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A journal for restless minds

Colloquī *: to discuss*

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For Hate's Sake

Dancing round the pyre

Strange how hate so swiftly condemns the good; Unreason, desperate to silence Reason's voice so soon denies all "the good that men do" giving sway to tyranny, unbridled chaos and anarchy. How readily do we bow to the golden calf, giving credence and authority to those who would enslave us for their sake and their hatred of their fellow man. The current crises are but two sides of the same counterfeit coin, used to cash in on our fear and our horror at the evil now consuming the good that is within each of us. Far too many *know* only what they are told, *believe* only what they have been told to believe, and *hate* those they have been taught to hate. Far too many have listened to the serpent's sibilant whisper and have eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; now convinced they are like gods they choose to burn Eden to the ground. They are foolish gods, indeed. There is nothing new in this, of course, never has been and by all reasonable evidence, never will be. That does, however, neither make it right, prudent, moral, nor justified.

The past several months has seen unprecedented abuses of authority by autocratic public officials unilaterally suspending civil liberties over highly questionable concerns for the "health and safety" of the public for whom they were elected to serve. As resentment over the abrogation of constitutionally protected rights and freedoms began to erode already historically low public confidence, the autocrats quickly looked for another crisis to distract the easily distractible public. The horrendous killing of another human being, a black man by a white cop—shown live on social media as the man was ever so slowly and cruelly asphyxiated—was too perfect an opportunity for those seeking to never let a good crisis go to waste. The live streaming of the vicious act spread faster than the Wuhan virus, threatening to unite the collective con-

science of the nation aghast at what they were witnessing; but the autocrats could have none of that lest it prove their nakedness. Under the Orwellian ruse of eradicating systemic racism, the mob was released like bulls in a china shop and granted carte blanche to "burn, baby, burn," to loot, destroy, and kill first a neighborhood, then a city, and at last a nation. Sometimes it takes a child to admit the obvious: that the emperor wears no clothes.

Make no mistake, the fires of hell are the devil's milieu; hate is the fuel and anger the bellows that fan the flames as Satan dances round the ever-growing pyre of lost souls. As God is all Love, the devil is all-consuming hate. Hatred owns no virtue, only an unquenchable, unreasoned anger; hatred is irrational, it kills the soul, then feeds on the carrion of the spirit. Nearly two centuries

past, Herman Melville wrote of such all-consuming hate with the last words of Captain Ahab to the great white whale, Moby Dick, "to the last I grapple with thee; from hell's heart I stab at thee; for hate's sake I spit my last breath at thee." Reading of Ahab's hatred seems somewhat muted when one considers a more contemporary rendering from the movie *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*. Consumed by hatred after being left on a desolate planet and all but forgotten



by Captain James T. Kirk who had left him there years before, Khan Noonien Singh wanted nothing less than revenge. "Revenge is a dish best served cold," he says. Never mind the reason for his exile or the disaster that changed the once verdant planet into a vast wasteland. Khan, a product of a eugenics experiment designed to create a cult of superhuman beings, was blind to his arrogance and unable to admit to weakness or failure. With his dying breath he spews his hateful venom at his nemesis, Kirk: "From hell's heart, I stab at thee. For hate's sake, I spit my last breath at thee." There is no room for reconciliation, no door to forgiveness, no words to douse the flames with mercy; hate is an absence, a dark, forbidding emptiness void of faith, hope, and, above all, charity.

Here, I must take a brief aside. Increasingly, I am finding it much too distracting to pick up one of the many books in my possession written by Mr. G.K. Chesterton. It appears, no matter what page I bend, Chesterton has preceded my thoughts with uncanny precision. Just now, quite without any specific purpose or wayward thought rambling through my peculiar mind, I chanced to pick up Volume XXXIV: The Illustrated London News 1926-1928. Without any particular care I opened it to page 41 whereupon I discovered his essay for February 13, 1926, *Modern Doubt and Questioning*.

I have often been rebuked for not treating a question seriously, and I have tried to consider very seriously what is the nature of this lack of seriousness. It seems to be largely a matter of imagery. ... Nearly all newspaper correspondences now revolve round religion, which we were told about fifty years ago had finally disappeared. I was asked to contribute an article under the general title of "Have We Lost Faith?" I answered the question, as it seems to me quite seriously, by saying that we have lost faith in the Darwinian theory, in the Higher Criticism, in the cruder conception of progress, and so on. Nearly all the correspondents flew into a passion against my flippancy. They had expected me to say, as they all said, that we were gradually losing faith in various parts of Christianity, and liked describing the sensation. Apparently it is not cheek to say you have lost faith in Deity or immortality, but it is cheek to say you have lost faith in Darwin. If you assert that you have outgrown St. John the Evangelist, you are not only a reverent person, but a person to be revered. But if you say you do not agree with a German professor named Harnack, you must be joking. It is impudent to question Progress, but not impudent to question Providence. Anyhow, among these critics there was one who specially interested me, for he said that no Christian apologist could possibly deny a certain historical identification of faith with ignorance; and a number of other things which I, for one, am ready as an apologist to deny, and to deny quite without apology.

When such a critic says, for instance, that faith kept the world in darkness until doubt led to enlightenment, he is himself taking things on faith, things that he has never been sufficiently enlightened no doubt. That exceedingly crude simplification of human history is what he has been taught, and he believes it because he has been taught. I do not blame him for that; I merely remark that he is an unconscious example of everything that he reviles. Certainly there were Dark Ages following on the decline of the old pagan civilization; but it is quite the reverse of self-evident that it is through religion that

the civilization declined. It is quite the reverse of the truth that it was by religion that the ages were darkened. It was by religion alone that they were illuminated, as far as they were illuminated at all. It is as if a riot were to wreck all the lamp-posts because street-lamps brought on the fog. It is as if a man were to blow out all the candles with one blast of fury, on the ground that they had encouraged the sun to set.

Thus, to hear these people talk, one would suppose that, but for what they call superstition, there would always have been progress. The truth is that, but for what they call superstition, there would simply have been savagery. They assume that Danish pirates would all have wanted to join Ethical Societies and attend University Extension lectures, but for deplorable obstacles like St. Dunstan. They assume that if the Huns had not been Christians, or Arians, there would have been no theological squabbles to divert them from scientific culture and social reform. In short, if the Huns had been heathens, they would have been humanitarians. In fact, however, if they had been heathens, they would have been simply Huns. It is implied that feudal barons would all have become Progressive County Councillors if they had been left entirely to themselves. It is suggested that Border chieftains would all have been arguing in debating clubs about evolution and ethics, but for the blighting influence of theology. ... In short, it is suggested that the cloud which darkened these dark ages was superstition or religion. But the truth is that the clouds that rolled up over the end of the Roman Empire came from all quarters of the sky and all causes in the nature of things: from Asia, from Africa, from the hungry North, from the economic breakdown and the failure of communications, from half-a-hundred other historical causes; and that the clouds were so dark that religion, even if it had really been superstition, would still by comparison have been enlightenment. One may like or dislike that candle, but it is quite certain that it was the only light in that gloom.

I began this essay with the singular thought: "Far too many *know* only what they are told, *believe* only what they have been told to believe, and *hate* those they have been taught to hate." I wrote those words without the benefit of having first read what Chesterton wrote some ninety-four years ago, "That exceedingly crude simplification of human history is what he has been taught, and he believes it because he has been taught." I certainly do not begrudge Chesterton his prescience; rather, I am deeply and seriously gratified for his unlikely support and confirmation. As Chesterton did not blame his critic for believing as he had been taught but merely suggested how much his critic

unconsciously resembled that which he reviled, I must admit to arriving at much the same conclusion over the current crop of mindless minions munching on the meaningless mush daily set before them. Likewise, it was with no small satisfaction that I read his illustrations, "It is as if a riot were to wreck all the lamp-posts because street-lamps brought on the fog. It is as if a man were to blow out all the candles with one blast of fury, on the ground that they had encouraged the sun to set." I simply could not have described the current progressive mind better if I had said the same, so I simply will not bother to do so.

We are living, no longer in an age of enlightenment where creativity, imagination and independent thought are encouraged and extolled; we are, in truth, dying in a time of darkness, where despair, hopelessness and hate have led us to complete surrender to the cult of death. Every cult has the same goal: the utter submission of the mind to the control of the cult. Cult members surrender everything: they give up their physical freedom, where they can go, who they can see, how they can dress, but worst of all, they give up their minds, mindlessly believing only what they are allowed to believe. Every cult does this by separating people from the familiar, forcing them to renounce their former lives, their country, their customs; to hold no loyalties but to the cult. The family is always the enemy, the main impediment to brainwashing and extremism.

In a recent editorial for the Epoch Times, Dana Cheng, who grew up in Wuhan, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak, wrote,

When I was growing up in China, one of the first songs we were taught was "I Compare the (Communist) Party to my Mother." We were taught from a young age that "father is dear, mother is dear, but none compare to the dearest Party."

We were taught that only the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) could provide a good life, that people in Taiwan were forced to beg on the streets and that we should liberate them. American capitalism was evil, and we should fight with the United States.

And of course, no one could criticize the CCP or anything in the society. My uncle complained about the food in a socialist cafeteria. He was labeled a rightist and, as punishment, was sent to work in the remote countryside for 20 years.

We love China, and we love the Chinese people. Communist ideology was imported to China from the Soviet Union. The CCP has damaged China's traditional culture and corrupted the morality of Chinese society. In its rule of 70 years, it has killed 80 million Chinese people.

Criticizing the CCP is not "anti-China," and it is not racist. The CCP does not represent China, nor the Chinese people. To mix China with the CCP distorts things and leads us to ignore the danger posed by the CCP.

Cults are, by their nature, ideological carrion eaters, preying on the weak and dying, much preferring souls soon dead, decaying spirits rotting from within. Satan's vultures circle wide, ever vigilant for the rales of death and underlying moral weakness. They smell the rankness and drool in offal anticipation.

There are books, a great many books, and essays—even more than there are books—on what is wrong with the world (Chesterton even wrote one with just such a title.) Each is likely of some value in the reading if only one would care to bend to such an onerous task as paging beyond the cover. I will not hold my breath waiting that that might happen, knowing full well that I will likely suffer from self-induced asphyxiation. For those who have managed to come this far, I offer my condolences and my heartfelt appreciation for your resolve. What follows are not my words, but they most assuredly mirror my thoughts.

Should Catholics be excommunicated for holding views on race which are found to be insufficiently woke? The Jesuits seem to think so.

In a June 1 editorial, America magazine urged Catholics to "hunger for [social] justice like we do the Eucharist," and that includes seeking "repentance and reconciliation" for the crimes of the white race. All whites are automatically culpable of those crimes by the fact that our skin contains less melanin. (If only the Jesuits were so eager that Catholics go to confession before receiving the actual Eucharist. Alas.)

Fifteen years ago, that view was only espoused by a few self-righteous undergraduates at B-list state colleges. It was a punchline: Sally comes home from their first semester of college, newly enlightened by three months of Ethnic Studies. She ruins Thanksgiving dinner by calling Grandpa (who fought at Normandy) a Nazi for supporting George W. Bush. We assumed that only silly, impressionable teenage girls could really believe in

“white guilt.” Now, it’s become the Jesuits’ editorial line.

In case you were wondering, yes: *America* [Magazine] has consistently opposed bishops and priests who deny Holy Communion to pro-abortion politicians. Yet more proof that “God’s Marines” have defected to the City of Man.

But Archbishop Wilton Gregory will do them one better. On June 2, the Archbishop of Washington, D.C., condemned the Saint John Paul II National Shrine for hosting a visit from President Donald Trump. The Shrine explained that the visit had been planned far in advance: Mr. Trump was there to sign an executive order advancing religious freedom. Yet a statement from Archbishop Gregory called the President’s mere presence at the Shrine “baffling and reprehensible.” Read it for yourself: “I find it baffling and reprehensible that any Catholic facility would allow itself to be so egregiously misused and manipulated in a fashion that violates our religious principles, which call us to defend the rights of all people, even those with whom we might disagree. Saint Pope John Paul II was an ardent defender of the rights and dignity of human beings. His legacy bears vivid witness to that truth. He certainly would not condone the use of tear gas and other deterrents to silence, scatter or intimidate them for a photo opportunity in front of a place of worship and peace.”

Just consider how extraordinary it is to hear a Catholic bishop essentially say, “This man shouldn’t be allowed into our churches because I don’t agree with his politics.” No bishop has ever said that pro-abortion politicians should be barred from church. They’d be encouraged to attend Mass until they’re prepared to confess their sin, do penance, and receive Holy Communion. But Archbishop Gregory doesn’t even want Mr. Trump putting his foot in the door.

By the way, that “place of worship and peace” that President Trump desecrated was Saint John’s Episcopal Church in Lafayette Square. Located just a block away from the White House, Saint John’s has been attended by every American president since James Madison, earning its nickname “the Church of the Presidents.”

Apparently, it’s true that Mr. Trump ordered police officers to clear out the protesters. According to a local Episcopal priestess, “They turned holy ground into a battleground.” The Washington Post interviewed Mariann Budde, the Episcopal “bishop” of Washington, about the President’s appearance at Saint John’s. Like her Catholic counterpart, Ms. Budde was outraged by Trump’s presence at one of her churches. “Everything he has said and done is to inflame violence,” she said; “We need moral leadership, and he’s done everything to divide us.”

Of course, both women belie the reason Mr. Trump was visiting Saint John’s in the first place: because it had been set on fire by the protesters. The President was assuring America’s Christians that he wouldn’t stand by and watch as vandals destroyed our houses of worship in an orgy of nihilistic rage. He will defend us, even if we refuse to defend ourselves.

This is the first point we must make. To believing Christians, our churches are not ours. They belong to God. It’s not for us to bar a politician from entering a church because we disapprove of his cause. It’s not for us to allow rioters to burn down a church because we approve of theirs.

Ms. Budde vented to the Post: “I am the bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington and was not given even a courtesy call that they would be clearing [the area] with tear gas so they could use one of our churches as a prop.” This is clearly someone to whom every church is a prop, and who sees herself as stage director. The churches exist for her to dress up in a miter and play prelate—or else simply to burn down. Whichever has more dramatic flair. Whichever is more effective in spreading the gospel of social justice.

To the Religious Left, Christianity is (at best) merely an aspect of the one true faith: Progressivism. The progressive believes the world will “spin forever down the spinning grooves of change.” And, when the spirit of Progress evolves beyond the need for churches, its new agents—the mob, apparently—may simply burn them down. The lady-vicars will all dance around the flames before hurling themselves into the pyre: a willing sacrifice to lubricate those “spinning grooves,” so that the world may forever spin down, down, down.

As for Archbishop Gregory, we mustn’t forget that egregious statement his office published at the beginning of the Covid pandemic. His Excellency announced the suspension of public Masses by assuring his flock that his “number one priority” was “to ensure the safety and health of all who attend our Masses, the children in our schools, and those we welcome through our outreach and services.” Once again, Christianity becomes merely a faction within Progressivism.

By His Excellency’s own admission, he is more concerned with the material improvement of his people than with their spiritual well-being. Whether it’s by cancelling public Masses so the faithful don’t fall ill or banning the President of the United States in order to “make a statement,” Archbishop Gregory has made it his mission, not to welcome people into the Church, but to keep them out.

I find it difficult to take the riots too seriously, given the lack of a real motive and the total failure of our elected

officials to disperse the mob.

The death of George Floyd in police custody was undoubtedly criminal. Yet there's no evidence that the arresting officer, Derek Chauvin, was motivated by racial animus, much less that Mr. Floyd's death is evidence of systemic racism within law enforcement. To point out this fact does not evince a lack of "compassion," though to deny it certainly evinces a failure of the rational faculties.

And, of course, our political class has only encouraged the riots by sitting on their hands. Not a single officeholder in the country has ordered the police to use the force necessary to restore order—to protect their citizens' lives and livelihoods.

To cooler heads, it's obvious that the two real causes of this riot were boredom and unemployment, both were seriously exacerbated by the shelter-in-place orders which have been in force across America for the last three months. (Remember, those lock-downs were ordered by the same public servants who are now cheering the looters and far-left militants as they reduce our cities to ashes.) Most likely, these riots will peter out as the mob gets bored again.

Yes, it will be devastating for those whose property was destroyed during these "protests." But we'll never hear about them. The media won't show us the faces of those mothers and fathers who can no longer feed their families because Antifa terrorists burned down their corner store. Just the opposite, in fact: on May 31, The Washington Post ran an op-ed by a Minnesota restaurateur named Hafsa Islam saying, "My family's restaurant caught fire in the Minneapolis protests. Let it burn." I guess they'd have us believe America's small business owners are happy to have their livelihoods destroyed so the mass of hooligans can "honor the memory" of George Floyd.

Oddly enough, all of this will probably just blow over one day. The mob will get bored and disperse; then we'll get bored and tune out.

Let's not forget, however, how our Christian leaders responded during this crisis. Remember the blasphemous editorial from America magazine and that ridiculous statement from Archbishop Gregory. Remember the Episcopalian lady-vicars fuming at President Trump for preventing their churches from being torched.

These "protests" are not about racial justice. They never were. They're about a nation that has become intoxicated by self-righteousness. It's a recreational riot.

But let's never forget how our priests and bishops, our mayors and governors, responded to this crisis.

The royalist Jacques Mallet du Pan famously observed that, "Like Saturn, the revolution devours its children." He was right in 1793, and he's still right in 2020. Those of our leaders who seek to appease the mob—our very own Robespierres and Expillys—are in for a rude awakening.¹

Last month, PBS streamed the autobiographical film: *Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words*. I can only hope you were able to watch this film. Carrie Severino was a former law clerk for Justice Thomas and she writes of her experience in the most recent edition of the National Catholic Register. In part, this is what she had to say of Justice Clarence Thomas:

Thomas tells the story of his youth growing up poor in Pinpoint, Georgia, of his grandparents taking him and his brother in after their father abandoned them and their mother couldn't afford to raise them. It was his grandfather, himself a Catholic convert, to whom the justice owes his own Catholic faith, as well as his commitment to hard work and never giving up.

The movie describes Thomas' education at schools that were segregated by state law, but run by Irish nuns who taught him that all men were equal in God's eyes. He still cherishes those nuns for their solidarity with the children they taught—"they were on our side"—as well as their loving insistence that he and his classmates live up to their potential: "You knew they loved you. And when you know that somebody loves you and deeply cares about your interests, somehow they can get you to do hard things."

He describes the rage that consumed him during his college years as a radical active in the Black Power movement, and how he ultimately prayed to God, "If you take this anger out of my heart, I will never hate again." That resolution not to give in to anger was tested through Thomas' brutal confirmation process, ... and the often racially-charged derision he has often received because his conservatism doesn't line up with what many expect from a black man.

He used to tell us clerks, "You have to decide what you're willing to die for. Until you know that, you're negotiable." Justice Thomas is famously nonnegotiable—perhaps the most principled and consistent justice on the court.²

1. Michael Warren Davis, "God or the Mob?", Crisis Magazine, June 4, 2020.
2. Carrie Severino, "PBS Captures the Essence of Clarence Thomas," National Catholic Register, June 7-20, 2020, p. 9.

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

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

George Weigel

Basic Books

2019, 322 pages.

PERIODICALS

First Things

www.firstthings.com

Touchstone

www.touchstonemag.com

Catholic Answers Magazine

www.catholic.com

Catholic Herald

www.catholicherald.co.uk

Chronicles

www.chroniclesmagazine.org

Gilbert!

www.chesterton.org

The National Catholic Register

www.ncregister.com

Our Sunday Visitor

www.osvnews.com

ONLINE

Crisis Magazine

www.crisismagazine.com

The Imaginative Conservative

www.theimaginativeconservative.org

Catholic Exchange

www.catholicexchange.com

Intellectual Takeout

www.intellectuالتakeout.org

Life News

www.lifenews.com

Life Site News

www.lifesitenews.com

OnePeterFive

www.onepeterfive.com

Catholic Vote

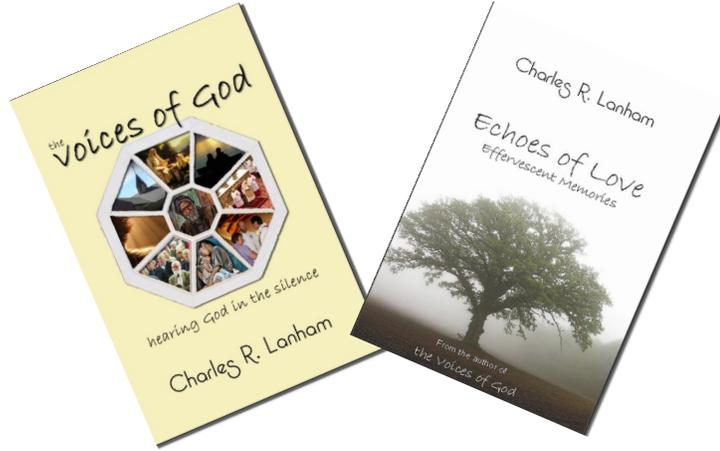
www.catholicvote.org

The Catholic Thing

www.thecatholicthing.org

PragerU

www.prageru.com

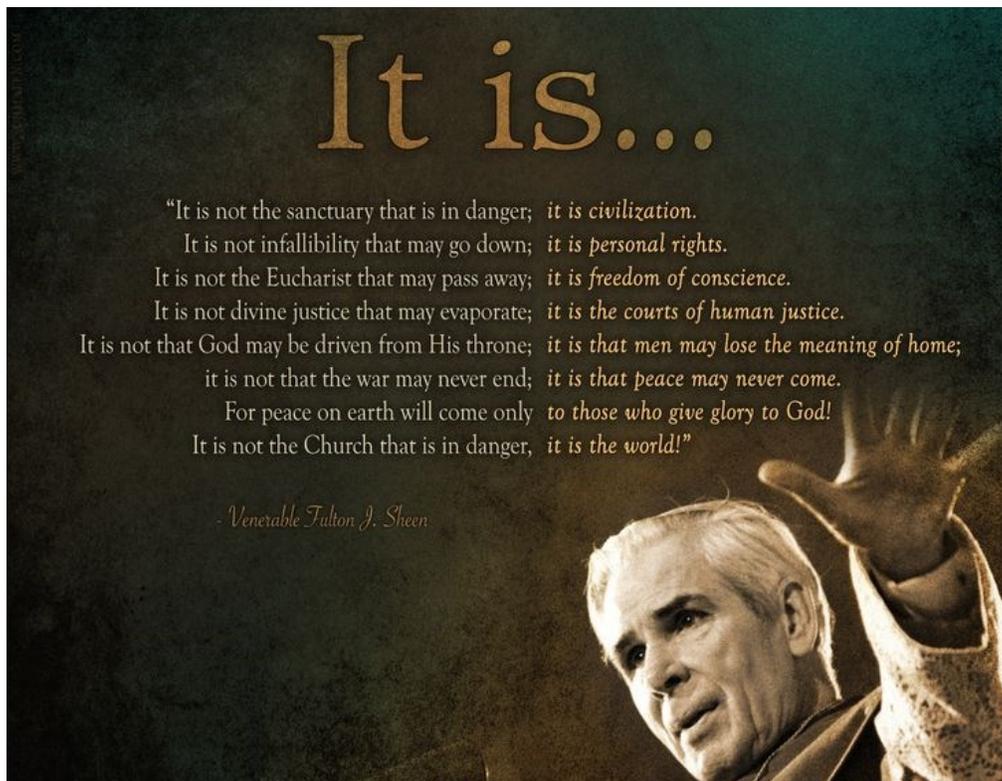


Books are available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or from the author's web site at:

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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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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