

June 19 2020
Volume 04—Number 37



A journal for restless minds

Colloquī *: to discuss*

The Bigotry of Ignorance

The destructive power of willful unknowing

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History, should it be accurately and fairly written—which, at this moment and in this place, should be highly suspect—will be unkindly treated. For the honest historian trying to decipher what is true, what were the causes, conduct, and consequences of our times, it will be excruciatingly painful and difficult, owing to a severe paucity of documented, verifiable fact and a plethora of propaganda, opinion, fantasy, fiction and unadulterated prevarication. It will be, to many, a conundrum given the vast overwhelming quantity of media coverage documenting every minute of our lives. Why this will be so is obvious to anyone, anyone, that is, who desires to know the truth rather than accept the cruel enslavement of the mind enchained by “soft bigotry of low expectations”¹ and the bigotry of ignorance.

For the most, we are an agreeable lot, agreeing to disagree on most everything and anyone who would dare offer any disagreeable dissent. Now before I wade deeper into the weeds, no doubt offending a blathering blatherskite in mad pursuit of an over-common Bandersnatch, I must digress or rather take a turn at beating about the burning bush which of course is likewise certain to offend those sensitive to the sensitivities of the humble tumbleweed or the enflamed passions of arsonists claiming to be direct descendants of Hephaestus, the mythic Greek god of fire. There is an Orwellian—my apologies to Mr. George Orwell, I mean no offense—misappropriation, if not outright larceny, of the English language by those who can find no solid ground upon which to stand. Unable to walk on water or feed themselves, they abuse the uncomplaining Jabberwock and call it justice; they, of course, knowing nothing of jabberwocky, far less of justice.

The problem is, to place it squarely before us, we know not of what we speak and hear nothing of what was

said. We are masters of casual casuistry and slaves to willful unknowing. Thoroughly post-modern progressives—to borrow a thought from the late Mr. G.K. Chesterton, still quite appropriate for today’s over-heated climatology— “naturally try to put themselves right without owning themselves wrong. Or, worse still, they wish to abandon what they have found to be wrong, without abandoning their claim to put everybody else right.” He goes on to note: “every impossibility is possible, except the possibility that [their] assumption ... is wrong.”² Two weeks later, Chesterton would suggest writing history three ways.

There are three ways of writing history. The old Victorian way, in the books of our childhood, was picturesque and largely false. The later and more enlightened habit, adopted by academic authorities, is to think they can go on being false so long as they avoid being picturesque.

They think that, so long as a lie is dull, it will sound as if it were true. The third way is to use the picturesque (which is a perfectly natural instinct of man for what is memorable), but to make it a symbol of truth and not a symbol of falsehood. It is to tell the reader what the picturesque incident really meant, instead of leaving it meaningless or giving it a deceptive meaning. It is giving a true picture instead of a false picture; but there is not the

shadow of a reason why a picture should not be picturesque.³

A dozen years later, Chesterton acknowledged the spread of modern nonsense, which, it seems to me, has progressed from bad to worse since the decidedly depressing days of 1935. Not surprising, his illustrations are not the least outdated; what is surprising is how now uncommon common sense has been vilified, ostracized, denied a mention other than to call it old-fashioned nonsense.

From the standpoint of most sensible people, is it not rather a point against a policy or theory that in practice it ends in pure nonsense? What I mean is this: we are all accustomed in the modern world, for instance, to hear the very reasonable praise of Athletics; some even call it Gymnastics, and the Nudists are ready to take advantage of the philological⁴ origin of the term. ... We can tolerate all types of bodily energy, ranging from the

History is not there for you to like or dislike. It is there for you to learn from it. And if it offends you, even better. Because then you are less likely to repeat it. It's not yours to erase. It belongs to all of us!



most healthy sports of schoolboys to the most fantastic exhibitions of faddists. But we should feel that a certain limit had been reached if it were proclaimed that various athletes were to compete about which of them could most quickly jump down his own throat.

Or, again, we are only too familiar in these difficult days⁵ with economic problems; about how men are to manage to get a living; and whether any reasonable number of them can find a crust of bread to eat, or a bone to gnaw, in a world which is producing so much food that whole stacks of it are burnt or thrown into the sea. Hence arise various speculations about how much a man can live on; or, more frequently, about how little a man can live on. Economists and statisticians, of State appointment and academic authority, discuss whether a workman can live on two pounds a week or, preferably, on one pound a week; and the advance of science may yet reveal that he can live on ten shillings a week or possibly ten pence. But suppose the ultimate outcome of these arithmetical calculations were to prove that he can live on minus tenpence. Suppose it were argued that he could somehow or other dine upon a debt. Imagine a complete mathematical proof that -10 was the exact numeral required for the upkeep of life. In that case, we, who had put up with a good deal of mild and relative nonsense already, should probably recognize that we were in the presence of positive nonsense; of a new sort of nonsense; and that we could not put up with it at all.

Now, I know that I am much out of the modern fashion in these matters; but I am struck by the fact that we have pretty well reached this point in the modern view of sex relations, and the interchange of partners, apparently modelled on the dance-figure of my youth that was called the "Ladies' Chain." We read in every other novel or newspaper that the inconsistency and illogicality are due to the old laws of Marriage. It seems to me that they are nearly always due to the new laws of divorce. But, anyhow, the point is that the argument has reached exactly that fantastic point I have mentioned in the other cases; and the statements reported in the newspapers sound exactly like the statement that a man can live on minus his income or jump down his own throat. Up to a point, we, who hold an older moral philosophy in these matters, have at least been prepared to admit that the new experiments represented a philosophy of some kind. Those who held it, held it as a moral philosophy, even if some of us happened to think it was an immoral philosophy. But it is rapidly going beyond anything that could be called even an immoral philosophy. It is rapidly reaching that precipice of stark Nonsense of which I have already spoken; the point at which an argument can go no further because it has already contradicted itself. The examples of what I

mean are scattered all over the ordinary newspapers; and the extraordinary thing is that nobody seems to react in the name of Reason against any nonsense being quite so nonsensical.⁶

We are bombarded and bamboozled by the philologically ignorant, derogated by intolerant, sneering cowards conveniently hidden behind novel masks, brow-beaten and stamped "racist" by verbal morons who would not know one if they were one, which quite naturally they are; a perfect case of the pot calling the kettle black owning not the slightest notion of what a kettle looks like, let alone the color.

When most people think of intolerance, they imagine a racist taunting a black person. Or they think of the white supremacist who killed a demonstrator in Charlottesville, Virginia. It seldom occurs to them that intolerance comes in all political shapes and sizes. A protester storming a stage and refusing to let someone speak is intolerant. So, too, are campus speech codes that restrict freedom of expression. A city official threatening to fine a pastor for declining to marry a gay couple is every bit as intolerant as a right-winger wanting to punish gays with sodomy laws. Intolerance exists on the right and the left. It knows no exclusive political or ideological affiliation. It happens any time someone uses some form of coercion, either through government fiat or public shaming rituals, to restrict open debate and forcefully eliminate opponents from the playing field.⁷

These are critical times; we are inundated with crises, most exacerbated by those seeking self-serving ends by any means. It is the credo of those who would enslave us: "You never let a serious crisis go to waste. And what I mean by that: it's an opportunity to do things you think you could not do before" Crises are the bread and butter of the intolerant, the elixir of the gods who would rule and condemn us to slavery. Power is a deadly addiction, more addictive than any drug or substance and far more deadly. History is replete with those who have sold their souls to claim it for their own, forever on the backs of "lesser" men.

Just as in the midst of a forest it is difficult and quite impractical to count the trees, as impractical as it would be to count the stars or every grain of sand, so too with counting every crisis that confronts and threatens our humanity. Foolish though it may be, there is useful purpose enumerating a few that are forever driving us to

distraction and ever more toward unbridled madness. No crisis is the same; some are obvious, others not so much; some may present as malignant cancers, others benign. Make no mistake, crises are cumulative and opportunistic monsters, where there is one, there will be others, each feeding power-hungry beasts, at times feeding on each other.

In the midst of this pandemic— *discrimen diei*, the crisis of the day—we find ourselves surrounded and threatened with riots, anarchy, chaos, terrorism, lawlessness, radicalism, hatred and violence. Law and order, justice and righteousness, decency and fairness, honesty and diligent personal responsibility are virtues antithetical to mob rule; personal responsibility anathema, reputation and character anachronisms, common sense an insult.

Our education systems do not educate our children, they indoctrinate and inculcate their malleable minds with illiberal philosophies and sociological hogwash. Instead of teaching the fundamentals (Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic) our schools have become laboratories for anti-social, counter-cultural, gender-bending, race-baiting, mind-numbing, God-hating, anti-religion, anti-church, anti-family, anti-human experiments. Dispelling any thought of individualism, personal achievement, individual drive or responsibility, young minds have been fed an acid stew of groupthink, identity politics, political correctness, socialism, racial and gender inequalities, privilege, tribalism, utopianism, materialism, *ad nauseam*. Instead of turning out educated reasoning human beings capable of independent thought, adequately prepared to meet the challenges of life, our academies—low, high and higher—have gleefully boiled minds into mush, providing pliant fodder for their masters. This is, to brazenly borrow a banal bromide, an existential threat to humanity, a crisis deadlier than the coronavirus and far more infectious. It is the true “invisible enemy.” The “woke” refuse to wake up to reality; rapt in their delusions and fantasies they dream they are playing a game which only the truly woke can win. They are mistaken.

Then there is the crisis of the spirit which is, to my mind, the most terrible of things, worse than any virus or disease infecting the body. “When people stop believing in God, they don’t believe in nothing—they believe in anything.”⁸ We have become too willing to believe in anything—but God. Ask an Atheist who owns no belief in either God or religion of what or in whom he believes and invariably the answer will be: “Science.” For the Atheist, Science is his religion—though he would not care much to call it that—and scientists are the spokespersons of his religion, the clergy behind the altar declaring the glorious wonders of his god.

“First we overlook evil. Then we permit evil. Then we legalize evil. Then we promote evil. Then we celebrate evil. Then we persecute those who still call it evil.”

Now there is a special place, a stature granted solely to the all-knowing Scientist. It is a spiritual gift, some might even call it godlike, alien to any other creature on this fair earth, and it is this: Science worshipers unquestioningly accept every utterance that comes from the mouths of their ministers, their clergy, their Scientists: it is the gospel truth, none can or dare deny it. The honest truth is no one is perfect, no one, not even and specially Scientists. Scientists are no more the same to science as priests are to Ca-

tholicism, rabbis to Judaism, Imams to Islam, or any clergy to their own religion. Scientists are human; they run the gamut from great to horrible, all are fallible. So, when a Scientist proclaims his gospel, it ought never be taken as the gospel truth. It may be or, more likely; it may not be the unvarnished truth, so help me Science. It may be or it may not be science-based, empirically proven. Wisdom demands caution, caution requires questioning assumptions, assumptions ask for proof beyond a reasonable doubt. Opinions are not proof; they are not unbiased, they almost always bring an offal smell to the room.

Years ago, the American Cancer Society exaggerated the likelihood of women developing breast cancer—they publicly admitted to this canard years later. Why would they embellish and promote such a lie? Because they wanted to scare women into getting mammograms. Their reasoning? They were following with the thought that you can lie to do good. A more recent example comes from the

inestimable Dr. Anthony Fauci, the self-anointed high-priest of the church of Public Health Scientists. At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Fauci declared the virus to be insignificant, infinitely less dangerous than the common cold or a mild case of influenza. Elevated to the status of high-priest, Fauci remarkably changed his sermon, preaching a gospel of strict observance to his canon of isolation, eternal “maskulation”, fasting and abstinence. Not so fast! Unprotected sex with strangers is exempted, as are rioting, looting, and mass protests fueled by radical Antifa and BLM terrorists shouting “Pigs in a blanket. Fry ‘em like bacon.”

Not willing to let an opportunity pass them by, acolytes were quick to respond with canons of their own design. Elected public servants issued edict upon edict, all in the name of concern for public safety, trampling the rights of all for the glory of their newfound religion: Unquestioned, Absolute Power. First, so they preached, it was only a temporary measure to “slow the curve,” then when the curve failed to pass go, it was to ... who knows, it really depends on who was pontificating at the moment. Then it was until we have a vaccine¹¹. Vaccines are coming. It is very exciting. Wait for it, wait for it. Stay in place. It is coming. When? No one knows and no one is telling. In the meantime, stay in place, maskulate, or if you cannot help yourself, protest, riot, loot, burn property, throw rocks and bottles and sticks and stones at cops, knock over 92-years-old ladies with your fist, shoot and enjoy watching retired policemen bleed to death, and anyone else who happens to get in your face.

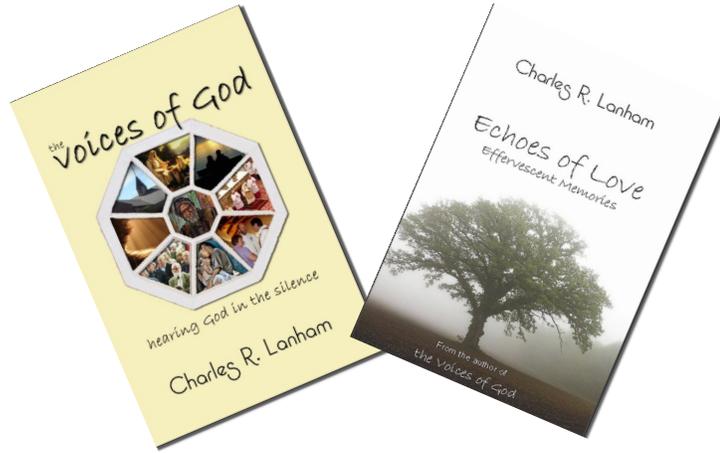
I could go on and on and on but I cannot bear the thought of another crisis not wasted. It is simply much too much, too, too much. I have decided of my own recognition to take Howard Beale’s advice. I am therefore going to open my window, lean my head out and shout as loudly as I possibly can: “I’m mad as hell and I’m not going to take it anymore!”⁹ I heartedly encourage you to do the same. Perhaps if we time it right, our voices will be heard above the madness of the mobs tearing down our sacred home. No doubt about it, “It’s a mad, mad, mad, mad world”¹⁰ and I want to get off before it completely and utterly destroys itself, call it self-inflicted suicide.

Tragically, though we are all beloved creatures of the

One who made us and all are equal in His eyes, there are those who would disagree. We are equal in God’s eyes, cosmetically different as roses, tall and short and everywhere in between—neither one-size-fits-all nor standardized S-M-L; each is more wonderfully beautiful than all of creation. The human race would be dull indeed in monoclinal repetition. In the end, it matters not the color of your skin, the wrinkle of your brow, the dye of your hair or shape of your nose. Like fingerprints and snowflakes, none are the same, each is a part of what makes you uniquely human. We have forgotten that. We should remind ourselves, often and everywhere, that what defines us is not cosmetic, what truly defines us is “the content of our character.”

Thanks be to God. Amen.

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1. Phrase originally coined by Michael Gerson, a former speechwriter for President George W. Bush. It refers to the fact that the left’s approach when it comes to minorities—especially in the black community—is based on the notion that they are unable to achieve success in American society. Here, I use it generically, referring to anyone not a part of the so-called, self-described elite class.
 2. G.K. Chesterton, “*More Myths, Mediaeval and Victorian, June 2, 1923*”, G.K. Chesterton: Collected Works, Volume XXXIII: The Illustrated London News, 1923-1925 (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1990), 112-113.
 3. G.K. Chesterton, “*Three Ways of Writing History*”, The Illustrated London News, June 23, 1923.
 4. Adjectival form of *philology*, the branch of knowledge that deals with the structure, historical development, and relationships of a language or languages. .
 5. A historical note: Chesterton wrote this essay in 1935 at the depths of the Great Depression.
 6. G.K. Chesterton, “*The Spread of Modern Nonsense, February 23, 1935*”, G.K. Chesterton: Collected Works, Volume XXXVII: The Illustrated London News, 1935-1936 (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1990), 40-42.
 7. Kim R. Holmes. “*The Closing of the Liberal Mind: How Groupthink and Intolerance Define the Left*”. Encounter Books, p. vii.
 8. Often misattributed to G.K. Chesterton, though evidence suggests it comes from page 211 of Émile Cammaerts’ book *The Laughing Prophet: The Seven Virtues and G. K. Chesterton* (1937) in which he quotes Chesterton as having Father Brown say, in “The Oracle of the Dog” (1923): “**It’s the first effect of not believing in God that you lose your common sense.**” Cammaerts then interposes his own analysis between further quotes from Father Brown: “‘It’s drowning all your old rationalism and scepticism, it’s coming in like a sea; and the name of it is superstition.’ The first effect of not believing in God is to believe in anything: ‘And a dog is an omen and a cat is a mystery.’”
 9. From the 1976 film *Network*.
 10. Title of the 1963 film.
 11. I would be remiss not to mention that since the Influenza pandemic of 1918 (commonly called the Spanish flu), Influenza has taken, on average globally, 650,000 lives. That is 67,600,000 lives over 104 years and there have been vaccines.

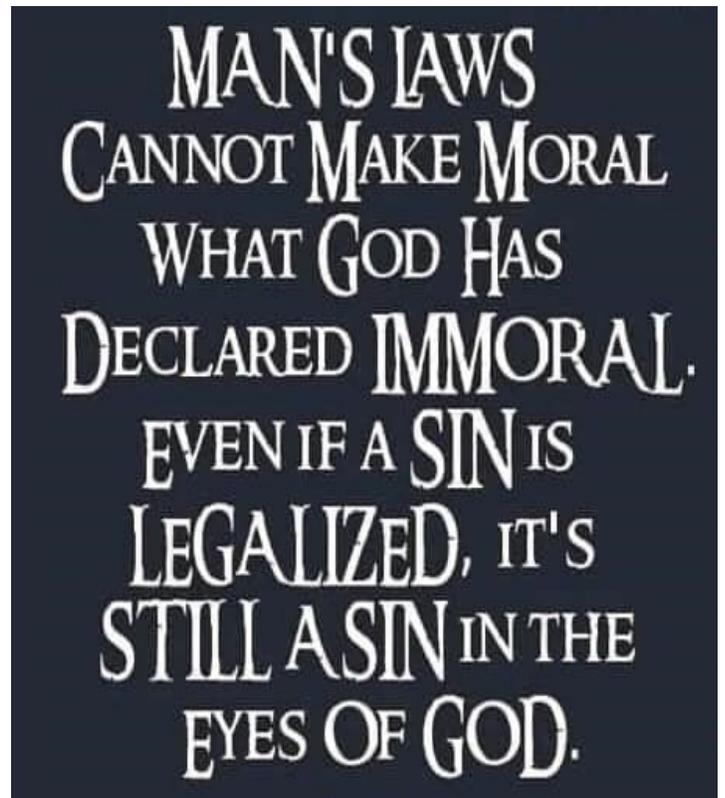
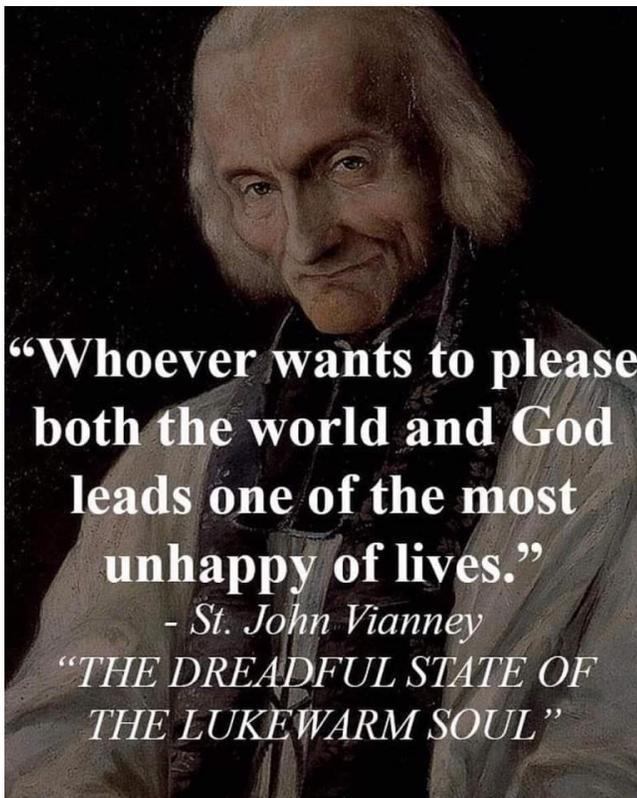


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Colloquī, the present infinitive of *colloquor* (Latin: *to talk, to discuss or to converse*) is a Deacon's Corner weekly journal. Its mission and purpose to encourage serious discussion, to promote reasoned debate, and to provide serious content for 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.

Colloquī is published weekly by Deacon's Corner Publishing. Each issue of **Colloquī** is available online: <https://deaconscorner.org>

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