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David Schindler: Hero

Michael Sean Winters | Jun. 28, 2013 Distinctly Catholic

There are not many books that have literally changed my life, but one of them is "Heart of the World, Center of the Church: Ecclesiology, Liberalism, and Liberation" by Professor David Schindler of the John Paul II Institute for the Study of Marriage and the Family. En route to a meeting with Professor Schindler this week, it occurred to me that all the things I had to write about this week, from the Fortnight for Freedom, the Voting Rights Act, same-sex marriage, beautiful churches, the reduction of religion to ethics -- all these issues were viewed differently by me because of my engagement with Schindler's text. It also occurred to me that I have never been able to share my review of that book, which was published in *The New Republic* on Aug. 30, 1999, because a computer glitch evidently erased much of the digital archives for that period of time. So I decided to transcribe that review and share it with my readers here at Distinctly Catholic.

BALTHASAR'S FEAST,*The New Republic*, Aug. 30, 1999

To the extent that the Catholic Church presents an intellectual face to American culture, it usually wears a neo-conservative smirk. Richard John Neuhaus, Michael Novak and George Weigel are probably the three best-known Catholic intellectuals in America. All three were singed by the revolutionary temperament of the 1960s, and all three have since sought to "restore" the values that they believe made America great. They are morally serious figures; and few would argue that the moral condition of a democracy is an insignificant matter. The writings of the Catholic neo-conservatives have aimed at posing the question whether a people can be self-governing if the citizens themselves (to say nothing of their political leaders) have no sense of moral self-governance. At a time when parts of urban America often appear as a photographic negative of what we mean by civilization, and the airwaves are dripping with quasi-pornographic accounts of the President's adventures, this is an especially urgent question.

It is also not a new question. The Founders were deeply concerned with preventing liberty from descending into license. But they were writing at a time when most people were deeply moralistic, in a society in which there were fewer competing moralities. In twentieth-century America, there is a free market in moralities; but this is not the sort of free market that conservatives and neo-conservatives admire most. And so the neo-conservatives have tried to lay the groundwork for a shared moral discourse, an ethical vocabulary inspired by religious values but one which is fundamentally non-sectarian, appealing to human reason. Their candidate for this shared moral discourse is the natural law, defined by Weigel as "the claim that?there is a moral logic built into the world and into us: a logic that reasonable men and women can grasp by disciplined reflection on the dynamics of human action." This natural law, Weigel asserts, respects the pluralism of modern society, while providing sufficient rigor to define deviancy and to promote the common good.

While natural law theory has been the dominant source of all Catholic social ethics, its secular American pedigree is equally unimpeachable. The Declaration of Independence makes its appeal to "the law of nature and of nature's God." In his farewell address, George Washington famously said: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who would labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest

props of the duties of men and citizens."

It is a fair question whether Jesus of Nazareth intended his teachings to be reduced to an ideology of Americanism, but religion must take a stance toward the world. This stance must be theologically informed and, whatever its character, it will have political consequences. The great experiment of liberalism overturned the alliance of Throne and Altar, yet the disposition to unite them anew burns with Metternich-like ferocity in the neo-conservative breast. The throne of their desire happens to be a democratic polity and a capitalist economy; but theologically speaking, a state is a state, a throne is a throne, worldly power is worldly power. The neo-conservative Catholics seem not to understand the distinction between engagement with the world and complicity with the world. For this reason, they have lost the great advantage that faith confers upon the faithful in any society: a genuinely critical standpoint.

Michael Novak is the most extreme of the neo-cons in his sacralization of "democratic capitalism." He may fancy himself a Thomist, but one has difficulty imagining Aquinas penning an essay entitled, "A Theology of the Corporation," as Novak did in 1982. In this small masterpiece of agitprop, we find this:

For many years, one of my favorite texts in Scripture has been Isaiah 53:2-3: "He hath no form or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; we was despised and we esteemed him not." I would like to apply these words to the modern business corporation, a much despised incarnation of God's presence in this world.

This gospel of success is beyond strident. It is silly and it is blasphemous: a rare, and most unhappy, combination.

George Weigel's recent book, *Soul of the World*, is more nuanced, but it is not more satisfying. He begins his reflections with the scriptural passage about rendering unto Caesar. By differentiating between Caesar and God, Christianity desacralized politics, which has the additional advantage for the Church of not messing its hands with strictly secular affairs. For Weigel, "the Church's commitment to a God beyond history helps make pluralism possible in history. And pluralism is a condition for the possibility of civil society, the tensile strength of which is a barrier to the temptation of all states to enlarge the scope of their power." I am not sure what he means by "a God beyond history." It is true that the American Founding was able to portray itself as a religious event because it occurred in the brief heyday of Deism, for which God really does leave the world alone. But there are no more Deists. American believers all believe in an interfering God of one kind or another. Certainly, the God of the Catholics is nothing like the God of the Deists.

Weigel is not troubled by the tension between the values-multiplicity of a pluralist ideal and the unifying and even leveling effect of a single moral standard for a whole society. He simply believes that natural law allows a polity to argue reasonably to the common good, and to pursue it. This line of thought echoes the writings of John Courtney Murray, S.J., who argued successfully at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) that the Church should embrace the separation of Church and State. His opponents at that time were the European intregralists, who argued that the Church should be united to the State whenever Catholics has a majority, and be given full toleration whenever they were in the minority. This integralist position was founded on the doctrinal claim that "error has nor rights." But Murray argued that rights inhere in persons, not propositions, and that the American model of Church-State separation was beneficial to the Church, permitting it the freedom to carry out its mission without the encumbrances and the intrusions of the state. Murray accepted that the state had a certain autonomous jurisdictional sphere into which the Church should not intrude, and vice-versa.

Murray believed, in short, in theological liberalism. Now, liberalism considered theologically requires an ontological distinction between nature and grace. The natural order can be examined by reason, and the supernatural order is the realm of faith. The role of grace is to perfect the natural attributes of mankind, to bring them to fulfillment. This dualistic distinction has been a staple of Catholic theology for centuries, and it has its

obvious uses in the liberal context. It permitted Murray to affirm the goodness of the natural apart from grace, and it provided a point of contact with those who do not share Catholic beliefs about grace. Murray remarked that 'the dualism of mankind's two hierarchically ordered forms of social life has been Christianity's cardinal contribution to the Western political tradition." This dualism usefully served to undermine Catholic integralism at Vatican II, and it is the theological presupposition of the neo-conservative position today. It furnishes them with the warrant for a headlong rush into the world.

You would not know from their work that the historical calling of the Catholic Church has been to block such a rush, to act as a barricade in the path of all purely social and political definitions of the soul and the religious community. There is a great obstacle standing in the way of the "theology of the corporation," and it is Rome.

II.

There is something else you would not know from the neo-conservative account of contemporary Catholicism. It is that there is a revolution afoot in Catholic theology, and the neo-conservatives are getting singed again. This revolution has nothing to do with condoms, or the ordination of women, or abortion. It has to do with this obscure issue of the relationship between grace and nature. Many theologians have been involved in this great intellectual movement, but none has had the profound effect of the late Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar.

Balthasar was born in Lucerne on August 12, 1905. After finishing his doctoral studies in German literature, he joined the Jesuits and was sent to study in Lyons, where he came under the influence of Henri de Lubac and *ressourcement* theology. This theology aimed to get past the neo-scholastic Thomism then in vogue by "returning to the sources," the writings of the Fathers of the Church, those early Christian thinkers from the first five centuries of the Church's history whose writings have a semi-canonical status within Catholicism.

These early Christian writers did not argue about moral niceties. There were no dry discourses on natural law. There was, instead, great awe at the mystery of the supernatural claims put forth by Jesus, and a rich vocabulary of images and metaphors for understanding those claims. In the writings of the Fathers, the newness of Christianity has not yet been lost: it was fresh, shocking; it challenged traditional philosophical understandings about God and the good. They believed that history was radically altered by, and tending toward a final resolution in, this person of Jesus.

The Fathers of the Church argued about the animating beliefs of Christianity ? the Trinity; the nature of Christ; the role of the Virgin Mary. And the *ressourcement* theologians of the 1950s understood that, while these dogmas were not longer in doubt, they also were no longer in focus. Catholic theology had become a congeries of arcane, designed to provide a ready answer to any and every conceivable human problem; a kind of applied Catholicism, as if the application to the world were the heart of the matter. For Balthasar and his colleagues, however, Christianity is not a moral code organized around natural law; it is a stupendous claim about the supernatural.

In the 1940s, while serving as a student chaplain at Basel, Balthasar became the spiritual director of a recently converted medical doctor named Adrienne von Speyr. Her mystical visions, and her relationship with Balthasar, caused something of a stir, and his Jesuit superiors refused to let him continue working with her newly founded women's community. Believing that he was called by God to collaborate with Speyr, Balthasat left the Jesuits. He had no real home, no steady income, and the suspicious local bishop wanted nothing to do with him. He edited Speyr's writings, and worked on his own treatises, which ranged from essays on the Greek Father and translations of the French poet Paul Claudel to an essay on the farewell trio in *The Magic Flute*. This last piece, which appeared in 1943, was perhaps the most telling, for throughout Balthasar's more mature work, his concern with beauty as an attribute of Being would dominate his theology. It has been said that he never forgave Kierkegaard for condemning *Don Giovanni* and, as if in retaliation, he devoted himself to the revival of a

theological aesthetic.

Balthasar's interest in beauty was rooted in his reading of the early Church Fathers. For him, as for them, man is the *Imago Dei,* not merely owing to his slef-consciousness and rational faculties, but owing also to his ability to appreciate unity, and to enjoy beauty, and to love. Balthasar argued that the human person comes to self-consciousness not in the moment of rational self-expression, but when the smile of the mother welcomes the child into being. He believed that the *Imago Dei* is most obvious in man when man is in love.

For Balthasar, love is not a cheap sentimental word, appropriate for burlap banners in the sanctuary; it is a dogmatic claim about the nature of the Godhead, and a first principle of what used to be called Christian anthropology. Indeed, for Balthasar, the central tenet of Christian faith ? belief in a Trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit ? is an affirmation that at the heart of reality is not the Platonic One, and not the Aristotelian Unmoved Mover, but a communion of persons in such intimate love that they are one at the same time as they are three. When the God of Love chose to reveal himself definitively, he took the form of Jesus; and so Jesus is the very form of the beautiful. Against Luther, who argued that the crucifixion of Jesus was a contradiction of all that was rational and beautiful and therefore must be accepted in simple faith, Balthasar argues that in the crucifixion we see the depths of God's love, willing even to suffer in order to be true to his covenant with his people. Balthasar asks if suffering is not always the face of love amid the contradiction of sin. Can those who love ever avoid suffering?

It is one of Balthasar's most endearing qualities that for one so erudite, he valued erudition very little when compared to love. (He made much of the fact that Beatrice precedes Dante into Paradise.) No philosophical scheme will reduce the enigma of love, and therefore no philosophical scheme can exhaust the enigma of man. And this stricture applies to ecclesiastical programs and Church authority as well. In Balthasar's reading of the Gospels, John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, is every bit as important as Peter, the disciple to whom Jesus entrusted authority in the Church. Balthasar famously finished his retreats with a meditation on the last chapter of John's Gospel, in which a jealous peter asks what is to happen to John and Jesus upbraids him harshly. Balthasar comments:

It is not [Peter's] business to know exactly where the boundaries between the official Church and the Church of love are to be found?The last thing said to the servant Peter, the last word of the Lord in the Gospel, is the watchword for the Church and theology in every age: "What is that to you?"

Balthasar always considered the saints, those who have an intense experience of God's love, to be more important to the Church than the professors and the priests, and even the popes.

Balthasar had a certain aversion to modern concerns about empirical data and logical proof, to the whole apparatus of the Cartesian "cogito" and its multifarious worldly and utilitarian progeny. He wrote that the Church's "most essential forces ? prayer, suffering, faithful obedience, readiness (perhaps unexploited), humility ? elude all statistical analysis." He was an outspoken foe of Opus Dei precisely because of their bald attempts to gain influence within the power structures of the world. Power and love, for Balthasar, are always and essentially at odds.

In Balthasar's construction of the vocation of Christianity, then, the dualism of grace and nature tha grounds the theology of American neo-conservatism would appear to be utterly misguided. Whatever the philosophical value of natural law theories, they are not an adequate foundation for godliness, even for an engaged godliness. Balthasar studiously avoided natural law reasoning in his essays. "For either the character of the Christian revelation is seen and grasped in its entirety as the glorification of absolute love by itself, or it is not perceived at all." On no page of his many volumes will you find the moral calculation, the social and political and economic sophistication, that dominates the writings of the Catholic neo-conservatives. There is, instead, a beautiful absence of complicity, a trenchant criticism of modern technological and capitalist culture:

Whenever the relationship between nature and grace is severed?then the whole of worldly being falls under the dominion of "knowledge," and the springs and forces of love immanent in the world are overpowered and finally suffocated by science, technology and cybernetics. The result is a world without women, without children, without reverence for love in poverty and humiliation ? a world in which power and te profit margin are the sole criteria, where the disinterested, the useless, the purposeless is despised, persecuted and in the end exterminated ? a world in which art itself is forced to wear the make and features of technique.

This is not an attitude of complete rejection. It is an attitude of ethical and spiritual criticism.

The Christian need not embrace the ways of the world, but he must embrace the world: this is Balthasar's "social" teaching. And because the Christian must take the person of Jesus as his form, the nature of that embrace must be one of suffering love. This is the stance of the Christian toward the world. It is a position of radicalism, not realism, and Balthasar resisted attempts, from the left or the right, to schematize the relationship between God and His creatures: "[The] program of Christian progressivism is curiously close to that of its opponent, Christian integralism?.Both, ultimately, have reduced the problem of power between God and the world, between grace and nature, to a monistic form which is easy to handle and can be managed by men." He wanted no part of such an effort, and gladly endured the criticism that his theology was relentlessly abstract and its consequences insufficiently thought through. When asked, toward the end of his life, to contribute an essay encapsulating his work, he outlined only the questions that he had posed in those works. In 1988, Pope John Paul II decided to honor Balthasar by making him a cardinal; but two days before the ceremony of investiture, while preparing to celebrate his morning Mass, Hans Urs von Balthasar fell down dead.

III.

David Schindler's book is the most important Catholic text to be published in the United States for some time, because he attempts to apply the idea of Balthasar to the social and political situation in America.

The usual view of contemporary Catholic theology sees two camps" the liberals who succeeded in opening the Church to the world at Vatican II and who have been in decline in the era of John Paul II, and the conservatives who think the Church went too far in the 1960s to accommodate the world, and support what they see as John Paul's restorationist program. Schindler argues for (if you'll pardon the expression) a third way. In his analysis, the liberals want more accommodation with the world and conservatives want less accommodation with the world, but they are still arguing about the rules of engagement. And both fail to appreciate the radicalness of the scriptural claim that "in [Jesus] everything in heaven and on earth was created."

For Schindler, the Christian must always consider the claims of faith first, and those claims extend to the entirety of his or her life. Classical liberalism claims that in the realms of the ontological and the sectarian, the polity has no preference: a Christian is free to pursue his faith and any citizen can make whatever truth claims about the universe that he wishes. To use Murray's distinction, the Bill of Rights are not "articles of faith" but "articles of peace." But, Schindler asks, are there not truth claims, religious truth claims, already implicit in this putatively "neutral" state?

Specifically, Schindler argues that Thomistic dualism is the *sine qua non* of liberal political regimes and, therefore, the neutrality of the liberal state is a sham. Murray's "articles of peace" formulation assumes a logical priority for freedom before truth, and inevitably issues in a "privatization" of religion. Since the Church is prevented from approaching the world "as Church" (welcome, but please leave your dogma at the door!) it is reduced to the role of an ethical authority. This role, in turn, shapes the Church's self-understanding so that what results is not only the secularization of society that the neo-conservatives decry, but also the secularization of religion itself. Being "Christian" is reduced to being kind.

On Schindler's reading, Novak and Weigel and the party of Murray start with the world and like what they see and argue backwards. They are trying to baptize liberalism. But liberalism already possesses a philosophy of man, and it is proudly at odds with the radically Christ-centered view of man propounded by Balthasar. Schindler denies the formal priority for liberty before truth that is at the heart of liberalism: he is writing as a Catholic. Weigel has described the role of Christians in the world as "resident aliens"; but for Schindler, liberalism is alienating for the Christian, not the world. He does not elide the difference between Christianity and the liberalism of the modern world; he cherishes it for its clarifying effect.

One wonders what a Schindler-inspired polity would look like. No one wants a return to the confessional state, but that would seem to be the natural outcome of Schindler's proposals. He fails to appreciate the varieties of liberalism: he may object to the priority of negative freedom in liberal though, but he takes no note of the precious complicating fact that liberal thinks such as Kant favored a positive conception of freedom. What is most troubling, though, is Schindler's inalertness to history: to recognize that regimes built upon negative freedom have entailed less tyranny than any other regimes is a powerful argument in their favor, and one which Schindler does not engage. The absence of ontology has sometimes been a moral and political blessing.

The economic corollary of political liberalism is, of course, the marketplace of capitalism. Schindler attacks capitalism on similar philosophical grounds: "Novak's position rigs the game: all the while it claims to be creating space or a market for competing moral visions, it is in fact, simultaneously, pouring the Scottish Enlightenment in this putatively 'empty' space or 'free' market." It is refreshing to read someone, anyone, for whom the triumph of market capitalism is not an eschaton, a climax of history, a salvific event.

For Schindler, the relationship between capitalism and Christianity is not at all ambiguous. They are, quite simply, incompatible. The neo-conservatives acknowledge that self-interest is the engine of capitalism, and that self-interest is rooted in sinfulness, but they argue that it can be wiggled into a virtue out of necessity: self-interest can be socially creative, and thus promote the common good. Schindler attacks such consequentialism at its root: "The question rather is twofold: a) whether we recognize that a selfishness become mutual is not yet mutual generosity; and b) whether we recognize that our primary 'exigence' or dynamic remains for the latter, however much we fail to realize it?A mutual selfishness which produces material wealth will, by virtue of its intrinsic dynamic, create a spiritual poverty which is exactly coincident with the production of material wealth."

Schindler takes the neo-conservative defense of self-interest in the name of 'realism" to be the kind of relationship that is corrupting for the Church, and evidence of an unwillingness to accept the world as created: "given the ever-present reality and weight of sin ? then would not Christians be better off aiming lower: say, toward some ethic that would be accessible in principle to all 'reasonable' person, irrespective of?their religious

and spiritual lives? In short, would not an ethic that held less demand for conversion have a greater chance for widespread success? The answer to these questions is contained in the words of Balthasar: namely, that success is not a name of God, and therefore is not a Gospel category." The American neo-conservatives may decry the slippery slopes of secular humanism and ethical relativism, but Schindler argues they are themselves well down the slope. Apologizing for the "social creativity" of capitalist self-interest is not a Christian project.

One wonders what the neo-conservatives thought of Pope John Paul II's statement *Ecclesia in America*, issued during his recent trip to Mexico and the United States. The text was an outgrowth of a synod of bishops from North America and South America held in Rome in late 1997. The text states, for example, that "if globalization is ruled merely by laws of the market applied to suit the powerful, the consequences cannot but be negative." Father Neuhaus, who was an official observer at the synod, surely did not pen that line, and his friends at the Wall Street Journal surely did not like this one: "On a continent marked by competition and aggressiveness, unbridled consumerism and corruption, lay people are called to embody deeply evangelical values such as mercy, forgiveness, honesty, transparency of heart and patience." The Pope has a particular avenue in mind for the expression of evangelical forgiveness; he called for the wholesale writing-off of the foreign debt owed by poor nations. In the Church's analysis of economics, in sum, Schindler and Co. have decisively won the battle against the neo-conservative apologists for capitalism.

Perhaps the weakest part of Schindler's volume is his treatment of gender. He sets in opposition two gender-derived poles of analogy: the "masculine-active" and the "feminine-receptive." The Creator is essentially masculine-active and Creation is essentially feminine-receptive. Christ is feminine-receptive in relation to the Father, but masculine-active in relation to the Church, hence the prominence given to the scriptural metaphor of the Bridegroom (Christ) and the Bride (the Church). Needless to say, the consequences of these crude and hoary categories are unpleasant. Since Christ is masculine-active toward the Church, which is feminine-receptive, the priest who is the image of Christ as Mass must be biologically male. If the priest must "image" Christ as "masculine-active" to the congregation, how can male congregants possibly "image" the "feminine-receptive" role that is ontologically theirs? In real life, of course, "masculine" and "active" are no longer so closely intertwined. One has the suspicion that this entire section was rigged for the purpose of defending the all-male priesthood. The Church and its theologians wrestle with gender issues in the most awkward of ways. This awkwardness has many roots, not all of them intellectual: the current generation of Church elders was trained in seminaries at which wooden paddles for tucking in one's shirt were distributed to the students, lest they inopportunely touch themselves.

So Schindler's book has its moments of coarseness; but it introduces Balthasar to an American audience, and do its significance is undeniable. Moreover, Schindler explicitly wishes to preserve modernity's achievements ? the alleviation of poverty, the emancipation of peoples, and the restriction of coercion against conscience ? even wile he is harshly critical of much of the Enlightenment anthropology that provided their philosophical underpinning. Anyone concerned about preserving those achievements should be happy to find an ally, even one whose perspectives are unfamiliar and unshared.

But Schindler and his fellow Balthasarians must stop chastising neo-conservatives and begin speaking with actual liberals. (The neo-conservatives ardently praise freedom, but they are too busy telling people how to live their lives to take them at their word.) Certain Balthasarians are realizing this. The Catholic lay movement *Communione e Liberazione* is trying to start just such a dialogue with liberalism, and it is no coincidence that their founder, Luigi Guissani, was heavily influenced by Balthasar. Guissani's book, *The Religious Sense*, which was recently published in English, seeks to advance the same Balthasarian ideal, though it is aimed at a less philosophically inclined audience. At a recent gathering *of Communione e Liberazione*, somebody approvingly quoted Isaiah Berlin on negative freedom. It is not so long ago that such a thing was unthinkable.

Schindler's book is not easy to read; his prose is technical and his subject matter is abstruse. But it is also a joy

to read. He seems less concerned with convincing you of the utility of his worldview than with introducing you to his God and to his Church. And Schindler is not only bringing the Balthasarian news. He also claims to be authentically interpreting the writings of Pope John Paul II and the decrees of Vatican II. The central passage for Schindler is paragraph 22 of the document *Gaudium et Spes*: "The truth is that only in the mystery of the Incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light?.Christ the new Adam, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, fully reveals man to himself and brings to light his most high calling." John Paul II has cited this text in virtually all of his major writings, and it was the only conciliar text cited many times in his very first encyclical letter, *Redemptor Hominis*, in 1979. And similar Balthasarian texts have been appearing in other Vatican documents.

The personnel appointments of the Church also reflect the influence of the Balthasarians. The new Cardinal-Archbishop of Chicago, Francis George, published a book in 1990 that is steeped in Balthasar's theology. The President of the John Paul II Institutes for Study of Marriage and the Family is Bishop Angelo Scola, a fellow editor with Schindler of the Balthasarian journal *Communio*. Scola was also named two years ago as rector of the Lateran University in Rome, and served as the Vatican's point man for a conference on the role of women in the Church. And one of Balthasar's cofounders of *Communio* in 1971 was Joseph Ratzinger, now the Cardinal Prefect of the Vatican's doctrinal office. These writings and these appointments will remain after John Paul II is gone.

It is true that the Balthasarian moral vision is difficult to sketch. The Balthasarians tend not to focus on moral issues precisely because they are wary of reducing religion to morality. What is clear is that a Balthasarian moral scheme would be at once more radical and more reticent than any dispensation of natural law. Schindler reminds Christians that they are called to conversion, and not only to kindness, and that conversion is a lifelong struggle. Natural law inevitably issues in a practical, act-centered morality that invites a kind of spiritual minimalism. The Balthasarian vision is more psychologically astute. It recognizes that even the best of intentions are not unstained by egoism, that sine is a part of the soul

Listening to the neo-conservatives, one has the sneaking suspicion that they think that God has finished saying whatever God wants to say, and that they have mastered all the riddles of revelation, and the only challenge that remains in the challenge of politics. It is the Balthasarians, by contrast, who remind one of Chesterton's claim that Catholicism is "not a tradition; it is a new and dangerous thing." In an America in which Christianity is reduced to the voting cards distributed by the Christian coalition and to the slogans of New Age peddlers of an idiotic happiness, Catholicism could do worse.

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