

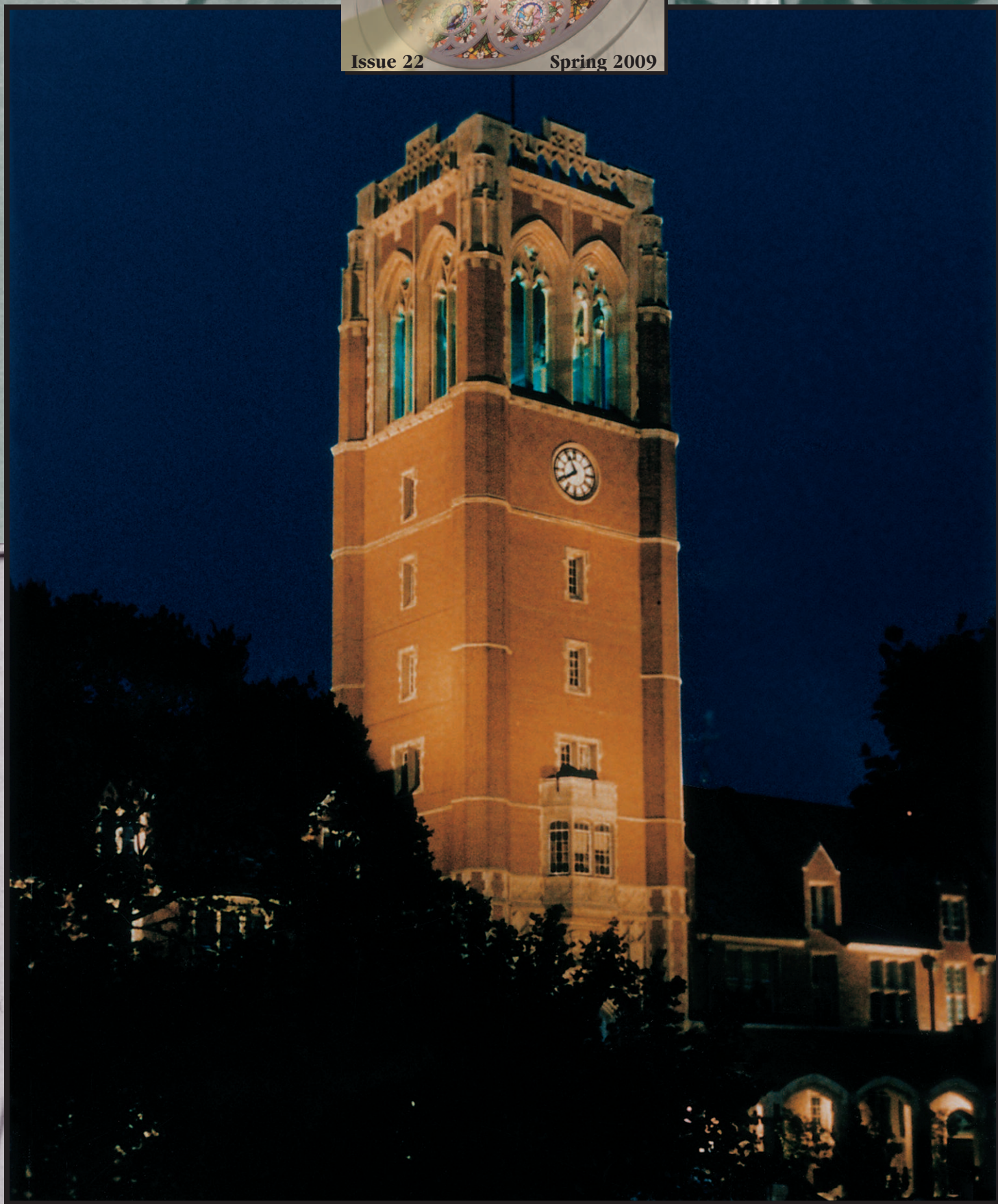
The Institute of Catholic Studies

# PRISM

at John Carroll University

Issue 22

Spring 2009







Dr. Paul V. Murphy, Director

## *A Message From the Director*

Dear Friends:

This season of the year in University Heights is a time of important transition. Spring returns and the campus of John Carroll University, with its magnolias and apple blossoms, looks particularly beautiful. More importantly, we look forward to the commencement exercises when the graduates of the class of 2009 will complete their education here and move forward to careers or further educational opportunities. Commencement exercises illustrate one of the important complexities of life on our campus. The pomp and circumstance of traditions that date to the Middle Ages make the event one that is rich in symbolism of values handed down through generations. At the same time, knowing that our new alumni go out into a world of significant economic and social challenges reminds us that our work is not about the past but the future.

Our mission here is therefore one of forming students who are rooted in broad human traditions of thought and culture who are at the same time able to respond to new and changing circumstances. The Catholic intellectual tradition, with its emphasis on the unity of faith and reason, engages the world as the theater of God's grace. Jesuit higher education, rooted in the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola, cultivates a deep encounter with the mystery at the center of our lives by continuous reflection on human experience in the light of the biblical call to be faithful to the God of creation, justice, and peace. This openness to creation, the joy of seeing our graduates take up the task of building a more just and peaceful world, reminds me of the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins' description of God's presence in the beauty of the world:

*GLORY be to God for dappled things,  
For skies of couple-color as a brindled cow,  
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;  
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls, finches' wings;  
Landscape plotted and pieced, fold, fallow and plough,  
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.  
All things counter, original, spare, strange,  
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)  
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim.  
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change;  
Praise him.*

It is an honor, as Director of the Institute of Catholic Studies, to play a part in this important work of human formation rooted in the Catholic and Jesuit intellectual traditions. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul V. Murphy, Ph.D.  
Director, Institute of Catholic Studies



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Institute of Catholic Studies  
**John Carroll University**  
*The Jesuit University in Cleveland*  
20700 North Park Boulevard  
University Heights, Ohio 44118

## *S*TUDENT FOCUS: **NATALIE TERRY, '10**



**NATALIE TERRY**

One of the goals of John Carroll University has always been to foster a spirit of “men and women” for others. In addition to academic excellence, students are encouraged to become positively involved in their communities.

Religious Studies major and sociology minor

Natalie Terry, JCU '10, is one such young woman. In addition to her major and minor, Terry is pursuing a concentration in Catholic Studies with classes such as Catholic Social and Political Thought, Contemporary Catholic Theology and Justice in the Economy, she is involved on campus in several student organization.

As a Fair Trade Intern, Natalie has been involved in promoting Fair Trade products and Aramark Foodservices' transition to serving 100% Fair Trade coffee on campus. As co-president of the student organization JUSTICE, Natalie has been involved in the Ignatian Family Teach-In at Ft. Benning, GA. Natalie cites her coursework and these extracurricular activities as being instrumental in influencing her decision to apply to graduate programs in theology and to explore the possibility of becoming a youth minister. In recognition of her high achievements both curricular and co-curricular, Natalie Terry is this year's recipient of the William F. Buckley Award for Catholic Activism. We are grateful for her presence among us.

## *F*ACULTY FOCUS: **REV. FRANCIS X. RYAN, SJ.**



**REV. FRANCIS X. RYAN, SJ.**

The study of literature has always been at the heart of a Jesuit education. As the current Chair of the English Department and recently appointed director of the Humanities program, Father Francis Ryan, SJ, feels that the study of literature provides valuable contributions

to the Catholic Studies Program. While other disciplines stress studying theology, apologetics or catechetical subjects, the English Department provides classes that

give academic consideration to the experience and effects of such philosophical ideas on people and things. While taking up his new duties, Father Ryan still teaches several classes in Catholic Studies on Late Medieval and Renaissance Literature. Of his work here he says: “it is important to continue offering courses that look at the effects of Catholic thought on literature and people and John Carroll University is an ideal location for that work.”



# NEWS

*of the Institute*

**Dr. Santa Casciani**, Director of the Bishop Pilla Program in Italian American Studies, was staying in her native town of Castelnuovo, near L'Aquila, Italy, when a severe earthquake shook that region in April. Dr. Casciani, along with her mother with whom she stayed, is safe. Donations to assist those who have suffered in the earthquake are being received by Mrs. Mary Beth Brooks at the Institute of Catholic Studies. For further information call 216-397-4558.

In October 2008, **Dr. Sharon Kaye** of the Department of Philosophy, published a novel called *Black Market Truth*. A thriller in the DaVinci Code genre, it is about a classics professor who discovers Aristotle's lost dialogues. It is the first volume in a trilogy called *The Aristotle Quest* ([www.aristotlequest.com](http://www.aristotlequest.com)).

In March and April, **Dr. Joseph Kelly** wrote three articles for the Catholic News Service which distributes feature pieces to diocesan newspapers. On April 29 he spoke about "*The Book of Genesis and Evolution*" at

Saint Hilary Church in Fairlawn, OH. He spoke on Early Christian Art at Benedictine High School on May 20.

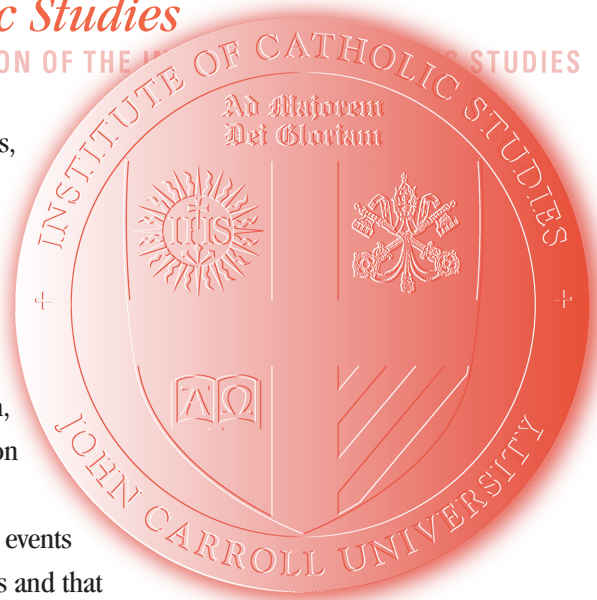
**Dr. Paul V. Murphy** recently published a chapter titled "Jesuit Rome and Italy" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*, edited by Rev. Thomas Worcester, SJ. Dr. Murphy's chapter analyzes the work of the Jesuits in Central Italy between 1540 and 1773.

In the summer of 2008 **Dr. Brenda Wirkus** of the Department of Philosophy received a Catholic Studies Course Development grant to design and teach a new course on the philosophy of St. Augustine. She taught the course to a large group of undergraduates in the spring of 2009.

## *The Mission of the Institute of Catholic Studies*

THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE OF CATHOLIC STUDIES THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE OF CATHOLIC STUDIES

The mission of the Institute of Catholic Studies is to provide students, faculty, staff, and the larger community with the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of how Catholicism and Catholics have interacted with the world, both shaping and being shaped by culture and society in the past and in the present. As Catholic and Jesuit, John Carroll University is an ideal home for such an undertaking. Through an interdisciplinary Catholic Studies Program, the Institute provides opportunities for encounter with and formation in the Catholic intellectual tradition as expressed in many scholarly disciplines from philosophy to science. It offers courses and public events that highlight the contributions of Catholic intellectuals and scholars and that explore the current conditions in which Catholics find themselves at the dawn of the twenty-first century. By these undertakings the Institute will offer students a solid interdisciplinary foundation for understanding the interaction of faith and culture in the past as well as for navigating their way in the future.





### *Record Graduation Class in Catholic Studies*

The John Carroll University commencement exercises for 2009 includes a record number of Catholic Studies graduates. Twenty one new graduates received the certificate in Catholic Studies, the largest number since the founding of the Institute of Catholic Studies. They include:

Jonathan Alexander  
Louis Balzer  
Chester Banaszak  
Alysse Boyd  
Zach Briers  
Matthew Byrne  
Gustavus Max Cole  
Caitlin Fritz  
Lillian Green  
Allison Kamien  
Brynn McNicholas

Erin Moran  
Julie Lindsey Myers  
Chady Naoum  
Robert Ramser  
Joseph Reed  
Timothy Roth  
Andrew Summerson  
Tommy Sutton Lovett  
Jeffrey Villanueva  
Alyson Werner

*Congratulations to these new JCU alumni!*



## “Early Modern Catholic Writing”

Dr. Robert S. Miola

Gerard Manley Hopkins Professor of English and Lecturer in Classics,  
Loyola University of Maryland



PROFESSOR ROBERT S. MIOLA

Catholicism in early modern England, no less than Protestantism, was a ministry of the word. Catholics practiced their religion in private and public prayer and protest, in words meditated, whispered, spoken, sung, written and printed. Such words, of course, were forbidden and felonious. After King Henry VIII had broken ties with Rome and declared himself Supreme Head of the Church in England (1536), successive administrations undertook the long and complicated process of suppressing, outlawing, and eliminating Roman Catholicism. Legislation in the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) made it a crime to say or sing mass, to administer Catholic sacraments, to speak against the state religion, to possess or publish Catholic writing; penalties included heavy fines, forfeiture of goods and land, imprisonment, and execution for treason.

Catholics still spoke the words of their faith in prayer. They regularly braved persecution to attend mass in the homes of the faithful, as is abundantly clear from the surviving records of Jesuit missionaries – Edmund Campion, Robert Southwell, Henry Walpole, John Gerard, Henry Garnet, and William Weston, for example – as well as from many state records of arrest and trial. With two acts of Parliament, Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries and helped himself to Church goods, lands, and buildings, but he could not eradicate the Divine Office, the monastic prayers recited at specified hours of the day. These combined with the Little Office or Hours of the Virgin Mary and other traditional prayers and hymns to supply Catholic (and sometimes Protestant) worship throughout the early modern period. This worship included

powerful, affective medieval devotions, such as “A prayer unto the wounds of Christ” and “The Fifteen Oes of St Bridget,” as well as Saint Thomas Aquinas’s great Eucharistic hymns (*Lauda, Sion, Pange, lingua, Sacris solemniis, Verbum supernum, Adoro te*), which affirmed the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist:

*Verbum caro panem verum*

*Verbo carnem efficit,*

*Fitque sanguis Christi merum*

*(Pange, lingua, <thesaurus precum latinarum>)*

*(The Word-made-flesh changes true bread into his flesh by a word, and wine turns into the blood of Christ.)*

Richard Verstegan gathered these and many other prayers together in his English *Primer* (1599), which achieved forty-two editions in the seventeenth century. Prominent here are Marian prayers (*Obsecro te*, for example) and hymns, including the famous antiphon, *Salve, regina*, which begins, “Hail holy queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope, to thee do we cry poor banished children of Eve,” and which the pilgrim Dante hears in the Valley of the Rulers (*Purgatorio* 7). Martin Luther objected to this hymn and John Hollybush wrote a refutation that substituted Christ for Mary amidst copious Scriptural reference (*An exposition upon the song of the Blessed*

*Catholics still spoke the words of their faith in prayer. They regularly braved persecution to attend mass in the homes of the faithful, as is abundantly clear from the surviving records of Jesuit missionaries*

*Virgin Mary*, 1538). Despite such opposition Catholics continued to “venerate,” as opposed to “worship,” Mary, the distinction precisely maintained in the theological terms *hyperdoulia* and *latría*. Catholics prayed the Litany of Loreto, a series of invocations

to Mary as mother, virgin, vessel, mediatrix, and queen and, of course, they prayed the rosary, perhaps the most misunderstood Catholic devotion. Dismissed as idolatry or merely mechanical repetition, the rosary consisted of a series of prayers correlated to a string of beads; it provided ordered access to the fifteen traditional mysteries of redemption – Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious. Church teachings and handbooks, such as that of John Bucke (*Instructions for the Use of the Beads*, 1589), continually explained that the person praying the rosary was to meditate upon each mystery in sequence.

One important manuscript from the period, moreover, preserves some Catholic ballads that reveal their polemical usefulness as well as the fears and hopes of Catholic singers. *Winter Cold into Summer Hot* catalogues the astonishing and unnatural changes brought about by the Protestant revolution:

*Abstinence is Papistry,  
As this new error saith;  
Fasting, prayer, and all good works  
Avoid, for only faith  
Doth bring us all to heaven straight –  
A doctrine very strange,  
Which causeth men at liberty  
Of vice and sin to range.  
From angels honour taken is,  
From saints all worship due;  
The mother of our living God –  
A thing most strange yet true! –  
Comparèd is by many a Jack  
Unto a saffron bag,  
To a thing of naught, to a paltry patch,  
And to our vicar's bag!*  
(Additional MS 15,225, fols. 33v-34)

The speaker marvels at the world turned upside down, winter cold into summer hot, at the loss of traditional religious practices for the doctrine of *sola fides* (“faith alone”), a doctrine that in his view promotes license and sin. Protestant “purification” here abolishes the proper respect due to angels, saints, and, most important, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, a long and well-beloved focus of Catholic devotion and art, now dishonoured and scorned. The allusion to the “saffron bag” pointedly evokes the Protestant argument that denied Mary’s intrinsic worth and holiness, reducing her to a mere vessel for the Incarnation.

Protestantism, of course, remained the principal target of Catholic theological and political writing, and each side proffered a different vision of history. Catholics argued that the true Church descended continuously and visibly from Christ and the apostle Peter to the present Roman institution and pope. Scripture; the very fact of the Church’s existence thus functioned as the prime guarantor of authenticity. “Where was your church before Luther?”

they repeatedly asked. Luther himself had anticipated this question by arguing that the true church began to recede into invisibility as the false Roman one appeared. Matthias Flacius provided chapter and verse of the deterioration over time in his massive *Centuriae Magdeburgenses* (13 vols., 1559-1574). Robert Barnes and John Bale articulated this theory in England, as did John Foxe (*Acts and Monuments*, 1563), the most important and influential creator of Protestant English history. Foxe tells the story of the English church from its founding by Joseph of Arimathea, though its captivity to Rome, to its present emancipation under the Tudors. In this narrative England emerges as the elect nation, the place that most purely restores and embodies the vision of Jesus Christ. The proof of England’s sanctity and of Rome’s perfidy, Foxe triumphantly concludes, is the blood of her martyrs, especially those executed in the reign of the Catholic Queen Mary I (1553-58).



Catholics strenuously dissented. Thomas Stapleton published a translation of Venerable Bede’s *Historia* (1565) to show the dedicatee Queen Elizabeth and the English “in how many and weighty points the pretended reformers of the Church in Your Grace’s dominions have departed from the pattern of that sound and Catholic faith planted first among Englishmen by holy St. Augustine [of Canterbury]” (sig. \*3). Bede’s history proves, according to Stapleton, that England became Catholic through papal intervention, as Pope Gregory the Great (r. 590-604) had dispatched Augustine as a missionary to the Saxons. Moreover, Stapleton’s preface and notes point out the authenticity of doctrines and practices lately rejected by Protestants – transubstantiation, auricular confession, the intercession of saints, miracles, prayers for the dead, and the primacy of the Roman See.

There were, of course, other substantive Catholic histories and rebuttals. Having meticulously assembled historical sources, Robert Persons’s *A Treatise of Three Conversions of England* (3 vols., 1603-4) argues that England thrice received the faith from Rome, first from the apostles, then from Joseph of Arimathea and Pope Eleutherius, and finally from Augustine and Pope Gregory. The *Treatise* denounces Foxe’s history as inaccurate and heretical, including one famous chapter that reveals “more than one hundred and twenty lies uttered by John Foxe in less than



three leaves of his *Acts and Monuments*” (Book 3, ch. 19). Persons turns his considerable learning and energy against Foxe’s conception of martyrdom and his new calendar of saints, ridiculing the canonization of such figures as William Cowbridge, who denied Christ, William Collins, whom Foxe himself declared mad, and William Flower, the apostate monk who wounded a priest.



EDMUND CHAMPION, SJ

Such tensions in the early modern period engendered much Catholic biography, hagiography, and polemic, often with little distinction between the genres. The execution of Edmund Campion in 1581, the brilliant and silver-tongued Jesuit, ignited a larger firestorm of controversy. Campion had won notoriety for his challenge to “avow the faith of our Catholic Church by proofs innumerable” in public debate, confident that none of the

Protestants living could “maintain their doctrine in disputation” (MS Harley 422, fols. 132r-v). After his capture, torture, and execution, William Cecil, Lord Burghley felt obliged to justify the persecution in a pamphlet, *The Execution of Justice in England* (1583, rev. 1584), which convicted Campion of treason.

Catholics told a different story, however, beginning with Thomas Alfield, *A True Report* (1582), who depicted Campion as a martyr, recounting his virtuous demeanour, his disavowal of any seditious activity, his sole concern with religious ministry, his final prayers for Queen and country, and his courageous submission to God’s will. At the gallows, Alfield reports, someone asked Campion if he renounced the pope; he replied that he was a Catholic. A voice declared, “In your Catholicism, I noted the word, all treason is contained” (Alfield, sig. C2). William Allen further developed this portrait of Campion as martyr in *A True, Sincere, and Modest Defence of English Catholics* (1584), as did Niccolò Circignani, “Il Pomerancio,” in his fresco cycle at the Venerable English College of Rome.

Living in the shadow of persecution, Catholics struggled to keep the flame of faith alive. A large literature of instruction and devotion, some old and some new, enabled their efforts. Saints’ lives, many descending from the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine (thirteenth century) proliferated. Catechisms by Laurence Vaux and Robert Bellarmine provided basic instruction in doctrine and the sacraments. The severe piety of Thomas à Kempis continued to challenge and inspire, as did the spiritual struggles of St. Augustine of Hippo, recorded in the *Confessions*. (These texts found readers among Protestants as well as Catholics.) A sub-literature of consolation drew upon classical and Christian teaching to foster contemptus mundi and focus attention on heavenly reward. Thomas More’s *A Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation* (1534) reminded readers that every man, woman, and child is born into the prison of this life under the sentence of death. Robert Southwell’s *An Epistle of Comfort* (1588) recounted St. John Damascene’s grimly moving allegory of human life: Pursued by a unicorn, a man fell into a well but saved himself by getting hold of a little tree. Thinking himself secure, he saw two

mice, one black and one white, gnawing the roots of the tree, and underneath a terrible dragon. At the stay of his feet he saw four adders and in the branches of the tree a little bit of honey.

*He, therefore, unmindful of all his dangers, not remembering that above the unicorn waited to spoil him, that beneath the fiery dragon watched to swallow him, that the tree was quickly to be gnawn asunder, that the stay of his feet was slippery and not to trust unto – not remembering, I say, all these perils, he only thought how he might come by that little bit of honey.*

*The unicorn is death; the pit, the world; the tree, the measure and time of our life; the white and black mice, the day and the night; the stop borne up by four adders, our body framed of four brittle and contrary elements; the dragon, the devil; the honey, worldly pleasure. Who, therefore, would not think it a madness in so many dangers rather to be eager of vain delight than fearful and sad with consideration of so manifold perils? (sigs. F3-F3v)*

*Officially denied access to church service, books, and priests, Catholics naturally turned inward, contrary to popular canards about Protestant “interiority” and poetics.*

To offer comfort and hope to the afflicted flock writers described in vivid detail the heavenly joys awaiting the faithful after a successful sojourn in such a vale of tears. The ballad “Jerusalem, my Happy Home,” for example, depicts heaven as a place of ivory houses, golden tiles, fruit-filled orchards, gardens of flowers, nectar, ambrosia, and spices, and heavenly choirs, populated by the communion of saints in joyful worship of the Almighty.



ROBERT PERSONS, SJ

Officially denied access to church service, books, and priests, Catholics naturally turned inward, contrary to popular canards about Protestant “interiority” and poetics. Prominent in this tradition is *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola (1521-2), a much-imitated teacher’s manual of drills and meditations. The *Exercises* are designed to guide a retreatant to election, the making of a choice of life, and to perfection, the surrender

of the self to God. They proceed in four stages, called “weeks,” that begin with reflection on the self as a sinner saved by God, proceed to contemplation of events in Christ’s life, and then focus on the Crucifixion and Resurrection. Robert Persons incorporated

some of the *Exercises* in his enormously successful *The Christian Directory* (1582), the most popular devotional work in English before 1650, achieving some 40 authorized and unauthorized editions. Among the unauthorized editions stands the Protestant adaptation made by a Yorkshire clergyman, Edmund Bunny, who republished the book after deleting or altering references to good works, acts of penance, the Virgin Mary, and the like. Person's powers of instruction and clarity are evident in his gloss on Ignatius's First Principle and Foundation, namely that man was created to praise, reverence, and serve God and thereby to save his soul and that all things on earth were created to serve man in this end. Our life here on earth, Persons explains, is like that of a merchant sent overseas by his master:

*Christ's bloody sweat in Gethsemane thus becomes metaphorically linked to the blood/wine of the Eucharist, just as it is in iconographic traditions, wherein angels gather the blood in chalices. The poem compares Christ to a pelican, feeding its young with its blood, and the phoenix, fabled to rise from the dead.*

*If the merchant factor, which I spake of before, after many years spent beyond the seas returning home to give accounts to his master; should yield a reckoning of so much time spent in singing, so much in dancing, so much in courting, and the like, who would not laugh at his accounts? But being further asked by his master what time he bestowed on his merchandise which he sent him for; if he should answer, none at all, nor that he ever thought or studied upon the matter; who should not think him worthy of all shame and punishment? And surely with much more shame and confusion shall they stand at the day of judgment, who, being placed here to so great a business as is the service of Almighty God and the gaining of his eternal kingdom of heaven, have, notwithstanding, neglected the same. (sig. C3)*



ROBERT SOUTHWELL, SJ

Early modern Catholics produced a remarkable and varied body of poetry, which, like the prose, voiced their protests, polemics, and prayers. The most accomplished Elizabethan Catholic poet is, undoubtedly, the Jesuit martyr Robert Southwell. Brilliant and well born, Southwell joined the Society of Jesus in 1578 and returned to England in 1586 to minister to Catholics, including the imprisoned nobleman Philip Howard.

He endured imprisonment and multiple tortures by the notorious Richard Topcliffe before his execution in 1595. His poetry circulated in manuscript and (remarkably) in several printed editions beginning in 1595, expurgated for publication in Protestant England. Southwell combines Ignatian meditative methods with the love of ingenuity, paradox and startling imagery that characterizes the best poetry of the early seventeenth century. In "The Burning Babe," the speaker sees a flaming child who declares:

*My faultless breast the furnace is.  
The fuel, wounding thorns;  
Love is the fire and sighs the smoke,  
The ashes shames and scorns.  
The fuel Justice layeth on,  
And Mercy blows the coals;  
The metal in this furnace wrought  
Are men's defiled souls. (Saint Peters Complaint, 1602. sig L4v.)*

After the child vanishes, the speaker remembers that it is "Christmas day." Here Petrarchan imagery of burning, melting, and dying furnishes reflection on the Incarnation and on the power of Christ's sacrifice to burn away sin. Ben Jonson commented, "so he had written" this poem, "he would have been content to destroy many of his" (ed. Herford and Simpsons, 1:137).

Another poem, "Christ's Bloody Sweat," begins with four lines, each presenting four elements in tightly controlled series:

*Fat soil, full spring, sweet olive, grape of bliss  
That yields, that streams, that pours, that dost distil,  
Untilled, undrawn, unstamped, untouched of press,  
Dear fruit, clear brooks, fair oil, sweet wine at will.  
(Moeoniae, 1595, sig. C2)*

Christ's bloody sweat in Gethsemane thus becomes metaphorically linked to the blood/wine of the Eucharist, just as it is in iconographic traditions, wherein angels gather the blood in chalices. The poem compares Christ to a pelican, feeding its young with its blood, and the phoenix, fabled to rise from the dead. It recalls Elijah's triumph over the priests of Baal with the help of the divine fire that consumed stones and dust (3 Kings 18: 37-9). The last stanza implores the sacred fire to show its force "on me, / That sacrifice to Christ I may return," then ends abruptly and powerfully in stark confession:

*If withered wood for fuel fittest be,  
If stones and dust, if flesh and blood will burn,  
I withered am, and stony to all good,  
A sack of dust, a mass of flesh and blood. (Additional MS 10422, fol. 13)*

The poem. "St. Peter's Complaint" shows the poet in a more expansive mood. Combining the native complaint genre with the Continental literature of tears, this poem adapts Luigi Tanzillo's *Lagrima di San Pietro* into 132 six-line stanzas of metaphysical conceits. First St. Peter meditates on Christ's eyes:



*O pools of Hesebon, the baths of grace,  
Where happy saints dive in sweet desires,  
Where saints rejoice to glass their glorious face,  
Whose banks make echo to the angels' choirs,  
An echo sweeter in the sole rebound  
Than angels' music in the fullest sound.  
(Saint Peters Complaint, 1595, sig. C2)*

Then he reflects on his own tears as he laments his triple denial of Jesus, a betrayal recounted in all the gospels (e.g. Matt. 26: 69-75). In a few successive stanzas he describes his tears as distillations from the alembic of his doleful breast, the children of his grief, good effects of ill deserving cause, showers that bring forth fruit and flower, the unpleasant brine of a barren plant. The imagery is not merely adventitious, however, but serves a doctrinal argument. These tears are purgative and penitential, part of the sinner's payment of temporal satisfaction for sin, an illustration of the Catholic doctrine of Penance, as ratified in the Council of Trent. "By you," says Peter addressing his tears, "my sinful debts must be defrayed" (sig. C3v). Later he recalls the examples of David bathing his bed with tears (Ps. 6: 7) and Anna shedding "inconsolable tears" for her missing son (Tobias 10: 1-7, a book not accepted by Protestants as canonical) as precedents for his penance: "Then I to days and weeks, to months and years, / Do owe the hourly rent of stintless tears" (sig. C4).

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plays have recently sparked fruitful re-evaluation. John Donne kept pictures of the Virgin Mary in the Deanery and wrote poetry that reflected his early Catholicism and that contradicted his sermons. According to his own testimony, Ben Jonson spent his most productive years in the forbidden religion. John Milton's *Areopagitica*, revered uncritically for too long as an enlightened call for freedom of speech, advocates the extirpation of popery and rehearses noisome prejudices against Jews and Turks. Catholic writings in manuscript and print constitute a new world of early modern discourse that instructs and delights even as it unsettles comfortable assumptions and received judgments.

*Robert S. Miola is the Gerard Manley Hopkins Professor of English and Lecturer in Classics at Loyola University of Maryland.* 📖



Early Modern Catholic writing provides a context that redefines the culture and literature of early modern England. Voices that have long been dismissed or silenced challenge the regnant myths of religious "Reformation" and the Providential emergence of an elect (and unbloody) English nation. Figures such as Edmund Campion, Thomas Stapleton, Robert Persons, and Robert Southwell claim their due place in our histories and handbooks. Attention to such Catholic voices, moreover, offers new perspectives on familiar figures – the elegant poet laureate Edmund Spenser, for example, who profited from the ruthless colonization of the Catholic Irish and who celebrated the victory apocalyptically in his Protestant epic. William Shakespeare's representations of Catholicism in the

## *“A Reason for Hope: Young Adult Catholics Today”*

*Dr. Mary L. Gautier, Ph.D.*

*Senior Research Associate at the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate,  
Georgetown University*

Thank you for inviting me to speak to you this evening about a subject that combines two of my passions: the Catholic Church in the United States and young people. I titled this presentation “A Reason for Hope: Young Adult Catholics Today” because it is my firm conviction, based on solid sociological research, that there is something very positive and encouraging about the Catholic sensibility of young adult Catholics that gives me a reason for hope. And as St. Peter said in his First Letter, chapter 3, verse 15: “Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.” Here is my explanation:

First, the Catholic Church as it exists in the United States today is a very different environment than it was for previous generations of Catholics. The immigrant Church of a century ago had a very different demographic, a different structure, and a different relationship with the overwhelmingly Protestant culture in which it coexisted. I will show you some of the demographic changes that have had a subtle, yet tremendous influence on the Catholic Church in which Young Adult Catholics are defining themselves today. Then I will talk about some of the characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors of Young Adult Catholics today, how they are similar and different from the generations before them, and why I feel that they are a reason for hope for the Church of tomorrow.

### **Catholics today are becoming more equally distributed throughout the country.**

The Catholic Church in the United States grew steadily in total population over the course of the 20th century. Between 1900 and 1950, Catholics in the United States had grown from just over 10 million to just under 30 million, an increase of 165 percent. The population more than doubled in size again between 1950 and 2000, increasing 107 percent during that half-century. By contrast, the total population of priests grew rapidly in the first half of the century, averaging about 2 percent per year, but stopped growing in 1969 and has declined throughout most of the remainder of the century.

Catholics have been moving out of their traditional immigrant neighborhoods of the Northeast and the Upper Midwest for more than a half century. Moving out of the cities and off the farms in favor of the suburbs, they are now increasingly located in the South and in the West. Some of this growth is due to immigration – there are still significant numbers immigrating to the United States from various Catholic population centers around the world. Some



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of this growth is due to natural increase – although Catholics nationally now have the identical family size as the rest of the country. Much of the growth is due to internal migration – as the urban areas in the Northeast and rural areas of the Midwest lose young population to jobs in the Sunbelt and in the suburbs around major metropolitan areas. Some of the additional growth, particularly in the South and the West, is due to the in-migration of Hispanic Catholics from Latin America.

The impact of that movement is now being felt in the Northeast and the Midwest by large-scale parish closings and mergers and the closing of parish schools. In the South and the West, particularly in metropolitan areas, the impact is felt as increasing pressure to open new parishes and schools to accommodate a growing Catholic population.

### **Catholics are becoming more diverse in race and ethnicity.**

Unlike the growth in the Catholic population of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century, which was primarily due to immigration from Europe and rapid growth in U.S. Catholic families, much of Catholic growth in the latter half of the 20th century has been through immigration from other Catholic populations around the world. Therefore, the Catholic population today is quite ethnically and racially diverse.

Less than two-thirds of U.S. Catholic adults are white, non-Hispanic. More than a third are Hispanic or Latino – U.S. born make up 11 percent and foreign-born make up the other 25 percent of



Hispanic Catholics. About 3 percent are African, African-American or Afro-Caribbean, 4 percent are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1 percent is Native American. Based on the numbers of Catholic immigrants arriving from around the globe as well as the increased diversity among younger generations of U.S. Catholics, the Church will be even more diverse in the future than it is now. In fact, half of all adult Catholics under age 40 today are Hispanic/Latino.

### **Generational replacement is changing the look and feel of Catholics in the U.S.**

Catholics today make up about 23 percent of the U.S. adult population or approximately 51 million U.S. residents age 18 and over. They are almost evenly divided between those born before Vatican II and those born since Vatican II. For our Catholic research purposes, we frequently discuss generational differences according to the following four categories:

***Pre-Vatican II (World War II and Silent), born in 1942 or before, age 66 and over in 2008.*** Making up just 17 percent of adult Catholics today, these Catholics were born during a period of hardship, economic uncertainty, and overt anti-Catholic discrimination. They came of age before the Second Vatican Council. The Church was extremely formative in their lives, so much so that they cannot imagine themselves being anything but Catholic.

***Vatican II (Baby Boomers), born 1943 – 1960, age 48 to 65 in 2008.*** Just over 33 percent of adult Catholics today, they were born in a time of great demographic and economic growth. They came of age during the time of the Second Vatican Council and their formative years mostly spanned that time of profound changes in the Church. Many Vatican II Catholics are also quite attached to the Church, although the Church they remember was in constant and invigorating flux.

***Post-Vatican II (Generation X, Baby Busters), born 1961 –1981, age 27 to 47 in 2008.*** Today, this generation is more than a third of adult Catholics. This is the first generation for which a large number of their parents were divorced; many were “latchkey kids,” returning from school to an empty house. They have been stereotyped as cynical and reluctant to form commitments or trust institutions, although they tend to form strong friendship bonds. This generation has no lived experience of the pre-Vatican II Church. Their experience of Church was one of disorienting flux; many are relatively ignorant of Church history and doctrine, preferring a do-it-yourself spirituality.

***Millennial (Generation Y, College and Post-College), born 1982 –1990, age 18 to 26 in 2008.*** Although they make up just 15 percent of adult Catholics today, much of this generation is still in elementary and high school. In sheer size, they are the largest generation of young people the United States has ever had. This generation has come of age primarily under the papacies of John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Because some still live with their parents, their religious practice is often closely related to that of their families of origin. Like the generation before them, they value relationships and are comfortable with diversity – in fact, they are the most ethnically diverse generation the U.S. has ever had.

Examining the ethnic diversity of the Catholic population within each of the generations demonstrates how the Catholic Church in the United States is becoming more ethnically diverse. As I described above, Post-Vatican II and Millennial Catholics now constitute half of all adult Catholics in the United States. Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II Catholics are primarily white, non-Hispanic. Post-Vatican II Catholics are more diverse – close to a quarter of them are Hispanic/Latino. Millennial Catholics are the most diverse – only half of this generation of Catholics is white, non-Hispanic. This increased diversity in racial/ethnic composition will be one of the defining features of American Catholics in future years.



### **Catholics today are more educated in general, but less educated about their faith.**

More than a quarter of adult Catholics have at least a college degree and that proportion continues to increase. Catholics are slightly more likely than the general population to have a four-year college degree or more. However, the proportion of Catholics that are educated in Catholic schools is decreasing. In 1950, about 40 percent of all Catholic school-age children were enrolled in Catholic schools and today more than half of Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II Catholics have attended a Catholic school for some part of their education.

By 2000, the percentage of all Catholic school-age children that were enrolled in Catholic schools had dropped to 20 percent. Less than half of today's Post-Vatican II and Millennial Catholics have been enrolled at a Catholic educational institution.

While increasing numbers of Catholic children participated in parish-based religious education between 1950 and 2000, the total percentage of Catholic school-age children enrolled in either Catholic schools or in parish-based religious education decreased from 62 percent to 57 percent. This means that, while Catholics today are increasingly well-educated, they are less likely than the Vatican II Generation to have received their education in a Catholic institution. The challenge for the Church, then, is to find ways to provide faith formation throughout the life course and particularly at those sacramental moments when people reconnect with the Church, such as marriages, baptisms, confirmations, and so on.

Another challenge for the Church, at least somewhat related to this, is the reality that Catholics today are less likely than the generations before them to be married in the Church or to be married to another Catholic. Older Catholics of the Pre-Vatican II Generation are especially likely to say that they were married in the Church.

Catholics are also increasingly marrying outside the faith. Today, 72 percent of married Catholics are married to another Catholic. Among married Pre-Vatican II Catholics, only about one in five has a non-Catholic spouse, while a third of married Post-Vatican II Catholics have a non-Catholic spouse.

Some of the challenges for the Church in meeting the needs of these families include creating a welcome environment for non-Catholic spouses, educating families in the faith without alienating mixed faith couples, and providing marriage strengthening resources for mixed faith couples.

### **Catholics today are more accepting of other faiths, but they maintain their Catholic identity.**

Younger Catholics are more likely than older Catholics to understand Catholicism as one faith among many others of equal validity in the religious marketplace that is America. Less than half of younger Catholics agree with the statement that “Catholicism contains a greater share of truth than other religions do.” They are less likely than older generations to agree that they “cannot imagine being anything but Catholic.” Finally, younger Catholics are less likely than older Catholics to strongly agree that “it is important to me that younger generations of my family grow up as Catholics.” Nevertheless, on some core aspects of Catholic identity, Catholic adults across the generations exhibit more similarities than differences, while on other aspects we can see definite signs of generational difference.

For example, CARA asked Catholics to describe how important their Catholic faith is in their daily life. Overall, four in five adult Catholics, 81 percent, say their Catholic faith is at least “important” in their daily life. Catholics of all four generations are similar in their expression of the importance of the faith to them. Between about 75 and 85 percent of each generation say their Catholic faith is at least “important” in their daily life.

*Some of the challenges for the Church in meeting the needs of these families include creating a welcome environment for non-Catholic spouses, educating families in the faith without alienating mixed faith couples, and providing marriage strengthening resources for mixed faith couples.*



Millennials are just as likely as the others to say it is “important” and only slightly less likely to say it is “among the most important” or “the most important part” of their daily life.

Among some other aspects of Catholic identity, however, we can see some important differences of opinion, particularly between the oldest Catholics and the generations that follow them. For example, nearly seven in ten Pre-Vatican II Catholics “strongly agree” with the statement “I am proud to be Catholic.” About half or slightly more younger Catholics agree as strongly.

Similarly, almost six in ten Pre-Vatican II Catholics “strongly agree” that the Sacraments are essential to their faith, while only about a third or fewer younger Catholics agree as strongly. The same pattern applies to the statement “I think of myself as a practicing Catholic.” Half of Pre-Vatican II Catholics “strongly agree,” compared to a quarter to a third of younger Catholics.

### **Catholics today are less attached to a parish and less diligent in sacramental practice.**

About six in ten Catholics are registered in a parish. Among those who say they attend Mass at least a few times a year, more than a fifth say they usually attend Mass somewhere else other than the parish that is closest to their home. Approximately a third of Catholics are at Mass on any given Sunday, but younger Catholics are *less* likely than older Catholics to be regular weekly Mass attenders and *more* likely than older Catholics to agree that “you can be a good Catholic without attending Mass every Sunday.” Mass attendance has been declining steadily from a peak recorded in the late 1950s, but has been quite consistent at about 30 to 40 percent over the past couple of decades. Some were forecasting that Church dissatisfaction in response to the clergy sex abuse crisis would translate into declines in Mass attendance and in financial giving. Polls have shown that the clergy crisis has not had much of an effect on either behavior.

Other research has shown that the Catholics who are attending Mass today, compared to Mass attenders in the 1950s, are also more likely to be participating in the Sacrament, rather than just observing it. In the 1950s, when between 60 and 75 percent of Catholics said they attended Mass, only about four in ten received the Eucharist at Mass. Today, seven in ten Mass attenders report they “usually” or “always” receive the Eucharist at Mass.



Breaking Mass attendance into generational groupings shows an interesting lifestyle pattern. Catholics of the Pre-Vatican II Generation are much more likely than younger generations to attend Mass weekly or more. Close to half of Pre-Vatican II Generation Catholics say they attend Mass at least weekly. About a quarter of Vatican II Generation Catholics say they attend weekly or more, and four out of ten of them attend at least monthly. They are likely to attend more frequently as they get older, but are unlikely to reach the levels of weekly attendance of the generation before them. About one in six Post-Vatican II and Millennial Catholics attend weekly or more. Similar to Vatican II Catholics, about four in ten attend at least monthly. Again, their attendance is likely to increase somewhat as they age, but it is not likely to reach the levels of weekly attendance of Pre-Vatican II Catholics.

Half of all adult self-identified adult Catholics are members of the Post-Vatican II and Millennial Generations. These Catholics have less of an institutional commitment than the generations before them. That does not make them less Catholic but it does mean that they are less likely to be attending Mass out of habit, social pressure, or fear. They still have the “Catholic glue” that keeps them identifying themselves as Catholic, but their attachment to the Church is different than it was for the generations before them.

Among adult Catholics who say they have missed Mass at least once in the last six months, the most common reason they cite for missing Sunday Mass is that they do not believe that missing Mass is a sin. Overall, 57 percent say that reason explains “at least somewhat” why they missed Mass. When we compare those who attend Mass regularly with those who attend only a few times a year or less, we see some interesting or telling differences. Those who are not regular Mass-goers are much more likely to say the reason they miss Mass is because they do not believe missing Mass is a sin or they are not a very religious person. On the other hand, those who attend regularly (at least once a month or more) are more likely to cite a busy schedule, family responsibilities, or health problems or a disability as the explanation for their absence.

### **Catholics today are becoming more discriminating in their beliefs.**

Younger Catholics – those who came of age after Vatican II – differ significantly from the generations that precede them on several attitudes about the faith. This is not a new development, but as these generations gradually replace the generations before them, their attitudes will tend to become the norm. Post-Vatican II Catholics (born after 1960) do *not* differ significantly from their elders in their attitude toward helping the poor or in their belief in Jesus’ resurrection, belief in Mary the Mother of God, or in the importance of the Sacraments.

They do differ significantly, however, in the importance they place on the teaching authority of the Vatican, teachings that oppose abortion, and a celibate male clergy. Younger Catholics are less likely than older Catholics to say that any of these is a very important aspect of being Catholic to them.

Because we are in the season of Lent, I looked at some generational comparisons relating to Lenten practices, just to give you a taste of what we see emerging in the research. Millennials, for example,


are more likely than either Post-Vatican II or Vatican II Catholics to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday (50 percent compared to 40 percent). They are just like the other generations in giving up meat for Lent, but they are more likely than their older generations to say that they also give up something else during Lent. In a similar vein, Millennials are just as likely as Pre-Vatican II Catholics to report that they have a statue or picture of Mary in their home; more likely than the two generations before them to say this. They are just as likely as Post-Vatican II and Vatican II Catholics to say they wear a crucifix or cross.

### **Catholics today are more supportive of increased lay leadership.**

Probably the most obvious change that is affecting Young Adult Catholics is the shift in parish leadership as the numbers of priests and sisters continue to decline. If we focus in just on the time of John Paul II, U.S. Catholic population increased by 29 percent, while the total number of priests decreased by 28 percent. Thus, at the beginning of John Paul’s pontificate there were 849 Catholics for every priest and a little more than 2,500 Catholics per parish. By his death, there were more than 1,500 Catholics per priest and well over 3,000 Catholics per parish. Each year for at least the last 15 years, the number of new priests being ordained is only about a third as many as are needed to compensate for the numbers who are dying, retiring, or leaving active ministry. The U.S. now has more than 3,500 parishes that have no resident priest pastor and more than 500 of those parishes are entrusted to someone other than a priest. At the same time, the number of women religious is declining by about 3 percent per year and their median age is now in the mid-70s. By contrast, there are now more than 16,000 permanent deacons ministering in the United States and well over 30,000 lay ecclesial ministers serving in parishes. These numbers will continue to grow as younger Catholics increasingly see lay leadership as a normal outgrowth of their baptismal call.

In general, American Catholics would like to have more input in parish decisions that affect them directly. Nine in ten agree that laity should have the right to participate in deciding how parish income should be spent, eight in ten say they should have the right to participate in deciding about parish closings, and seven in ten think laity should have the right to participate in selecting the priests for their parish. This trend is likely to continue as U.S. Catholics become increasingly well educated and take on more responsibilities in parish life.

For these reasons and many more, based on the emerging patterns of faith and practice that we see in the research as well as the living witness of concern and compassion that we see in the actions of Young Adult Catholics today, I firmly believe there is a reason for hope. Or, as it is written in Jeremiah 29, verse 11: For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for your woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope.

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### *At the Name of Jesus*

Dr. Cynthia Caporella, Director of Choral and Liturgical Music at John Carroll University directs the combined choirs of the Schola Cantorum of JCU, Borromeo Seminary, and St. Mary's Seminary on Saturday, April 4, 2009.

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