



A journal for restless minds

REMEMBER THE PAST

The future depends upon it

INSTITUTED BY CHRIST

Making disciples of all nations

RICH OR POOR

Saving for eternity

AD QUOD HOC...

This and that...

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.

Remember The Past

The future depends upon it

Growing up I found little use for history, a common enough sentiment, I suppose, for those who have created so little of it themselves. For myself I found it rather tedious: remembering all those names, dates, and places—which is how history was generally taught in those days.

I suspect the pedagogy hasn't changed much since although I fear the content has been so tortured as to bear little resemblance to the truth. In any case I imagine the low regard for history remains much the same for the youth of any age. Given my antipathy for the past, earning a BA in History now seems quite ironic and *historic*.

Nowadays I find myself hoping that others will discover the importance of and necessity for remembering the past. Confucius wrote that you must study the past if you would define the future, something that few seldom consider,

especially those who are want to change it or to install progress.

Progressives are want to define change as progress; removing all traces of what was, all the while claiming new and improved...what? It is like "throwing the baby out with the bath water." George Santayana wrote "Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. When change is absolute there remains no

being to improve and no direction is set for possible improvement: and when experience is not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual. Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."¹



Too many accept without question the present mindset: what is must have been, made better and improved. Few question what once was, it matters not to them. The truth is of no consequence, the past vacuously forgotten. They care not to know what has been deliberately constrained by those who would enslave them for their profit. May God help us all.

1. George Santayana, *The Life of Reason, Vol I, Reason in Common Sense*, 1905.

Instituted By Christ

Making disciples of all nations

Were it not for opinion, the silence would be deafening. Facts are impediments, too often dispelling myth and tale upon which we are wont to rely. What we believe (opinion) and what is truth (fact) are in rare sympathy for it is easier to opine than to bear witness to the facts: what is objectively and historically true.

A few issues ago (Colloqui Vol. 1 No 15, When Will We Learn?) I raised the argument that the “genesis of the infection” — the disease causing many of our young to leave the Catholic faith — “first arose in the 1960s with the confluence of two events: The convening of the Second Vatican Council and the launch of the Great Society.” While no doubt some may have read this as little more than personal opinion, there is a plethora of well-documented evidence (facts) to advance it far beyond opinion into well-founded argument.

A reader provided thoughtful comment on the aforementioned article and as much as I always appreciate comments—positive or negative—I was left with the disturbing sense that the article was somehow misread or misunderstood. The writer began:

“I read with interest about your concern for why young people are leaving the faith. I am not of the opinion that Vatican 2 or LBJ have anything to do with it. Unintended consequences are part of every

decision in human history and it might be that the good that came out of those instances in history far outweigh the bad. I invite you to not get discouraged by them but to consider how many people might be drawn to the church by acts of inclusiveness such as Vatican 2. I know many priest (sic) who cite it as a pivotal point in their decision to enter the priesthood.”



Allow me to state as firmly as I may that I was in no way discouraged, but was simply attempting to offer a reasoned argument based upon the multitude of unintended consequences that occurred from the confluence of the two events in which I argue three successive generations were infected with negative results.

One thing the writer makes clear: it is personal opinion; opinion based on supposition rather than argument substantiated by fact. In truth, there are no facts or sources cited, beyond suggestion, to support the conclusions drawn. Sadly, the opinions expressed are all too commonly held—by Church leaders and laity alike—especially the false hope that “many people might be

drawn to the church by acts of inclusiveness such as Vatican 2.” The facts prove otherwise.

The facts are quite the contrary of the illusory desires expressed. In a book first published in 2001, *The Great Façade*, authors Christopher Ferrara and Thomas Woods Jr. provide clear and irrefutable evidence that illustrate the disastrous effects brought upon the Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council. The facts speak for themselves and the sources are undeniable for they come directly from the Vatican’s own statistical reports.

“It is an empirical fact, demonstrated by every available statistic, that the Postconciliar liturgical reform and the commencement of programmatic ‘ecumenism’ and ‘dialogue’

were followed immediately by precipitous declines in the number of priests, the number of new ordinations, the number of conversions and baptisms, and the percentage of Catholics attending Mass. In the immediate aftermath of the Council, an astounding 50,000 priests defected, and today there remain approximately 50,000 fewer Catholic priests than there were thirty-one years ago. In 1997 there were fewer baptisms in the United States than there were in 1970! See, e.g., statistical analysis of the priesthood in L’Osservatore Romano, 13/20 August 1997, and ‘The Index of Leading Catholic Indicators,’ The Latin Mass, Winter 2000, presenting extensive data from the Vatican’s Statistical Yearbook of the Church and other standard reference works.”¹

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While there were clearly unintended consequences such as previously outlined, the Council deliberately abrogated two millennia of Sacred Tradition and chose to ignore the Church's perennial counsel against the embrace of substantial ecclesial novelties of any kind.

Perhaps the most disastrous novelty embraced by the Council has been the *new ecumenism* which effectively reduced Catholicism to an equivalency with all other religions. Preconciliar Church teaching had been consistent and clear: the Catholic Church was the one true Church divinely instituted by Christ outside of which there is neither Church nor salvation (*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—the dogma that there is no salvation outside the Church.)

The 1917 Code of Canon Law ², cc. 1258 and 2316, explicitly forbade any active participation by Catholics in worship with Protestants; *Mortalium Animos* by Pope Pius IX and the 1949 Instruction of the Holy Office on the "ecumenical movement," forbade any form of common worship at discussion groups authorized by the local bishop, and required that the "Catholic truth" on "the return of the dissidents to the one true Church" be presented.

In *Mortalium Animos*, Pius XI taught that pan-denominational congresses "can nowise be approved by Catholics, founded as they are on that false opinion which considers all religions to be more or less good and praiseworthy, since they all in different ways manifest and signify that sense which is inborn in us all, and by which we are led to God and to the

obedient acknowledgment of His rule. Not only are those who hold this opinion in error and deceived, but also in distorting the idea of true religion they reject it, and little by little turn aside to naturalism and atheism, as it is called; from which it clearly follows that one who supports those who hold these theories and attempt to realize them, is altogether abandoning the divinely revealed religion."

The preconciliar Popes condemned any common worship with Protestants as a danger to the Faith, but the Council opened the door to it and Pope St. John Paul II (expressly and by example ³) taught that common prayer and joint liturgies with Protestant ministers (who condone abortion, contraception and divorce) is essential to the search for Christian unity.

John Paul subsequently doubled down on this position when he held joint Catholic-Lutheran Vespers at the Vatican as it was then reported by CWNNews.com on November 13, 1999:

"Archbishops G.H. Hammar and Jukka Paarma—the Lutheran primates of Sweden and Finland, respectively—and Bishops Anders Arborelius of Stockholm and Czeslaw Kozon of Copenhagen joined with the Holy Father for the Vespers service. Several other Lutheran bishops from the Scandinavian countries were present for the ceremony, including two female bishops."

The Council and Pope Paul VI intentionally and deliberately broke with Sacred Tradition, while ignoring and dismissing the consistent condemnations of the preconciliar Popes in this regard. Post-council

the Catholic Church was no longer the one true Church divinely instituted by Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world but simply one among many.

Logic would clearly suggest that this has played a significant role in the ever increasing mass exodus of Catholics from the Church. If Catholicism is merely one religion among many as the Council and post-conciliar Popes have consistently proselytized then there is no longer a compelling reason to remain Catholic. This is especially evident with those who hold any disagreement with Catholic doctrine and dogma.

Why then are young Catholics leaving their faith? The answer should be blatantly obvious but it apparently is either too bitter a pill to swallow or too difficult to contemplate for many Catholics, especially those who were raised Catholic before the Second Vatican Council. Actions have consequences and nowhere is this more apparent than the *kumbaya* ecumenical movement engendered by the progressive mindset of the Council and the post-conciliar Popes.

1. Ferrara, Christopher; Woods Jr., Thomas. *The Great Facade: The Regime of Novelty in the Catholic Church from Vatican II to the Francis Revolution* (Second Edition), Angelico Press.

2. The 1983 Code of Canon Law significantly altered the 1917 version, especially with regards to active participation by Catholics in protestant worship and receiving the sacraments by protestant Christians.

3. "On May 14th I was received by the Pope, together with a delegation composed of the Shiite imam of Khadum and the Sunni President of the council of administration of the Iraqi Bank. At the end of the audience the Pope bowed to the Muslim holy book the Koran presented to him by the delegation and he kissed it as a sign of respect. The photo of that gesture has been shown repeatedly on Iraqi television, and it demonstrates that the Pope is not only aware of the suffering of the Iraqi people, he has also great respect for Islam" (*Fides* news agency, Rome, June 4, 1999).

Rich Or Poor

Saving for eternity

We are used to hearing idioms such as “money is the root of all evil” or “no matter how much you have, you can’t take it with you.” Week after week, Sunday after Sunday, we are reminded by the readings of the necessity to “sell what you have and give to the poor;”¹ that “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.”² The message is clear enough but whether we are listening is a question.

Recently I ran across a story which caught my eye; it illustrates quite well how difficult it is to resist the siren call of worldly possessions:

“A young graduate of a Jesuit university, happened upon one of the Jesuit community recreation areas. He couldn’t help but notice the refrigerators full of food and drink, the fine furniture throughout and a media room with large televisions and expensive stereo equipment. Meeting one of the Jesuit professors as he looked around the room he quipped, ‘If this is poverty, show me chastity!’”

The first reading comes from the Book of Amos, an infrequent visitor to our Sunday Lectionary (only once in Year B and twice in Year C.)

Amos was a shepherd from Judah and a prophet of divine judgment and the sovereignty of Yahweh in nature and history. His oracles, rich in image-

ry and language reminiscent of his pastoral background, focus on calling the people back to the high moral and religious demands of Yahweh. As was common with the other prophets, Amos knew that divine punishment is never completely destructive; it is part of the hidden plan of God to bring salvation to men. The perversity of the human will may retard, but it cannot totally frustrate this design of a loving God.



As is often the case, the reading is better understood when the more complete passage is read, placing it into context. The first three verses of Chapter 8 describe the Lord’s anger at the people:

“This is what the Lord God showed me: a basket of ripe fruit. ‘What do you see, Amos?’ he asked. I answered, ‘A basket of ripe fruit.’ Then the Lord said to me:

‘The time is ripe to have done with my

people Israel; I will forgive them no longer. The temple songs shall become wailings on that day, says the Lord God. Many shall be the corpses, strewn everywhere. — Silence!’”³

God is angry at the people for their waywardness, for their greed, which is what Amos points out in verses 4-6, the readings for today. The remainder of the chapter, verses 7-14, describe the punishment that God will deliver upon them.

Take careful note in how Amos describes the greedy, for he points out the true nature of avarice. It is a far different, but I would posit, more accurate description of what greed truly is.

Our view of greed is often superficial, focusing on an individual’s single-minded pursuit in amassing wealth and possessions. Ebenezer Scrooge from Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* comes to mind as the quintessential example of someone whose whole existence is focused on acquiring and holding onto what he has obtained, *his* wealth.

But if we look only at Scrooge we will assuredly miss the worst of it, for we won’t see those who have suffered because of his greed, we won’t see the needy upon whom Scrooge has trampled in his pursuit of a fortune gained. We won’t see that he has bought the lowly man, his nephew Fred, for a bit of silver, even while complaining at the price. In his lust for fortune gain he has lost a thing far more precious, his

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humanity.

He cannot love God or man because his heart has hardened, turned into cold, uncaring, unfeeling stone. His eyes are clouded, occluded from the harsh realities of the world he has helped produce by his avarice and his greed. His ears are deafened to the piteous cries of those suffering from his cruel indifference. His mouth perpetually formed into an unhappy scowl, now capable of uttering little more than *"Bah, humbug!"*

Greed breeds unpleasant miseries: distrust, dishonesty, disloyalty, duplicity, hatred, even anger; it kills or destroys all that is good: love, trust, honesty, loyalty, and joy. This is why Jesus tells us: *"The person who is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones; and the person who is dishonest in very small matters is also dishonest in great ones."*⁴

On this Ron Rohlheiser writes that *"When we do something wrong and then cover it up and lie, it is not so much the particular thing that we did wrong that harms us, it's the lying about it afterwards that does the real damage. We are all weak, we all fall, we all commit sin. God understands this and it is not so much the sin itself that harms us. What causes the real harm is lying, covering up, sneaking around, not being transparent, living a double life. Why? Because the human spirit is not made to live in dishonesty and duplicity. When we do wrong, we either have to stop doing what we are doing or, at least in honesty and contrition own our weakness, or our spirits will automatically begin to harden and to warp. Such is the*

*anatomy of the soul; it cannot tolerate moral duplicity for long without hardening and warping."*⁵

Jesus goes on to say, *"If you are not trustworthy with what belongs to another who will give you what is yours? No servant can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and mammon."*⁶

Here he gets to the heart of the matter: who is the master and who is the servant? Who owns all that there is? The ultimate landowner is of course—God. God created everything, including man and woman. Then he blessed them and said to them, *"Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth."*⁷ God made us stewards of all that he created.

Like our first parents, we have a tendency to forget that we are not the master of all, God is. We like to think of ourselves as masters of all that we possess yet in doing so we inevitably fall short in our stewardship of what is truly God's. Either we serve God or we serve ourselves; we cannot have it both ways.

Greed blinds us from the truth and in our blindness we see only the false glitter of our own avarice. We choose dishonest wealth over true wealth which comes from God. And as Jesus tells us if you are not a trustworthy steward with dishonest wealth — that is, worldly possessions — then how can you expect God to trust you with his?

Saint Paul says that it is God's will that everyone be saved, to be with him for all eternity. We know that not all are saved but why not?

Let us think of heaven, not so much as a place, but more like a marriage of a person united forever in love with God. A marriage is a union of two into one body, one mind, one spirit. As no one can marry himself or herself, neither can God unite with those who do not will to do so; God cannot bring about any union without the will of another. God can give all the grace necessary but if we reject that grace and refuse God, then there can be no union.

God desires lovers, not slaves. He wants faithful stewards of all that is his. Those who choose to serve mammon, to worship and adore the false idols of wealth and possessions cannot serve God at the same time. Those who are trustworthy of all that is God's, who live honestly and faithfully knowing that all God has created belongs to him and him alone, they are the ones who will see God. Amen.



Homily for
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle C
Amos 8:4-7
1 Timothy 2:1-8
Luke 16:1-13

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1. Mt 19:21.
 2. Mt 19: 24.
 3. Am 8:1-3.
 4. Lk 16:10.
 5. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, *In Exile: Honesty as Sobriety*, The Sunday Website of Saint Louis University.
 6. Lk 16:12-13.
 7. Gen 1:28.

Ad Quod Hoc...

This and that...

In an recent article (First Things, October 2016, A More Perfect Absolutism, pp. 25-26,) Michael Hanby, associate professor of religion and philosophy of science at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at the Catholic University of America opined:

"It is part of the absurdity of American life that we decide questions of truth under the guise of settling contests of rights. Which means that we decide questions of truth without thinking deeply or even very honestly about them. Thus, while it is obvious to many that we are living through a profound cultural revolution, it is less than clear just what sort of revolution it is—though with Obergefell and the Obama administration's recent decree abolishing human nature in response to North Carolina's 'bathroom law,' it takes a real effort not to see. The sexual revolution is not simply an overturning of sexual morality or family law, but a revolution in our fundamental view of human nature that promises to reshape who we are as human beings. What previous generations took for granted—for example, that man woman, mother, and father name natural realities as well as social roles, that children issue naturally from their union, that the marriage of man and woman is the foundation of human society—all this is now increasingly regarded as obsolete and even hopelessly bigoted."

I have yet to find a better, more cogent description of what is assuredly the most insane policy to yet be

spewed from the current administration. As Hanby notes, this is nothing short of a clear but pompously absurd attempt to abolish human nature, or worse to assume the role of God in some perverse attempt to completely redefine the laws of nature and of nature's God. We can only hope that sanity will soon return to those who would play God.



Elsewhere in the same issue (While We're At It, p. 68) R. R. Reno writes:

"More than a year ago, I wrote that the Catholic Church is likely to seek to accommodate herself to the current stage of the sexual revolution, following the pattern established after the uproar about Humanae Vitae, Paul VI's encyclical reaffirming the Church's prohibition of the use of artificial means of birth control. That pattern is one of silence. Tepid statements are made, but on the whole, church leaders avert their eyes and pretend there aren't any problems. Cardinal Wuerl is particularly adept at this, but he's by no means the only one. Many American bishops are hiding in whatever bunkers they can find, hoping the storm will pass."

They have their reasons, of course, for lacking what my wife calls 'testicular fortitude.' As well all know, the gay rights movement is extremely punitive. Dissent from the sexual revolution gets punished, swiftly and severely. And then there's Rome. Pope Francis sends mixed messages, at best—so much so

that it's not at all clear that a bishop who speaks forthrightly and forcefully about sex and marriage won't get punished by Rome as well. The danger, often unnoticed is that by staying silent, the Church becomes complicit with a revolution that's sure to leave many victims in its wake."

Is it just me or is the silence from the Church deafening?



The questions surrounding free will and the possibility of evil are frequent and seldom answered with sufficient clarity to appease the questioner. Why does God, who gave us free will, allow evil or bad things to occur? Does evil of necessity have to exist?

Apologist Karlo Broussard suggests (Catholic Answers Magazine, Sep-Oct 2016, Not the Good I Want but the Evil I Do Not Want, pp. 30-33) that for Thomas Aquinas, *"the human faculty we call will is an intellectual appetite, a tendency to be drawn to the good apprehended by the intellect. Where the sensitive appetites respond to sensual goods presented through sense knowledge, the intellectual appetite—will—responds to the good as understood or perceived through intellectual knowledge."*

The intellect presents an object (or objects) as a good, and the will responds. You might say the intellect relates to the will like a man relates romantically to a

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woman. As the man, as a part of his wooing the woman, bestows her with gifts, the intellect 'woos' the will by presenting to it objects under the aspect of good—providing it with a desirable object.

The good without qualification—not this good or that good but goodness in general—is the formal object of the will. Just as truth is the ultimate end of the intellect, goodness is the ultimate end of the will. In this we have no choice. The human will is necessarily ordered to universal goodness as 'necessity of end' (*Summa Theologiae* I:82:1)—not 'necessity of coercion,' which is repugnant to freedom.

Our freedom of choice and self-determination arises when faced with finite or particular goods. Because finite goods do not express goodness in its universality (totality) but express it only in this or that particular mode, and thus exclusive of other goods, the will is not necessitated to them. The will is free to choose among particular goods as means to its end, goodness itself. This is called 'freedom of specification.

But whenever the will does choose, it does so only *sub specie boni*—under the aspect of good (see *Summa Theologiae* I-II:8:1). The human will cannot choose evil as evil."

Although we are free to choose evil things and often do so, we are only able to choose evil because we perceive that there is some good from the evil.

Broussard suggests that even when we correctly apprehend an act as evil, we still may choose to do evil because we misapprehend a lower

good for a higher good. He uses as an example the contracepting couple:

"They may know the Church teaches contraception is a grave violation of God's design for sexuality and that it is a good thing for them to avoid such an act. But they judge the satisfaction of sexual desires as a higher good and thereby choose it over obedience to God's will."

In Aquinas's view (see *Summa Theologiae* I-II:17:2 and I-II:17:5, ad 1) immoral actions are not merely the result of mistakes in deliberation; they also involve the will's influence over the intellect—as in the case when the will influences the intellect to reconsider an evil action as good under a different description.

Thus the intellect's capacity to be mistaken in its judgment about what is good, the misapprehension of the ordering of goods, and the will's ability to influence the intellect to consider an act initially judged as evil as good under a different description. All this seems to be what Aquinas is getting at when he refers to the power of free choice for evil arising from "natures capable of defect."



S. M. Hutchens, writing for the editors (*Touchstone* magazine, Sep/Oct 2016, School's Out, pp 4-5) writes that as parents of young children it is incumbent upon them to send their children to schools not inculcated with corrupting ideas, such as the belief that "gender" is a matter of personal choice. To do otherwise is irresponsible.

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

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

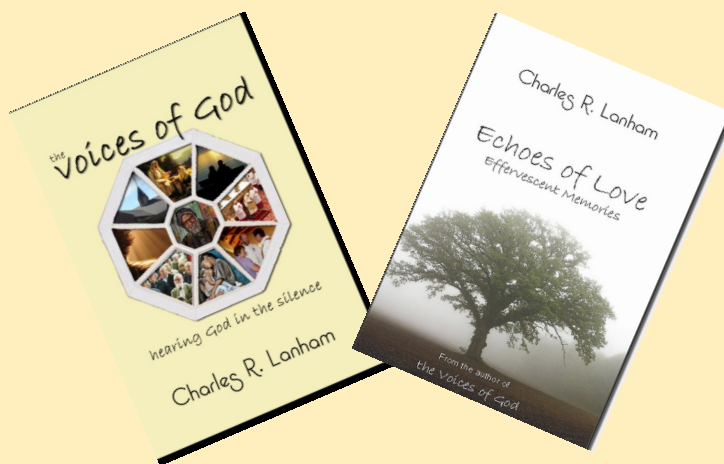
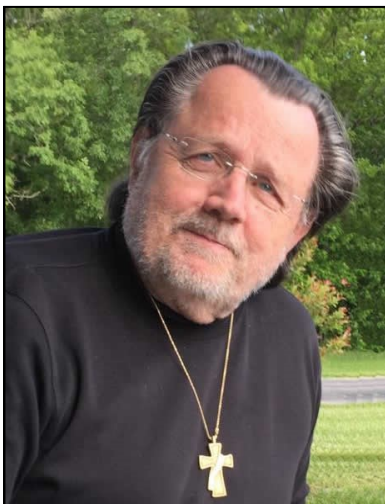
Catholic Answers Magazine

Share the Faith, Defend the Faith

Editor: Tim Ryland

Bi-Monthly.

www.catholic.com



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He is the author of **The Voices of God: Hearing God in the Silence**, **Echoes of Love: Effervescent Memories** and is currently writing his third book **Without God: Finding God in a Godless World**.

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Each issue of **Colloquī** can be viewed or downloaded from
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