakeout.org)

**Life News**

[www.lifenews.com](http://www.lifenews.com)

**Life Site News**

[www.lifesitenews.com](http://www.lifesitenews.com)

**OnePeterFive**

[www.onepeterfive.com](http://www.onepeterfive.com)

**Catholic Vote**

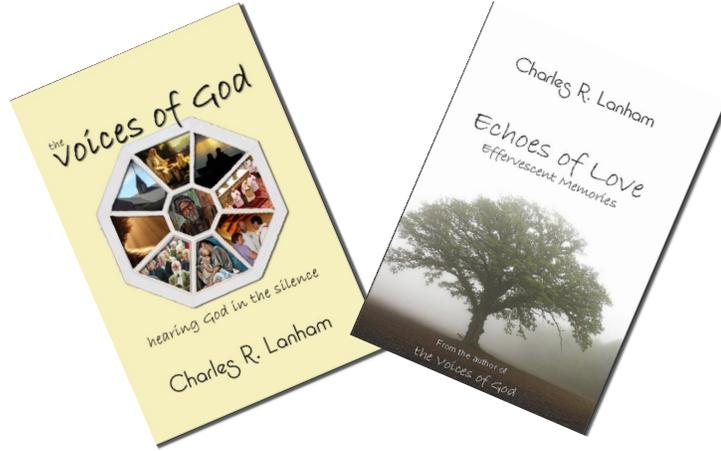
[www.catholicvote.org](http://www.catholicvote.org)

**The Catholic Thing**

[www.thecatholicthing.org](http://www.thecatholicthing.org)

**PragerU**

[www.prageru.com](http://www.prageru.com)



Books are available on **Amazon.com** or from the author's web site at:

**deaconscorner.org**

**Deacon Chuck Lanham** is a Catholic author, columnist, speaker, theologian and philosopher, a jack-of-all-trades like his father (though far from a master of anything) and a servant of God. He is the author of **The Voices of God: Hearing God in the Silence**, **Echoes of Love: Effervescent Memories** and has written over 400 essays on religion, faith, morality, theology, and philosophy.

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**deacon.chuck@deaconscorner.org**

**USEFUL ABBREVIATIONS FOR THE TIME-PRESSED ONLINE READER**

<b>TL:DR</b> TOO LONG; DIDN'T READ	<b>RB:GB</b> READ A BIT; GOT BORED
<b>VS:SDR</b> VERY SHORT; STILL DIDN'T READ	<b>SR:MP</b> SKIM-READ; MISSED POINT
<b>SR:PW</b> SHOULD READ; PROBABLY WON'T	<b>RH:PAC</b> READ HEADLINE; POSTED ANGRY COMMENTS



**Memes with an edge of truth.**



"THAT'S ODD: MY FACEBOOK FRIENDS WHO WERE CONSTITUTIONAL SCHOLARS JUST A MONTH AGO ARE NOW INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXPERTS...."

**Colloquī**, the present infinitive of *colloquor* (Latin: *to talk, to discuss or to converse*) 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! Essays may and often will contain fuel for controversy, but always with the expressed intent to seek the Truth, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth, so help us God.

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