

Colloquī

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A journal for restless minds

J'Accuse...!

Dark night of the soul

Last Shot Of Tequila

Toying with the worm

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.

J'Accuse...!

Dark night of the soul

We have come now to the dark night of the soul; the torchlight held in beacon-hand, its flame now shuttered against Northwind's bitter blow denies truth and justice welcome light.

An open letter published on January 13, 1898 in the newspaper *L'Aurore*, addressed to the President of France by the renowned author Emile Zola accused the French government of anti-Semitism and the unlawful jailing of Alfred Dreyfus, sentenced to spend the rest of his life in a penal colony for espionage. In his letter, which began "J'Accuse ...!" ("I Accuse ...!") Zola pointed to judicial errors and the absence of any serious corroborating

evidence. He argued that "the conviction of Alfred Dreyfus was based on false accusations of espionage and was thus a grave misrepresentation of justice.

Dreyfus' conviction was almost entirely based on the testimony of three "professional" handwriting experts (graphologists.) Zola correctly pointed

out the ludicrous and illogical nature of their findings. Anyone who bothers to take careful note in reading their testimony will readily see Zola's objection for they asserted, in their professional opinion,

that "the lack of resemblance between Dreyfus' writing and that of the *bordereau* (a detailed listing of documents) was proof of a 'self-forgery.' They even prepared a fantastically detailed diagram to demonstrate that this was so.



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Wind the clock and let it fly, truth and justice still suffer vertigo from the spin; there is nothing new under the sun. Evil spins a merry tune as dizzy dancers accuse their feet of broken toes ... and damaged egos. Crises borne of chaos are bought and paid by cruel and evil tyranny.

Here I take a brief aside to reconsider a few thoughts of particular relevance first printed several years ago.

The Crisis

With apologies to Thomas Paine

Thomas Paine, on December 23, 1776, penned these immortal words:

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated.¹

While the focus of his article was on the then ongoing struggle for independence from Great Britain, his words still ring as true today as they did 242 years ago.

As then, we are living in time of crisis, under siege by a tyranny, not one of cruel and oppressive might, but one of the soul. The soul of any nation and of its people is that ineffable quality which defines them. A soul pure of heart and courageous in the face of tyranny and oppression serves as the ever vigilant guardian of freedom, the bulwark against which no tyrannical force may ever prevail. When the soul of a nation is sullied and tarnished by *"the summer soldier and the sunshine patriot"* and the guardians no longer stand vigilant against the forces of hell, then freedom will be denied and tyranny will reign triumphant.

No doubt when Paine wrote *"What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value"* he did not envision the current crisis but his observation holds true today. According to several government reports and supported by independent research analysis nearly 50% of Americans now receive government benefits of one form or another. One study reported that 60% of Americans were receiving more in government benefits than they paid in taxes. We have become addicted to cheap stuff at the government trough and the more we obtain the less value we place upon it.

The soul of a nation under God is a righteous nation, filled with the souls of a people who worship God and love their neighbors as themselves. Without God at the helm no nation on this earth can withstand the forces of hell. This is nothing new for history is replete with analogues identical to our own.

Unfortunately, history is no longer considered relevant and what passes for history has been distorted well beyond recognition to salve the wounds of perceived injustice. History has been reduced to this: Truth is truth only if it is what one wants to hear and facts are inconvenient truths and therefore irrelevant.

God has become irrelevant along with his Truth. His Truth is one of love, mercy, and forgiveness. As we love God so we must love one another. Without God, what we obtain we obtain too cheap and esteem too lightly. Life becomes but a cheap commodity, subject to the whims of a fickle master. Tyranny cannot be easily conquered but freedom obtained so dearly is worth any price.

Deacon's Corner, Oct. 28, 2015 #204

Freedom Is Never Free *Man's freedom is limited & fallible*

Saint Irenaeus wrote that "Man is rational therefore like God; he is created with free will and is master over his acts."² Much of current scientific thought, quite to the contrary, would deny the existence of the divine and thus call into question the remainder of just such a statement. If there is no God, then it follows that man could not be a creature of a non-existent God and therefore not bound by any law instituted outside human construct. *"Without its Creator the creature simply disappears... If God is ignored the creature itself is impoverished."*³ Without God, *free will* becomes meaningless for the

sole purpose of *free will* is so man *"might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him."*⁴

What is commonly assumed to be *free will* or *freedom* is quite simply the ability to act as one would please without considering the merits of one's action. Any limitation or restriction placed upon one's desires is contra-freedom and unjustified, including any duty or responsibility that should be demanded by such an act. Such freedom must be unencumbered for it to be truly free.

Despite the evident popularity of such a notion of *free will*, nothing could be further from the truth. *"The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to the slavery of sin."*⁵ Freedom to do anything one should desire, without considering whether the act is a good act or an evil act, is not freedom but mere mindless, amoral, irrational conduct.

*"Freedom makes man responsible for his acts to the extent that they are voluntary."*⁶ But doesn't that mean that freedom isn't completely free? That is exactly what it means. Freedom isn't free, contrary to what Janis Joplin professed when she sang *"freedom's just another word for nothin' left to lose. Nothin' ain't worth nothin' but it's free."*⁷ The truth is that man's freedom is both limited and fallible. There is no such thing as unlimited freedom; we have no inherent right to do whatever we

desire, whenever we desire it, without regard for the consequences.

God left man 'in the power of his own counsel' (Sir 15:14) that he might seek his Creator and freely attain perfection. Attaining such perfection means personally building up that perfection in himself. Indeed, just as man in exercising his dominion over the world shapes it in accordance with his own intelligence and will, so too in performing morally good acts, man strengthens, develops and consolidates within himself his likeness to God.⁸

What should be increasingly apparent is that much of our current understanding of and epistemology concerning freedom and free will are abjectly and objectively foreign to anything approaching what is true. Created by God with *free will*, our freedom is limited to performing morally good acts which bring us closer to the image and likeness of God.

Deacon's Corner, Dec 30,, 2015 #213

What Price Freedom?

It is more than you would think

Freedom is never free no matter how stridently one might assert that it absolutely must be so, for there is no such thing as absolute, unfettered freedom. All freedoms are bounded by restrictive covenants, limited by how far one can go in exercising one's power to act upon one's personal desires.

So, what price is freedom? You cannot purchase freedom like a loaf of bread or a new car, for freedom doesn't come neatly packaged and labeled nor will you ever find a price

tag attached. That isn't how the price of freedom is determined. It is not determined by weight, color, size, category, or type.

No, the price of freedom is determined precisely by what limits are placed upon it and what consequences are incurred as a result of its employment. Consider for a moment what price was paid for eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Neither Eve nor Adam paid for the fruit in cash or by credit card prior to eating of it. The price they paid for choosing to act in direct disobedience to God's stricture was far greater than what they would have willingly paid for that single piece of fruit .

All higher forms of life have a brain, a physical system of neurons and synapses that control both external and internal actions and reactions. Touch something hot and the brain signals for the body to immediately, instinctively, and involuntarily react, no thinking required or needed. Threatened by some force or situation and the brain will signal for an increase in adrenalin, the heart will beat faster, and senses will become sharper, and again, no thinking required or necessary.

The brain, no matter whether belonging to human, animal, fish or fowl is in essence a biological computer that receives input and produces output and nothing more. It responds to stimuli and directs the nervous system to perform some action. The brain, any brain, cannot think or make a choice.

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Stand a million dominoes on end next to each other and they will remain just as they were placed until some external force causes the first one to fall into the next. Nothing inherent in the domino allows for it to make a choice, to decide to do anything other than to stand in place until driven to do otherwise.

Human beings differ from all other life in that we have the capacity to consciously think and make choices. We can choose where and when to have lunch, we can learn and think in the abstract, such as determining the value of x in an equation or understanding the concept of negative numbers. In other words, we not only have a material brain but we also have an immaterial mind.

A brain surgeon may be able to look into the brain but no one can access another's mind. And it is the mind that makes us human and it is the mind where free will resides and it is our free will that gives us freedom.

But what accounts for our immaterial non-physical mind? Where does our ability to think freely, to make choices, to act as we desire originate? Nothing physical can create the immaterial which leads us to the obvious conclusion: there must be an immaterial mind far greater than ours to account for, to conceive of, and to create our minds, and that would and can only be God.

Believe it or not, it is your choice; after all you have free will.

Deacon's Corner, Jan. 6, 2016 #214

According to legend, Lao Tzu, founder of Taoism some twenty-four hundred years ago, is purported to have said, "If you give a man a fish you feed him for a day. If you teach a man to fish you feed him for a lifetime." The intent, of course, is to point out that it is better to teach someone how to do something than to do it for them. Giving someone a fish is good for the short term, but it is better to teach them how to do it so that in the long term they can take care of themselves.

The difficulty, as in most things in life, lies in arriving at a common understanding of its meaning and how best to practice it. As noted earlier, we have become addicted to handouts, free stuff, everything from the basic human necessities of food, clothes and shelter to the freedom to do as we please, free from all moral or ethical restraints imposed on us by some invisible God. We have become a nation of entitled beggars who have become inured to being fed for a day, neither encouraged (taught) to think nor to do for ourselves. The social justice policies of the progressive left have turned Lao Tzu's proverb on its head: "If you give a man a fish, he is indentured to you forever, his soul is yours; if you teach a man to fish, his soul is free, he owes you nothing."

It is neither by circumstance nor coincidence then that the current crises enveloping both the Catholic Church and our nation are of a similar nature, which is to say it is all about sex. That is not to say it is merely so for that would deny the whole of it; it is far more complex but the pivot upon which the scandals within the

Church and the controversies surrounding the confirmation hearings of Brett Kavanaugh turn hinge on our perception and definition of, as well as our understanding and knowing the purpose of S-E-X.

The sexual abuses committed by clergy within the Church are endemic of the serious decline in moral and ethical norms within the broader social and cultural context of the present day. Absent the sole procreative purpose as ordained by God, sex has become a mindless, selfish, self-satisfying exercise in passing self-pleasure. The specific purpose and complementary design of male and female genitalia are of no import; in short, when it comes to sex, anything goes.

Concomitant with the loss of any sense of sex's procreative purpose has been the loss of the sense of sin. Increasingly, especially over the past half-century, these changes in social and cultural norms have exacerbated and hastened changing attitudes and beliefs concerning life itself. Just as sex no longer holds some deeper moral purpose, life itself has become meaningless; both have become commodities, valued only by the pleasure which can be derived from them.

This then leads to the crux of the argument made against the confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court. As the title of one article declared, "It's Not Kavanaugh. It's Roe." While admitting to not knowing the guilt or innocence of Brett Kavanaugh—which the author claims to be an entirely separate matter—what

is known is that those who are against his taking a seat on the high court could not care less whether he is innocent or guilty.

The author, Jennifer Hartline, makes her position perfectly clear when she says:

No, I don't believe for a nanosecond that the Democrats care one whit about Kavanaugh's innocence or guilt. Their moral indignation is phonier than a \$3 dollar bill. ...

This is about abortion. It's about the larger sexual ideology as well, but abortion first and foremost. This is about nothing more than demolishing a candidate for the Supreme Court whom they did not choose, and who poses a serious threat to their golden idol. Abortion is both sacrament and god.

Any honest observer has to be repulsed by the histrionics displayed during Kavanaugh's confirmation hearings. Screaming women raving like lunatics about one thing: abortion-on-demand. At the thought that they may not be able to extinguish the natural results of their sexual encounters, that the child they helped create is a human being they are obligated to protect, the pelvic Left becomes absolutely unhinged. Unhinged is even too inadequate a word. It's like the behavior of demons about to be exorcised.

A country that shrugs off the evidence of what abortion really is and chants all the louder about "freedom" and "equality" can never claim to achieve either. *Roe v. Wade* is the litmus test to end all litmus tests. That's because abortion is the moral "issue" to end all issues. It is uniquely defining of a culture and an individual. People who support the act of butchering the most defenseless and innocent

of all human beings, blithely calling it "choice" can hardly plant their flag on a civilized hill.

A nation that considers killing its own children to be the *pièce de résistance* of its fight for empowerment and justice is suffering a suicidal delusion.

And that's precisely what we've got here in America. The delusion is so hypnotic and addictive that nothing must be permitted to question it or come against it. There must be sexual pleasure without price. Nothing matters more than sexual gratification. The god of the groin is perpetually unsatisfied and greedy.

They served their idols,
which became a snare to them.
They sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to the demons;
they poured out innocent blood,
the blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan;
and the land was polluted with blood.
Thus they became unclean by their acts,
and played the harlot in their doings.

— Psalm 106:36-39

So the modern sophisticated pagans want to continue exposing the unwanted child to birds of prey on a rock in the midday sun. The allegiance they require to abortion-on-demand is no different and no better. Except that today they remove those lucrative brains and organs first. (I guess our ancestors didn't know there was money to be made from baby body parts.

After 45 years of this demonic delusion, with millions of babies picked apart by vultures in lab coats, along comes the possibility that finally the most sickening injustice of all time may be undone, and the pelvic Left is twelve different kinds of hysterical.

They don't hate Brett Kavanaugh because of anything he may have done over thirty years ago. Any transgression can be forgiven if fervent devotion to abortion is manifest.

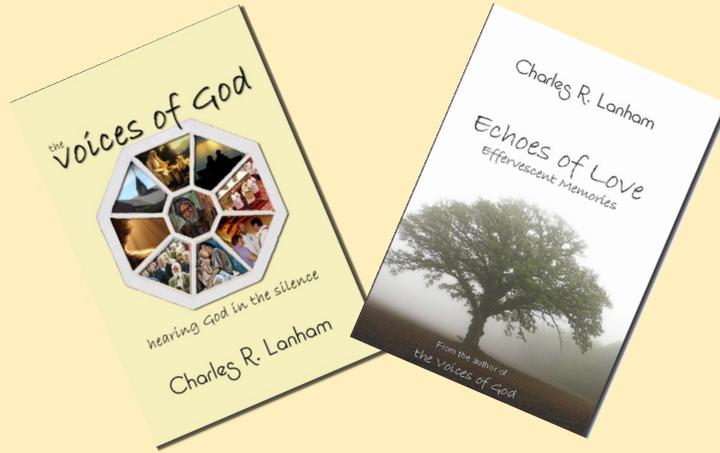
They hate Kavanaugh because they love abortion and he does not. Hell hath no fury like "women's rights" scorned.⁹

We find ourselves floundering in the midst of a grave immoral morass.

There is nothing new here, of course, as such dystopian dysfunction has been a recurring complaint throughout all of history. What so worries the soul is the vitriol and hate expressed so vehemently by those who have lost all sense of sin, who believe only in themselves, who demand audience for their opinion but deny the same to those who would dare oppose. When souls cry out for justice, their voices are silenced; when evil demands a voice, its voice is magnified by an army of sycophantic media sympathizers.

As for this poor soul, knowing God always has my back, trembles at the thought of standing naked and unafraid before the horde of hell and demanding that Satan "Go to hell!"

1. Thomas Paine, *The Crisis*, December 23, 1776..
2. St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeres*, 4, 4, 3: pg. 7/1, 983.
3. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, §36.
4. Catechism of the Catholic Church, § 1730.
5. CCC §1733.
6. CCC §1734.
7. Janis Joplin, *Bobby McGee*.
8. Pope Saint John Paul II, *Veritas Splendor*, *Encyclical Letter*, §39, August 6, 1993.
9. Jennifer Hartline, *It's Not Kavanaugh. It's Roe*, *The Stream*, September 20, 2018.



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

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