

The Sirico Brief

[All non-active hyperlinks have been removed and the full articles appended in order of mention]

Introduction

On February 7, 2007, an Open Letter titled “On the Suppression of St. Philip Neri House, Kalamazoo, Michigan” written by Catholic writer, Randy Engel, author of *The Rite of Sodomy*, was sent to Franc Cardinal Rodé, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Rome.

The Open Letter, reprinted below in full, requests that Cardinal Rodé appoint a formal board of inquiry, independent of the Oratorian Confederation, to examine the charges brought against St. Philip Neri House, an Oratory in formation, and its religious superior, Father Robert A. Sirico.

The Open Letter was first posted by Renew America columnist, Matt C. Abbott, (www.renewamerica.us/columns/abbott) on February 13, 2007, and was quickly picked up by other Catholic and religious news services.

Response to the Open Letter, both pro and con, was immediate.

Support for a Vatican investigation of Sirico and St. Philip Neri House came largely from traditional Catholic circles.

Opposition to the Open Letter came almost exclusively from the Acton Institute, based in Grand Rapids, Mich., co-founded by Sirico in 1990. Acton Institute is a quasi-Libertarian economic/political organization whose primary purpose is to influence government policy using a thin veil of religion for credibility.

On February 14, 2007, one day after the Open Letter was made public, John N. Couretas, head of public relations for the multi-million dollar Acton Institute, sent Abbott an e-mail asking him to immediately remove the Open Letter from his Web site.

Couretas claimed that the Engel letter contains “substantial falsehoods, was written by a person who did not allow Fr. Robert or the Acton Institute to respond to her allegations, and contains not a single person on the record backing up her claims.”

Couretas did not identify the exact nature of the alleged “substantial falsehoods,” nor did he explain why the Acton Institute, a non-Catholic entrepreneurial enterprise should be entitled to an opinion on a purely religious issue – the suppression of St. Philip Neri House and the removal of Father Sirico as its religious superior by a Vatican Congregation.

In the meantime, Abbott received additional pressure to abort the Engel article from priest-friends of Sirico and other associates connected with the Acton Institute.

After discussing the matter with Engel, Abbott withdrew the Open Letter, and the other websites followed suit.

Subject closed?

Not quite!

Actually, the debate on Father Sirico and St. Philip Neri House is just heating up.

The Sirico Brief contains documentation in support of the charges made against Father Robert Sirico and St. Philip Neri House in the Engel Open Letter of February 7, 2004. A copy of the brief along with pertinent attachments has been forwarded to the Congregation for Religious.

Original Open Letter

An Open Letter to Franc Cardinal Rodé, Prefect

**Sacred Congregation for Institutes of
Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life**

“On the Suppression of St. Philip Neri House, Kalamazoo, Michigan”

7 February 2007

Franc Cardinal Rodé, Prefect
Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and
Societies of Apostolic Life
Piazza Pio XII, 3
00193, Rome, Vatican City State

Your Eminence,

The purview of the Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life embraces all matters concerning orders and religious congregations, secular institutes, and societies of apostolic life including associations of the faithful erected with the intention of becoming institutes of consecrated life or societies of apostolic life.

St. Philip Neri House located at 219 Woodward Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49007 in the Diocese of Kalamazoo, Michigan, is a Society of Apostolic Life, and a House of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in formation, and it therefore falls within the jurisdiction of your Congregation. The superior of St. Philip Neri House is Father Robert A. Sirico.

This “Open Letter” has as its objective, the securing of a ruling from your Congregation that will bring about the suppression of St. Philip Neri House and the removal of Father Sirico as its superior. St. Philip Neri House is currently seeking membership in the Confederation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri.

The circumstances surrounding the erection of St. Philip Neri House and the selection of Father Sirico as its superior is a matter of grave public scandal, and constitutes a clear and present danger to the spiritual welfare of Catholic men seeking vocational advice and spiritual direction from Father Sirico and other members of the community at St. Philip Neri House.

A Portrait of an Apostate, Marxist, Active Homosexual, Gay Rights Activist

Father Robert A. Sirico was born on 23 June 1951, in Brooklyn, N.Y. He is an Italian-American of Sicilian descent. He apostatized from the Catholic faith in his late teens. His time spent in the U.S. Navy after high school graduation was of short duration. Following his discharge from the Navy, he settled in Seattle where he took up with a cult called the Jesus People and joined their male commune known as Joshua’s House. By the age of 19, his brief flirtation with Marxism over, the charismatic youth embarked on a new career as an itinerant Pentecostal preacher and established his own “church” known for its “miraculous faith healings.”

In 1972, Sirico established a different kind of “church” - a satellite of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Church (UFMCC) founded by homosexual activist Rev. Troy Perry in Los Angeles in 1968. The UFMCC teaches that homosexuality is neither a sin nor a sickness and that “homosexual relationships should be celebrated and affirmed.” The UFMCC has been used as a battering ram against the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant sects who oppose homosexuality.

In 1975, Rev. Sirico moved to Los Angeles and became the Executive Director of the Los Angeles Gay Community Center, one of the oldest and largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) organizations in the world. He also continued his work as a minister of the UFMCC.

On 21 April 1975, Rev. Sirico made the annals of “gay” history as a pioneer “gay rights” activist when he performed the first same-sex “marriage” in the United States of two male homosexuals with a civil marriage license at the First Unitarian Church of Denver, Colo.

One year later, on 12 April 1976, Rev. Sirico, dressed in a black clerical suit with a Roman collar made the pages of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* under the headline “‘Male Slave Mart’ Raid in L.A. Called a Mistake.”

As reported by the *Seattle P-I*, on April 10, 1976, Los Angeles policemen dressed in riot gear arrested 40 persons participating in a homosexual “slave market” held at the Mark IV Health Club in Hollywood. The bathhouse was operated by a sadomasochist cult called the Leather Fraternity. Nude “male slaves” were led on stage by an auctioneer and inspected by potential buyers. “Slaves” went for \$10-75. The undercover policeman at the auction told the press that he picked up a man for \$16 following assurances from the auctioneer that the ‘volunteer for charity’ would perform specific sex acts on him. The auction room came complete with its own dungeons and cell blocks and sadomasochist apparatus including leather harness restraints and chains.

The event was sponsored by the Los Angeles Gay Community Center headed by Rev. Sirico, who told the *P-I* reporter that the Los Angeles Police Department was “out to get” the gay community. Rev. Sirico called the event a “harmless fund-raising event” staged to raise money for the Center’s venereal disease clinic.

The UFMCC in Los Angeles has confirmed that the Rev. Robert Sirico involved in the two history-making “gay” events at the Unitarian Church in Denver in 1975 and the Mark IV Health Club in Los Angeles in 1976, is the same Father Robert Sirico, currently the superior of St. Philip Neri House in Kalamazoo, Mich.

Sirico Ordained for the Paulist Order

On 13 May 1989, after completing his novitiate with the Paulist Fathers at their House of Studies in Washington, D.C., and his scholastic training at Catholic University of America, Robert A. Sirico was ordained a priest of the Paulist Order, a Society of Apostolic Life like the Oratorians.

THIS ORDINATION SHOULD NEVER HAVE TAKEN PLACE.

On 2 February 1961, all superiors of Religious Communities, Societies without vows, and Secular Institutes received a copy of the document “Careful Selection and Training of Candidates for the States of Perfection and Sacred Orders” from the Congregation for Religious. The Congregation noted that while the Instruction was “privately circulated” its contents were “a matter of public law.” The principle subject of the discourse of the Instruction is the proper vetting and training of candidates for Sacred Orders. The Instruction was in force, but obviously not enforced by the Paulists, at the time of Sirico’s ordination.

On the matter of the selection of seminary candidates, the essence of which is the discernment of character, the tone of the 1961 Instruction is exacting, even strident Moral certitude as to the fitness of the candidate for ordination is demanded of the superior. The Instruction firmly acknowledges that chastity is the heart of religious life and the priesthood. Any candidate unable to observe ecclesiastical celibacy and practice priestly chastity, no matter what other “outstanding qualities” he possesses, is to be barred from the religious life and the priesthood.

The 1961 Instruction specifically prohibits the advancement to religious vows and ordination of habituated onanists as well “as those afflicted with evil tendencies to homosexuality or pederasty, since for them the common life and priestly ministry would constitute serious dangers.”

Even though, by the late 1980s, the Paulists were routinely ordaining known homosexuals for the priesthood, their ordination of Sirico was especially alarming given his long habituation to the vice of sodomy and his public record of homosexual activism.

Sirico Seeks Independence from the Paulists

After his ordination, Sirico was assigned to the Paulist Center in Minneapolis, Minn., and shortly thereafter transferred to the Paulist Catholic Information Center in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Unhappy with his situation, Sirico toyed with the idea of seeking exclaustation from the Paulists provided he could incardinate in the Diocese of Grand Rapids, but Bishop Robert John Rose did not want him apart from the Paulist Order. Instead, Sirico petitioned and was granted a one-year sabbatical by the Paulists.

In 1990, only a year after his ordination, Sirico underwent another career change. He became the President of the newly created Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty in Grand Rapids, an ecumenical, free-market educational think-tank funded by Michigan-based Dutch Calvinist business entrepreneurs. Sirico began to preach another gospel – that of Calvinist economic predestination and prosperity. He declared that Catholic seminarians, priests and religious are especially ignorant of fundamental economic principles and need to be educated on the benefits of free market capitalism. To date, Sirico has lectured around the world including the Vatican on the ethical dimensions of the free market economy and faith-based environmentalism as promoted by James Dobson and other prominent Christian conservative evangelical leaders.

Sirico Moves to Lansing Diocese and then Kalamazoo Diocese

Sirico moved out from under the authority of his Paulist superiors and away from the Diocese of Grand Rapids to the “gay-friendly” Diocese of Lansing under “gay-friendly” Bishop Kenneth Povish, a backer of the notorious New Ways Ministry. Sirico was assigned a rural parish by Chancellor James A. Murray while continuing to commute to his job at the Acton Institute in Grand Rapids.

In 1998, Murray was appointed Bishop of Kalamazoo. Sirico followed him to Kalamazoo.

For Sirico’s benefit, Bishop Murray immediately set up St. Philip Neri House as a *pia domus* – the first step in becoming an Oratory of St. Philip Neri and a member of the worldwide Confederation of the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri.

Despite Sirico’s homosexual background, Murray appointed Sirico the superior of St. Philip Neri House.

St. Philip Neri House currently claims four residents including three priests – enough to erect an oratory and be incorporated into the Confederation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri. The residents include Father Sirico, Father David Grondz, Father James Richardson, and Brother Basil, an associate of Father Grondz.

Fathers Grondz and Richardson were ordained by Bishop James A. Murray for the Diocese of Kalamazoo on 13 May 2006 at St. Augustine Cathedral. In addition to their assignment at St. Philip Neri House, both are also engaged in pastoral work for the diocese.

Questions of moral turpitude have arisen in connection with the seminary life of these three men, and with the close existing relationship between Grondz and Sirico, which I am unable to confirm or deny. However, as Prefect for the Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life you will be in a position to investigate seminary records and interview former oratory residents and visitors so as to render a fair verdict on these particular questions.

I have been in contact with men who have discerned at St. Philip Neri House. Their reports suggest disturbing patterns of behaviors at the House including catty, effeminate conversations; inappropriate touchings especially by Superior Sirico; the use of sexually explicit films including “gay” flicks as part of the oratory’s “Home Night” program; and violent exhibitions of [homosexual] rage by Sirico.

These reports come as no surprise to anyone with even a minimum understanding of homosexual behavior. The very nature of homosexual relationships in the religious life and societies of apostolic life precludes the existence of the oratory concept envisioned by Saint Philip Neri, the father of the Societies of Apostolic Life movement. Homosexual relationships poison the well of friendship, discipleship, and stability – the hallmarks of an Oratorian community.

Petition Put Forth to the Congregation

Based on the complaints noted above, I place the following petitions before you as Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life:

1. That you instruct the officers of the Confederation of the Oratory of St. Phil Neri, specifically, the Procurator General Very Reverend Edoardo Aldo Cerrato, C.O. from the Rome Oratory and the Delegate of the Holy See for the Oratory, Very Reverend Felix Selden, C.O. from the Vienna Oratory, to withdraw from active consideration the request of the St. Philip Neri House of Kalamazoo, Mich. for oratory status, pending an investigation of the above charges.
2. That a formal board of inquiry, independent of the Oratorian Confederation and its members, be established to examine the above charges against Father Sirico and St. Philip Neri House.
3. Upon finding these charges to be valid, that the Congregation order the dissolution and suppression of St. Philip Neri House.

As you must be well aware, the Holy Father has frequently spoken out against the very concept of homosexual “unions” and “marriages.” What do you think his reaction will be when he learns that the first “gay” minister to perform such a ceremony in the United States is now the superior of a Catholic religious order?

In a press statement of 4 March 2006, you said that Pope Benedict XVI is seeking to revitalize the life of the Church beginning with the reform of religious orders. Why not begin this reform with the Oratorians and the Paulists and other societies of apostolic life and religious orders that have been compromised by the Homosexual Collective?

One of the favorite sayings of Saint Philip Neri was “Christian joy is a gift of God flowing from a good conscience.” May you do your duty in the matter of St. Philip Neri House and Father Robert A. Sirico, and sleep with a good conscience this night.

Sincerely in Christ,

Randy Engel, author, *The Rite of Sodomy*
Box 356, Export, PA, USA 15632

Randy.Engel@riteofsodomy.com

cc. Archbishop Gianfranco Gardin, Secretary
Very Rev. Felix Selden C.O., Vienna, Apostolic Delegate
Very Rev. Edoardo Aldo Cerrato C.O., Rome, Procurator General

Action Line

13 February 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ –

According to Cardinal Franc Rodé, Prefect for the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Pope Benedict XVI has made the reform of Religious Orders and Societies of Apostolic Life a principle goal of his pontificate.

Letters, e-mails and faxes and phone calls to the Congregation in support of an investigation of St. Philip Neri House under the leadership of Fr. Robert A. Sirico are needed now! Contact:

Franc Cardinal Rodé, Prefect
Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and
Societies of Apostolic Life
Piazza Pio XII, 3
00193, Rome, Vatican City State
Phone: +39. 06. 69884121
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E-Mail: civcsva.pref@ccscrlife.va

Please give this “Open Letter” the widest circulation possible. No permission is needed to post it on your website or print it in your newsletter. Copies of this “Open letter” have already been sent out to all Oratories of St. Philip Neri throughout the world.

Let our universal battle cry be **Alto quien vive!!** Loosely translated it means: **Anyone on the battlefield who is still alive, stand up and fight!! Fight for your Faith! Don't Give Up!**

Randy Engel, author, *The Rite of Sodomy – Homosexuality and the Roman Catholic Church*
www.riteofsodomy.com ; Randy.Engel@riteofsodomy.com.

Sirico Timeline

1951 Robert A. Sirico is born on June 23, 1951 in Brooklyn, N.Y. He is an Italian-American of Sicilian descent. He has three older siblings and a number of nieces and nephews some of whom have moved to the Kalamazoo area in recent years.

His older sister and widow, Caroline Pannunzio, was born on October 25, 1938. She moved from her Florida home to Kalamazoo in 2004.

His older brother, Genaro Anthony “Tony” or “Junior” Sirico was born on July 29, 1942. He is an actor. His most prominent role to date is that of Paulie Walnuts in television series *The Sopranos*. He currently resides in Bensonhurst in the borough of Brooklyn, and has made public appearances with his brother, Robert.

Another brother, Carmine Sirico, also resides in New York.

[SIRICO Marie.doc](#)

1969 Upon graduation from high school graduation during the Vietnam War period, Sirico enters the Navy. He enlists on August 18, 1969 and is discharged six months later on January 20, 1970.

In an interview with Ray Ruppert, Religion Editor of *The Seattle Times* on January 23, 1971, Sirico claims he was discharged from the Navy because of his “clergy status.” This statement is false. According to records obtained from the Navy’s National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Mo. by writer Thomas Herron, Sirico entered the service at Ft. Hamilton in Brooklyn and attended boot camp at the Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Ill. Sirico was assigned to the aircraft carrier, the USS Kitty Hawk ported at the Bremerton, Wash. Navy Yard. He was discharged from the Naval Hospital at the Bremerton shipyard less than three months later. There is no mention of Sirico’s “clergy status.”

[Discharge 1](#)

[Discharge 2](#)

1970 Sirico settles in Seattle where he joins the Jesus People Movement, led by Linda Meissner. She would later separate from her husband and the Jesus People and joined the controversial cult known as the People of God, headed by David “Moses” Berg. Sirico chooses a different path.

The 19-year-old Sirico takes up residence at the House of Joshua, an all male religious commune in North Seattle operated by the Meissners, and begins promoting the theology and beliefs of the Jesus People.

He soon gains a reputation and a large following as a charismatic preacher promoting the Pentecostal message and experience of “baptism of the Holy Spirit.” He claims for himself the gift of tongues, the gift of interpretation of tongues, the gift of healing and the gift of miracles.

In addition to drawing support for his Truth in Healing, Inc. ministry from local Baptist and Pentecostal churches, he also attracts the attention of Catholic Charismatic and main-line Protestant churches.

[miracle 1](#)

1971 Sirico begins to draw large crowds to the Bethany United Presbyterian Church.

In his January 23, 1971 interview with Ray Ruppert, Religion Editor of *The Seattle Times*, Sirico says he was no longer a Catholic and had become an ordained Pentecostal minister.

Sirico tells Ruppert that his first religious experience occurred when he was preparing for his First Communion at the age of seven. He said it was like God and him were together and he was speaking directly to God. Sirico says that at age 11, while preparing

for his Confirmation, he first spoke in tongues. Kneeling, Sirico said, he spoke in another language before a crucifix. "That I believe to be my baptism in the Holy Spirit," he explains.

A woman named Mrs. Flourmill A. Marion, injured in a series of auto accidents in 1966 and 1969, hears Sirico preaching on KTW, attends his healing service and claims she has been cured of pain and able to walk without crutches.

Rev. Ralph Johnson, a Protestant minister, at the urging of a university student from his congregation who is impressed by Sirico's preaching, meets with Sirico and other members of the commune at the House of Joshua. Johnson brings a tape recorder and examines Sirico's claims of speaking in tongues. Sirico could not talk in tongues. Johnson asks Sirico to translate Greek using his power of "interpretation of tongues." Sirico could not do it. Johnson quizzes Sirico about his alleged cure of a young girl with a sight problem which had proven false. Sirico retorts that the girl had not remained faithful and had "lost her healing." Linda Meissner interrupts the meeting and orders Johnson out. Johnson concludes that Sirico's miraculous claims are bogus and that Sirico is using his claims to gain control and notoriety in the commune.

[Healing: A Matter of Faith 1](#)

[Healing: A Matter of Faith 2](#)

1972 Seattle's Charismatic Presbytery, an organ 70 clergy and laymen sets up the Robert Sirico Foundation to finance Sirico's healing ministry. A spokesman for the Presbytery publicly praises Sirico as "a spirit-filled young man whom God has blessed with a marvelous healing ministry." As part of the Charismatic Renewal Movement, Sirico's "Miracle healing" is drawing capacity crowds at local churches.

On Wednesday, May 10, 1972, Sirico holds a press conference and publicly announces he is a homosexual and that he intends to start a homosexual church in Seattle.

Sirico tells the press that, "The harsh stand of most churches has driven many homosexually-oriented men and women... to suicide. It has destroyed in others the dignity and self-esteem that is the foundation of a health personality and a productive career." "The gay men and women who have overcome this self-hate to live full lives have generally had to reject Christianity to do it, because Christianity is generally represented as incompatible with their nature," he says.

The Church's history of "excommunicating, scourging, or burning of 'faggots' as heretics and sinners is an arrogant perversion of the Christian law of love," says Sirico. He admits that many friends including members of his own family have disowned him. He says the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches will help bring the assurance of the love of Christ to gay people on the terms of self-acceptance that healthy people must live by. [The UFMCC teaches that homosexuality is neither a sin nor a sickness and that "homosexual relationships should be celebrated and affirmed." The UFMCC has been used as an effective battering ram against the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant sects who oppose homosexuality.]

The young affable Sirico smiles at the press and tells them he is very happy. "I'm hoping to be married to a beautiful man in Los Angeles whose work is translating for the deaf," he confesses. He also announces that as pastor of the new MCC, he will perform

“homosexual marriages.” In a later interview with the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Sirico says that “Two men in bed together... was a holy experience – to hold one another close and confess together, “Isn’t God wonderful?”

In *Gay Seattle: Stories of Exile and Belonging* (University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2003, pp. 161-163), homosexual activist and writer, Gary L. Atkins, quotes Sirico as stating, “The blessings of the Holy Spirit are being passed onto the homosexual community... My [Christian] beliefs have not changed. I have a relationship with the Lord that I never knew existed.” Atkins says that Sirico refused to repent what was not a sin and instead proclaimed he was “proud and glad that God has made me this way.”

Sirico’s public “coming out” sends shock waves through the Charismatic Presbytery whose members, including Protestant and Evangelical ministers and Catholic priests, who oppose homosexuality.

On Thursday, May 11, 1972, a delegation from the Presbytery meets with Sirico to counsel and dissuade. Sirico informs them that he was aware for most of his life that he was a homosexual, since the age of 13.

He says that he used to believe that homosexuality was a perversion and was condemned in the Bible, but recently changed his mind. Citing 1 Corinthians 6:9, Sirico says his new interpretation of this passage is that the Bible condemns “trying to change one’s sexual orientation,” that is, a person who goes against his heterosexual or homosexual nature. In his healing ministry, Sirico says, he has found it impossible to “totally deliver” a person from homosexuality and has seen some become so despairing as to commit suicide.

According to Presbytery member, Rev. Richard Denham, Pastor of Bethany Presbyterian Church, that past February, Sirico visited New Mexico and Los Angeles where he “worked over a bit of Greek in the New Testament” with persons sympathetic to a condoning of homosexuality within Christendom. Rev. Troy Perry, the founder of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Churches in Los Angeles befriended the young man and made a new convert for the MCC.

After Sirico and two homosexual companions walk out “belligerently and defiantly” from the meeting, more than 20 members of the Presbytery issue a prepared statement on Sirico’s defection. Rev. Dennis Bennett, rector of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, a principal drafter of the statement, makes it clear that the Presbytery is not taken in by Sirico or the MCC propaganda machine. He declares, “Mr. Sirico is not actually ministering to the homosexual community in starting a “gay” church, but really condoning and encouraging what Scripture and the Church clearly recognize as a serious sin.” “Ministering to the homosexual community would involve helping the homosexual be delivered and healed and to take an effective and normal place in society,” said Bennett.

Rod McDougal of the Jesus People also expresses regret that Sirico had chosen his homosexual friends over his Christian friends stating that in order to recover from this “sickness,” Sirico needs to stop surrounding himself with ones with weaknesses like his own.

All the members of the Charismatic Presbytery resign from Sirico’s Board *en masse*.

Bob Johnson, manager of the Broadway Theater where Sirico plans on holding his healing services announces that no Sirico-led service will be held at the Broadway.

Later, Sirico receives permission to hold church services at the Capitol Hill United Methodist Church in Renton Hill. Communion services are held on Sunday mornings and a 5 p.m. Mass is celebrated each Sunday by a priest.

Sirico forms a Youth Group at the MCC made up of young homosexuals, mostly males, including street hustlers. Young men from the local Gay Community Center are also hired to work at odd jobs at the church. [This pattern of surrounding himself with young males, first at the House of Joshua, now with young homosexual men at the MCC, would be repeated again and again throughout Sirico's life.]

In late June, Rev. Sirico travels to Vancouver, British Columbia to hold the first religious service in the city for 30 homosexuals. From June 30 to July 2, Vancouver hosts a Gay Pride that includes a debate between Sirico and a Protestant minister who opposes homosexuality.

On August 6, Sirico's church is formally chartered by the UFMCC and Rev. Perry preaches at the dedication service. Bodyguards are on hand to protect both Sirico and Perry. In a statement to the press, Sirico likens the MCC's struggle for "gay liberation" with the civil rights movement of the late fifties. "If I have to be the person here who says 'I ain't movin' to the back of the bus,' then so be it," he tells the press.

Perry states that his goal is to make homosexuality accepted in the church and in society. Other churches "have to recognize the fact that souls are being won to Christ," he said. The dedication service includes the ordination of seven deacons. The young church claims 80 members, mostly male homosexuals and their relatives. [When AIDS hits the States, approximately 40% of the MCC's male members will be living with AIDS or will have died of AIDS including many of its clergy.]

Plans for a New Church

Pastor to Perform Homosexual Marriages

Church Needs Bodyguards

1973 On April 23, Sirico is among a group of homosexuals picketing the Seattle Police Department. The picketers charge that Police Chief George Tielsch has a "personal vendetta" against homosexuals and that the police sexually harassed sexual minorities. When Tielsch does not grant the group a hearing, pressure is increased on him. Sirico and other homosexual activist picket Tielsch's home. When Tielsch was finally forced out of office, Sirico made his famous quip, "Who says God doesn't answer the prayers of gay people?" Sirico is joined in the picket by ex-priest homosexual William DuBay.

Fr. William H. DuBay served as a priest of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles under James Cardinal McIntyre (1948-1970). In the mid-1960s, DuBay clashed with the cardinal on the issue of clerical unionism, civil rights, and leftist economics and politics, and was suspended. He moved to Oakland, Calif., and went to work at a Synanon drug

and alcohol rehabilitation center, but he disagreed with the center's treatment of homosexual addicts. DuBay continued north to Seattle where he settled down and married socialite Mary Ellen Rochester. One year later, he "outed" himself as a homosexual and his marriage was annulled. He became a columnist for *The Advocate*, a national "gay" newspaper and joined up with fellow homosexual activists Sirico. DuBay also established a "gay-affirming" Synanon-style clinic named Stonewall that was housed in a former Carmelite monastery on Renton Hill.

In July 1973, Sirico continues his homosexual missionary activities by assisting in the establishment of a new Metropolitan Community Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. In a front-page Associated Press release in the *Lima News* of July 7, 1973, Sirico is quoted as stating that "The great oppressor of homosexuals in history has been the Church with its misinterpretation of the Word of God."

Later in the summer Sirico travels to Ottawa to energize the "Gay Liberation Movement in Canada.

In October, Rev. Sirico is arrested by the Seattle police and is incarcerated over an incident in Pioneer Square, a popular cruising area that housed a public men's room (tearoom) frequented by local homosexuals. Sirico is coming out of a local bar at 2 a.m. when he sees the police arrest two young male hustlers for sexual solicitation. When he attempts to interfere with the arrest, he was taken into custody. He joins other homosexuals in the holding tank singing "We Shall Overcome" until he is bailed out by one of his parishioners.

Cincinnati Church

1975 In February, Raymond "Dutch" Hunthausen arrives in Seattle. Under Archbishop Thomas Arthur Connolly (1951-1975) "Catholic" homosexual groups like Dignity were able to secure a foothold in the Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle, but under Archbishop Hunthausen (1975-1991) they explode into a frenzy of political activity. Under Hunthausen, Dignity masses continue at St. Joseph Parish, while religious orders in the Seattle archdiocese are heavily compromised.

In the spring of 1975, Sirico prepares to move to Southern California.

On April 21, 1975, MCC clergyman Sirico travels to Colorado where he performs the first same-sex "marriage" of two male homosexuals with a civil marriage license at the First Unitarian Church of Denver. He is assisted by Rev. Elder Freda Smith, the MCC's first woman minister. Witnesses include MCC Rev. Elder Charlie Arehart and Rev. Troy Perry's longtime assistant, Frank Zerilli.

The following day, the *Boulder Daily Camera* runs a picture of Sirico, dressed in clerics with a Roman collar and alb, preparing "communion" under both species for the "happy couple" - Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams.

According to *Camera* staff writer, Tony Stroh, Sullivan is Australian and his visa expires in July, 1975. Through his marriage to Adams, Sullivan hopes to be granted the

status of First Preferential Alien - that of a spouse. Sirico tells Stroh that the U.S. Immigration Service takes a dim view of homosexual aliens, nevertheless, the “wedding” is intended, in part, to test the immigration laws and to show that same-sex couples should have the same right to marry as heterosexual couples.

On June 11, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, in an article by Joel Connelly titled “Exceptional Church is Accepted,” announce that the Church Council of Greater Seattle approves membership of the UFMCC affiliate church. Father Hogan, a Catholic priest, and a Catholic Board member supported the MCC affiliation.

In late summer of 1975, Sirico sets up residence in Los Angeles, and accepts a job as the Executive Director of the Los Angeles Gay Community Center, one of the oldest and largest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) organizations in the world. The Los Angeles Gay (and Lesbian) Community Center was founded in 1971 by Morris Kight, a wealthy “gay” leader of the early Homosexual Movement in Los Angeles. Sirico also continues his work as a “minister” of the UFMCC.

On October 8, 1975, *The L.A. Times* prints a letter-to-the editor from Sirico congratulating the *Times* for its coverage of “gay” events. “How depressing life must be for those prime examples of homophobia, those ancient oppressors of people, who suddenly find that they themselves are the ‘queers.’Hate will never rectify the wrongs done us, but love can make the future a better place to live,” writes Sirico.

Communion

Gay Fears Deportation

Exceptional Church is Accepted

Coverage of Gays

1976 In April, 1976, Rev. Sirico makes national headlines in a controversy over a Los Angeles police raid of a male slave auction sponsored by the Los Angeles Gay Community Center.

A *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* article dated April 12, 1976 titled “‘Male Slave Mart’ Raid in L.A. Called a Mistake,” features Sirico dressed in a black clerical suit with a Roman collar.

The *P-I* reports that on Saturday night, April 10, 1976, 65 Los Angeles policemen dressed in riot gear arrest 40 persons participating in a homosexual “slave market” held at the Mark IV Health Club in Hollywood. The bathhouse is operated by a sadomasochist cult called the Leather Fraternity. Nude “male slaves” were led on stage by an auctioneer and inspected by potential buyers. “Slaves” went for \$10-75. The undercover policeman at the auction told the press that he picked up a man for \$16 following assurances from the auctioneer that the ‘volunteer for charity’ would perform specific sex acts on him. The auction room came complete with its own dungeons and cell blocks and sadomasochist apparatus including leather harness restraints and chains.

The *Pasadena Star-News* of April 12, 1976, reports that eye witnesses at the scene report acts of copulation and sodomy prior to the opening of the auction.

The event is sponsored by the Los Angeles Gay Community Center headed by Rev. Sirico, who told the *P-I* reporter that the Los Angeles Police Department was “out to get”

the gay community. Rev. Sirico called the event a “harmless fund-raising event” staged to raise money for the Center’s venereal disease clinic. He said he had bought slaves at similar auctions and had them clean his house.

Sirico networks with various radical political leaders such as Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden, but he continues to be single-minded in promoting “gay” rights

[“Gay” activists consider the Mark VI affair to be the equivalent of the 1969 Stonewall Riots as a “resistant historical moment,” and report that it gave more respect to the leather (sodomasochist) community.]

Police Raid Private Club

Male Slave Market Raid

Overkill in Raid

Charges not Pursued

1977 Sirico, now reported to have relocated in the “gay” Libertarian mecca of San Francisco, experiences a political “conversion” to Libertarianism.

Sirico reports that an unnamed friend provides him with reading materials by non-Christian libertarian economists such as Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek, and Murray Rothbard. This, he says, leads to his conversion to Libertarianism. [See Thomas J. Herron, “The Trouble with Converts,” Part I and Part II, *Culture Wars*, September 2005, Vol. 24, No. 9, and October 2005, Vol. 24, No.9, 10 for a basic guide to Libertarian economics.]

Sirico becomes a spokesman for Libertarians for Gay Rights. [The original Libertarian Party for Gay Rights started in the United Kingdom in 1945.] He also embraces a philosophy of Liberalism that includes freedom of thought, freedom of conscience and freedom of trade.

On September 26, 1977, the *Los Angeles Times* runs an article, “Libertarians Will Mount 1978 Gubernatorial Campaign,” in which Sirico is interviewed by *Times* political writer, Bud Lembke. Sirico lists five areas where Libertarians and “liberals” are in agreement: deregulation of drug manufacture, possession and use; decriminalization of prostitution and pornography; extending rights to homosexuals; and allowing mental patients to be free if they don’t break any law. Sirico emphasizes that Libertarians have views that some things, such as sadomasochism, are morally wrong, but they don’t believe government should censor them.

Three years prior to the Sirico interview, the Libertarian Party platform calls for the repeal of laws against voluntary homosexual and heterosexual behavior. It also endorses the right of same-sex partners to marry. It believes that adults have the right to private choice in consensual sexual activity and opposes any government attempt to dictate, prohibit, control, or encourage any private lifestyle, living arrangement or contractual relationship.

Libertarians for Gay Rights

1978 Sirico receives an Associates Arts (A.A.) from Los Angeles City College. In the spring of 1978 he starts his studies at the University of Southern California.

1980 Sirico attends the University of London for a semester as an exchange student.

1982 Sirico earns a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in English from the University of Southern California. [In 2005, the Acton Institute biographical page on Sirico stated that his degree was in economics, but this statement was later withdrawn. Sirico hold no advance degrees in economics.]

Sirico returns to the East Coast and shortly thereafter enters the Catholic Paulist Order novitiate, and later, the Paulist House of Studies in Washington, D.C.

[The Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle, popularly known as the Paulist Fathers, was founded in New York in 1858 by Father Isaac Hecker, a convert to Catholicism, a former Redemptorist missionary, and the “grandfather” of contemporary Catholic “Pentecostalism.” Father Hecker preached in an “ecumenical” and “nonjudgmental” contemporary idiom. Many of his novel teachings, including the primacy of religious experiences over doctrine and discipline, and the idea that the Church must accommodate her teachings and discipline to the spirit of the new age in order to attract those outside the Faith were soundly condemned by Pope Leo XIII. Given Sirico’s background as a Pentecostal Charismatic minister, it was easy to see why he would be drawn to the Paulist Order.

By 1982, the Paulist Order, like many religious orders and societies in the United States, had been heavily colonized by homosexual clerics and seminarians. That Sirico was an apostate and self-described “gay” man and a notorious “gay” activist, did not appear to be a stumbling block to his acceptance as a candidate for Holy Orders by the Paulists, despite the fact that an absolute ban of known homosexuals from consideration as candidates to the priesthood or religious life was in effect, though not enforced, by Rome.

Under the Paulist system, a candidate for Holy Orders serves one year as a postulant, two years as a seminarian, one year of internship, two more years as a seminarian, one year as a deacon, and is then ordained – a total of seven years.

Like the Oratorians, the Paulists are not a religious order, but a society of apostolic life. As such, Paulists do not take formal vows like religious order priests such as the Jesuits or Benedictines, although some members assume the evangelical counsels by some bond (vow, oath, promise) as defined in their Constitution.

The specific apostolic work of the Paulists is the conversion of non-Catholics.]

1983 Sirico completes his postulancy, and starts his seminary scholastic training at Catholic University of America (CUA) in Washington, D.C.

1984 On April 23, 1984, Sirico attends the Northwest Bible Conference held at the Glen Acres Church, 11401 10th Ave. S., Seattle, Wash. He is unaware that the pastor of the church is his old nemesis, Rev. Ralph Johnson. When Pastor Johnson spots Sirico in clerical garb, he goes to his office, pulls out his file on Sirico and confronts him publicly with the information. The incident causes quite a stir. Johnson recalls that Sirico said something like he knew this would happen one day.

1985 Sirico begins serving his internship while residing at St. Paul’s College in D.C. operated by the Paulists. He serves as a chaplain to AIDS patients at the National Institutes of health.

1986 While attending classes at CUA, Sirico meets Kris Alan Mauren, a student of economics at Johns Hopkins University and the future co-founder of the Acton Institute. The two men discover they share common ground on religion and economics. [One version of their initial meeting is that they met at a Bible study. The other version is that met at a Republican/Democratic student seminar.]

Pursuit of Truth

1987 Sirico completes his Masters of Divinity program at CUA, and in the fall of 1987 is assigned to St. Lawrence Church and Newman Center in Minneapolis, Minn. operated by the Paulists. He is put in charge of the young adults program connected to the Newman Center.

Paulists at St. Lawrence Church

1988 In March, Sirico produces and directs a musical drama, “The Women at the Tomb” for Newman Center college students. He tells news reporters that he is developing a television program for alienated Catholics.

On May 5, 1988, Sirico gives a talk at the Newman Center titled “Theologians in Search of Liberation – A Critique,” in which he says, “It is my contention that a society where free minds and free markets are respected and protected is the kind of society that best promotes progress and human dignity.”

Sirico is raised to the diaconate.

Church's Musical Drama Tells of Christ's Passion

1989 Father Sirico is ordained a priest of the Paulist Order on May 13, 1989. [It is unclear if his religious superiors requested and/or obtained the required dispensations from Rome in connection with the various canonical impediments and irregularities connected with Sirico's past life as a notorious apostate and homosexual activist. This would be a matter for the Vatican to investigate.]

The newly ordained Fr. Robert A. Sirico, c.s.p., is initially assigned to the Paulist Center in Minneapolis, but shortly, thereafter, is transferred to the Paulist Catholic Information Center (CIC) in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Sirico and another Paulist priest, Fr. James Fisher, present a talk at the CIC, “Who Was Ayn Rand?” Both priests are admirers of Ms. Rand, atheist and author of *Atlas Shrugged* and prophetess of the philosophy of Objectivism and “the virtue of selfishness,” and the “godmother” of the Libertarian Party. [A tape of the Sirico-Fisher lecture confirms that that Sirico's return to the Catholic Church and ordination to the priesthood did not substantially alter the Libertarian ideals he acquired during the heyday of his “gay” Libertarian Party activism in San Francisco, albeit, with a Christian veneer.]

Sirico says he is experiencing a growing concern over the lack of training religious studies students receive in fundamental economic principles, leaving them poorly equipped to understand and address today's social problems.

In his own words, in a dinner talk given on June 22, 2006 in San Francisco marking the 25th Anniversary of the Atlas Economic Research Foundation, Sirico notes: “I remember 17 or so years ago, walking through the cobblestone streets of Guatemala, as a priest speaking to Alex Chaufen and expressing to him my frustration of tendency to socialism within religious circles. The keen, riveting insight that he gave me in a few words: He said “institutionalize yourself, recreate the process that introduced you to liberty.” So, in a real way since the very inception of the Acton Institute, we have followed that advice that Alex, then John Blundell, and of course, Leonard Liggio, who is my ‘godfather of liberty’ as it were, have helped us to promote. That’s why it is a personal honor and privilege to be with you tonight to celebrate this worthy event....Lord Acton said that ‘Liberty is the delicate fruit of mature civilizations.’ My friends, we have to protect, and promote, and create the environment in which this delicate fruit can flourish for the next generation. God Bless You!”

- Alex is Alejandro Chaufen, the Argentinean-born, CEO and President of the Atlas Foundation. He was one of the original Board Members of the Acton Institute. Chaufen wrote *Christians for Freedom: Late Scholastic Economics* which was published in 1986 by Ignatius Press in San Francisco. According to Thomas Herron, it purports to show that the, mainly Spanish, late scholastic theologians of the so-called Salamanca School (16th-17th century) writings on moral theology can be interpreted as endorsing free market economics. It contains an introduction by another Catholic writer who had written an endorsement of *laissez-faire* economics a few years before, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, Michael Novak. Novak is a former leftist, who had dissented on Church sexual teachings, and was born again as a neocon.
- John Blundell, the British economist and Director-General of the Institute of Economic Affairs, served as President of Atlas from 1987 to 1990.
- Leonard P. Liggio, served as a Trustee of the Acton Institute from 1990 to 1999, and is currently on its Advisory Board. He is the Executive Vice-President of Atlas; President of the Mont Pelerin Society; a visiting professor of Law at the Universidad Francisco Marroquín (Francisco Marroquín University) in Guatemala City; and a libertarian Professor of Law at George Mason University. Liggio played a major role in the development of libertarian capitalism in the United States by promoting an alliance between Libertarian “Old Right” and the “New Left” in the mid-1960s.

For Sirico, the Atlas Economic Research Foundation proves to be a mother load of opportunity - an open door to the corridors of power within the vast Atlas global network of “market oriented” think tanks.

In 1990, Sirico is invited to join the elite Mont Pelerin Society. In May of 2001, Universidad Francisco Marroquín awards him an honorary doctorate in Social Sciences. He is invited to serve on the Civic Institute in Prague, which is affiliated with Atlas. In 2004, the Acton Institute receives a Templeton Freedom Prize for Excellence in Promoting Liberty, a program of the Atlas Foundation.

Less than one-year after his ordination to the priesthood, Sirico petitions and is granted a one-year, paid sabbatical from the Paulists in order to pursue a new non-Catholic apostolate and career in economics and politics. He considers leaving the Paulists to become a diocesan priest in the Diocese of Grand Rapids, but Bishop Robert J. Rose refuses to incardinate him. Sirico continues to perform minor duties at the Paulist Information Center.

Paulist priests as a rule do not wear their clerics. With the creation of the Acton Institute, Sirico switches from suit and tie to black clerics with a Roman collar. He begins the process of redefining and remarketing his image.

1990 Father Sirico joins with Kris Alan Mauren who is working for the Westin Hotels in Hawaii to co-found the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty in Grand Rapids with a seed grant of \$80,000 from an unnamed Chicago philanthropist. Sirico assumes the title of President and Mauren, the title of Executive Director and they put themselves on the Acton payroll. Ten years after the founding of the Acton, its annual budget has risen to \$3,692,061 and both Sirico and Mauren are drawing salaries in excess of \$100,000.

Among the foundations to contribute to the early work of Acton is the pro-abortion Scaife Family Foundations. In 1991, Acton receives \$100,000 from the Sarah Scaife Foundation. Between 1995 and 1999, the Scaifes would donate \$465,000 to Acton.

Another important early contributor includes the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation founded by the Libertarian millionaire Charles G. Koch. In 1991, Acton received a grant of \$10,000, and between 1993 and 2004, it received an additional \$86,000 from the Koch Foundation.

The list of grantees to Acton and its Board of Trustees and Advisory Board begins to read like a Who's Who of Industrial, Free Market, Privatization, Libertarian funding.

The Acton Institute bills itself as “one of the world’s leading think tanks and educational centers” designed to “promote a free and virtuous society, and economic liberty. Although the Acton Institute is not Catholic, the main target of evangelization to the free market gospel and Calvinist world-view of prosperity and wealth are Catholic clerics and religious, Catholic seminarians, and Catholic laymen particularly high school and college students. While no priests serve on Acton’s Board of Directors, there are priests serving on its Advisory Board including Rev. John Michael Beers, Pontifical College Josephinum, Joseph Ganssle, OFM, Marian Associates, Rev. James Sadowsky, SJ, Fordham University and Rev. James V. Schall, SJ, Georgetown University.

Like most “think tanks” it is quickly becoming a vehicle for influencing the development of public policy and the political deliberations of political parties, especially the Republican Party, and state and national government. [For background information on the activities of the Acton Institute from 1990-2005 see <http://www.acton.org/pdf/Acton15Year.pdf>. For updated information see www.acton.org.]

1991 Paulists assign Sirico to various support groups hosted by the Catholic Center including the Grand Rapids Area Grief Resource Committee, and a support group for victims of abuse, leaving Sirico free to work at Acton and travel and lecture worldwide.

On May 1, 1991, Pope John Paul II issues *Centesimus Annus - The Hundredth Year*, an Encyclical Letter on the Hundredth Anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's great Encyclical on capital and labour, *Rerum Novarum*, promulgated on May 15, 1891.

1992 While on a visit to Rome, Sirico meets Archbishop Francois X. Nguyen Van Thuan, the exiled former Archbishop of Saigon and President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. Pope John Paul II asks the archbishop to coordinate efforts for the compilation of a comprehensive study on Catholic social teaching. Archbishop Van Thuan asks Maciej Zieba, O.P., a Polish Dominican and Father Sirico and the Acton Institute for assistance with the project that is begun in 1999-2000. The Rome project opens new doors to various Vatican dicasteries and contacts for Sirico and the Acton Institute.

1993 On June 7, 1993, *Insight on the News* (Vol. 9, No. 23) features an article on Christian Libertarians by Richard Mitner titled "'Religion stands up to Big Brother' - Christian Libertarians oppose pornography and drug abuse and government intervention to prevent their pervasiveness; includes analysis of the work of Reverend Robert Sirico and the Action Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty."

Mitner notes that Libertarianism does not only apply to field of economics and politics, but to social and moral issues as well including such as the legalization of drugs.

As an example he cites the views of Rev. Robert Sirico on drug use. He notes that Sirico "formed the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty partly to push for drug policies that would make inner-city streets safe again. But Sirico's approach is a little unorthodox: He thinks drugs ought to be legalized."

"If God made the heavens and the Earth by his mere word, and created man and woman free to either damn themselves or find redemption," asks Sirico, a Roman Catholic priest in Grand Rapids, Mich., "then where does the government get off" regulating nonviolent behavior such as drug use? Though he doesn't condone drug use, Sirico thinks the government shouldn't regulate behavior that harms only consenting adults, says Mitner.

Mitner identifies Sirico as a Christian Libertarian who believes that the role of government is to safeguard life, liberty and property, enforce contracts and punish violent criminals, not legislate or teach morality. This is essentially the same views he espoused in 1977 as head of Libertarians for Gay Rights. It is not a Catholic view.

The Paulist Catholic Center hosts an "An Evening Honoring the Grief of Victims and Survivors of Abuse." Sirico shares the moderator role with Rev. James Chelich, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church in Grand Rapids and a co-founder of the Grand Rapids Chapter of Courage with Father Sirico. In the September 18, 1993 issue of *Grand Rapids Press*, Sirico and Chelich describe part of the healing process – Victims name their pain on note cards, place these collective pains in a pile and set them on fire... priest

throws incense on the flames... the fire is smothered with sand and candles are planted in the ashes – actions more New Age than Catholic.

Religion Stands Up to Big Brother

Abuse Victims Share Their Pain

Power Broker on the Rise

Drug Policy Book

1994-1995 At the very time that the Acton Institute is experiencing phenomenal financial and administrative growth, Sirico finds himself under increased pressure from his Paulist superiors to quit or at least scale down his secular job and assume more of his priestly duties.

1996 Sirico takes a leave of absence from the Paulists and moves from the Diocese of Grand Rapids to the notoriously “gay-friendly” Diocese of Lansing, but is not incardinated either by Bishop Kenneth Povish, the outgoing Bishop of Lansing, or his successor, Bishop Carl Frederick Mengeling who takes office on January 25, 1996. It is unclear which bishop gave his approval for Sirico to move into the Diocese of Lansing, but we do know that Msgr. James A. Murray who had served as Chancellor of the diocese from 1964 to 1997 arranges for Sirico to be assigned to a rural parish staffed by an elderly priest-friend of Msgr. Murray. Without formal assigned duties Sirico can continue to commute to the Acton Institute. He is essentially a free agent.

[Bishop Kenneth Povish of Lansing was a long-time supporter of New Ways Ministry, a rabid pro-homosexual organization. As Bishop Emeritus, he defended Bishop Keith J. Symons of the Diocese of Palm Beach after Symons was forced to resign his office in 1998 following the revelation that he had sexually molested at least five teenage boys. The disgraced Symons, still a bishop in good standing, returned to his native Michigan where he took up temporary residence in a convent in DeWitt, near Lansing. Within a year, Bishop Symons was back in action thanks to Bishop Mengeling who permitted the criminal pederast to present a daylong program of prayer and meditation on the Bless Virgin Mary at the St. Francis Retreat Center in DeWitt.]

As President of the Acton Institute, Sirico assists the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in Rome in the staging of a conference to celebrate the fifth anniversary of *Centesimus Annus*.

1997 As part of a lecture tour for the Acton Institute, Sirico visits Victoria University for the Department of Religious Studies in New Zealand. His lecture is titled “Is Christianity Compatible with Global Capitalism.” Chair of the department, Paul Morris later complained that Sirico did not speak on agreed upon subject, and subsequent dialogue with audience did not materialize.

Sirico is interviewed by reporter Charles Honey of the *Grand Rapids Press* for a March 29 1997 article on Rev. Martin Kurylowicz, 47, who has come “out” to his parishioners at Sparta Holy Family Catholic Church following his return from a pro-homosexual conference held by New Ways Ministry. Kurylowicz tells the congregation

that he is a “celibate homosexual.” He tells Honey that Bishop Robert Rose is “very supportive.”

Sirico tells Honey that he thinks Kurylowicz’s actions are “irresponsible,” and that divulgence can “unnecessarily offend” and “scandalize” parishioners. Sirico says that the priest should discuss his sexual orientation with a counselor or close friend, not with his congregation.

Three-months later, Kurylowicz leaves Holy Family to study at the University of Michigan. On May 27, 2006, Bishop Walter Hurley, Rose’s successor, announces that he is removing Kurylowicz’s diocesan faculties to publicly exercise his priestly ministry.

On November 18, Chancellor Murray is informed that Pope John Paul II has appointed him Bishop of Kalamazoo, Mich. Murray invites Sirico to come to the Kalamazoo Diocese with him. According to Murray, this move will permit Sirico to fulfill his hope of “establishing a religious community of men committed to living the ideals of prayer, service and, of course, chaste celibacy.”

Fr. Sirico Refused to Honour Agreement Gay Priest Comes Out

1998 On January 27, 1998, Bishop Murray officially takes over the Diocese of Kalamazoo. The diocese purchases a large home, a former sorority house at 219 Woodward Ave. in downtown Kalamazoo, to house Sirico and his new community. [Sirico has since purchased the home and owns it outright].

On November 4, 1998, Bishop Murray announces that he is establishing St. Philip Neri House as a *pia domus* – the first step in becoming an Oratory of St. Philip Neri and a member of the worldwide Confederation of the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri. The new religious community will be formed in the spirit of John Henry Cardinal Newman, says Murray. He also announces that he has appointed Father Robert A. Sirico as the superior of the new Oratory in formation.

[The Oratorians, like the Paulists are not a religious order. They are a society of apostolic Life. The Oratory is a confederation with no central authority. Secular (diocesan) priests and lay brothers live together in community bound together by no formal vows but only by the bond of charity in keeping with the vision of Saint Philip Neri who founded the first Oratory in Rome in 1575. Each oratory is autonomous – rising and falling on its own merit or lack thereof. A life of prayer, preaching and the sacraments and a charism of friendship, discipleship, and stability mark the well-ordered oratory. Each oratory or house, technically speaking, is established by the pope himself and the Holy See and has direct appeal to the Holy See in serious matters. The Congregation for Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life oversee the members of the Confederation as well as oratories in formation like the St. Philip Neri House in Kalamazoo. As noted in the Open Letter to Cardinal Rodé, because of its loose structure with a superior being elected by members, or, in the case of Sirico, by the local bishop, the Oratorians were among the first religious communities to be heavily colonized by the Homosexual Collective. Not surprisingly, especially in England and the United States, the Oratorians have suffered their share of pederasty and homosexual scandals.]

1999 Bishop Murray incardicates Father Sirico as a priest of the Kalamazoo Diocese,

thus formally severing all ties to the Paulist Order.

The religious community of St. Philip Neri House is promoted as a community that offers the better of two worlds – the secular priesthood and the religious life. Members will have the responsibility of building an oratory from the ground up.

St. Philip Neri House opens its doors to seminarians from Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. Weekends of discernment are planned to attract seminarians to the new oratory. [Sacred Heart Seminary has had a pervasive homosexual problem dating back at least to the mid-1940s. Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit Thomas J. Gumbleton claims he was sexually molested at Sacred heart Seminary by a priest during his freshman or sophomore year in the mid-1940s. A former professor at the seminary in the early 1970s reported that a student had confided in him that he had been sexually seduced by a faculty-member priest. When other similar cases were brought to the attention of the professor, he arranged a meeting with the Detroit Archdiocesan Delegate for Clergy who told the professor that he did not have to worry and the matter (of pederasty and homosexuality) was in good hands. The 2002 issue of *New Oxford Review* contained a letter from a former seminarian at Sacred Heart Seminary who was dismissed for being too conservative. He noted that some of the seminarians he knew never prayed and had not been to confession for months, but they played the “game” and went on to be ordained whereas he was sent away.]

In April 1999, Sirico is awarded an honorary doctorate in Christian Ethics from Franciscan University of Steubenville.

In October 1999, Sirico, as president of the Acton Institute, gathers more than two dozen theologians, economists, and environmental experts at a conference center in West Cornwall, Connecticut, to discuss what they saw as the alarming direction of religious environmentalism. Out of that meeting came the Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship.

As Superior of St. Philip Neri House, Sirico announces that the Traditional Mass will not be part the community’s practice. However, on December 15, Bishop Murray announces he will permit the Traditional Latin Mass to be held at St. Philip Neri House on a trial basis from January to June 2000. He appoints his Judicial Vicar, Rev. Leonard Bogdan, to say one weeknight Mass on a day that fits into Bogdan’s schedule. One Traditional Mass, filled to overflowing, is held at St. Philip Neri House and then the Mass is moved to the Cathedral of St. Augustine. The revelation that Bogdan is an accused sexual predator is not made public until 2006.

[In late March 2006, when the Archdiocese of Chicago released the names of living priests who were the subject of substantiated accusations of sexual abuse, Bogdan’s name was on the list. As it turned out, Bogdan, ordained for the Archdiocese of Chicago on May 3, 1960, was one of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin’s many clerical hideaways. The first sex abuse of a minor allegation against Bogdan was made in April 1983, but it was withdrawn in writing in June 1986. The following year, Bernardin had Bogdan squirreled away in the Diocese of Kalamazoo. The then, Bishop Paul Donovan, accepted Bogdan into the diocese and gave him the position of Adjutant Judicial Vicar, but the priest was not incardinated into the Kalamazoo Diocese until 1995. In June 2000, Bogdan retired from active ministry in the Diocese of Kalamazoo and later retired to Sun City Center, Ariz. In the summer of 2001, the original allegation against Bogdan was reinstated in the Archdiocese of Chicago, this time with the determination that “there is reasonable cause to suspect that sexual

misconduct with a minor occurred.” Bishop Murray suspended Bogdan’s faculties to assist in priestly ministry in March 2002.]

Turning Points

2000 In November 2000, the Acton Institute acted as joint convener of a conference on the theme of “Globalization, the Economy, and the Family,” with the Pontifical Council for the Family.

2001 In January 2001, Sirico acts as a primary facilitator for a retreat conference of a group of the Mexican episcopate, including Cardinal Juan Sandoval Iñiguez..

In May, Sirico receives an honorary doctorate in Social Sciences from Universidad Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala. Founded in 1971, the avowed mission of the secular university is “to teach and disseminate the ethical, legal and economic principles of a society of free and responsible persons.”

2002 On March 26, 2002, Pastor Ralph Johnson, Sirico’s old nemesis at Glen Acres Church of Christ in Seattle, receives a query from a reporter from Maryland concerning the Father Robert A. Sirico’s homosexual background. The reporter questions Johnson on Sirico’s early involvement with young men, possibly minors. Johnson sends the reporter a copy of his file on Sirico including information on the House of Joshua where Sirico resided after his discharge from the Navy.

2003 On February 4, Sirico delivers a Business Ethics Lecture at the Joseph A. Butt, S.J., College of Business Administration of Loyola University, New Orleans.

On May 1, as President of the Acton Institute, Father Sirico joins other religious and political leaders for the National Day of Prayer held on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., calling for all Americans to joining together for a spiritual renewal in America.

December 24, the Acton Institute posts online one of Sirico’s secular sermons titled “The Virtue of Tolerance.” According to Sirico, tolerance is a virtue “because it is the underlying principle of social peace.” Sirico quotes Fr. John Courtney Murray, architect of the Second Vatican Council’s document on religious liberty, who held the position that the separation of church and state “is not an article of faith; it is an article of peace.”

2004 Winter-Spring The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace releases the long-awaited *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* which contains 75 documents of the Magisterium on social doctrine beginning with the writings of St. Clement of Rome, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas Aquinas and concluding with the popes of the 20th century including Pope Leo XIII and Pope John Paul II.

[Compendium online at: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html].

Father Sirico, co-editor of the publication is interviewed by Zenit News [an organ of the Legionaries of Christ] on April 30, 2004 on the content and significance of the compendium. Sirico praises Pope John Paul II for his anthropology and commitment to personalism, which he says deepens the Catholic understanding of the social question

Meanwhile, back in Seattle, Pastor Johnson receives another communication concerning Sirico, this time from Kalamazoo, informing him (Johnson) that Sirico has been made the superior of St. Philip Neri House, a religious community of young men. Motivated out of concern for the welfare of young men put in Sirico's path, on November 24, 2004, Johnson sends Bishop Murray, Ordinary of the Diocese of Kalamazoo, background materials on Sirico.

Pastor Johnson receives a response to his warning about Sirico from Bishop Murray in the form of a letter dated December 7, 2004.

Bishop Murray thanks Pastor Johnson for his concern about any embarrassment Robert Sirico may cause to the Church and his desire to protect the Church from scandal.

Murray explains that he first met Robert Sirico in 1996 when Sirico voluntarily took a leave of absence from the Paulists with their blessings and came to the Diocese of Lansing. He said he arranged to have Sirico live in a rural rectory under the "supervision" of an old priest-friend where Sirico "lived a personal life of prayer and service appropriate to a Catholic priest." [In fact, Sirico came to Lansing because the Paulists were adamant about Sirico leaving his 40-hour-job at the Acton Institute. Only one year after his ordination, Sirico had abandoned his religious vocation for that of a businessman. If Sirico wanted to live a priestly life, he would have stayed with the Paulists in Grand Rapids and quit Acton. Instead he moved out of the Paulist Order's reach and continued to commute to Acton in Grand Rapids, well out of the "supervision" of Murray's aged priest associate.]

Murray told Pastor Johnson that in 1998, when he was appointed Bishop of Kalamazoo, he asked Sirico to come to Kalamazoo and "pursue his hope of establishing a religious community of men committed to living the ideals of prayer, service and of course, chaste celibacy." [Sirico, by his actions, had already demonstrated that he had rejected the priestly life in favor of the life of a businessman and entrepreneur. Given this fact, and the fact of his past record as a sodomite and "gay" leader, why would any bishop set him up with his **own** religious community and place him in a position of authority with ready access to young men seeking discernment to the priesthood?]

Murray writes that Sirico told him of his involvement "for about 31/2 years in various aspects of the gay movement," and that Sirico had "repudiated the gay life-style and returned to his Catholic roots" in 1976. [It appears that Sirico did not tell Murray the full truth about his past because as late as 1977, Sirico was still going strong as head of Libertarians for Gay Rights. Further "various aspects" does not begin to indicate the degree of involvement of Sirico in the Seattle, Los Angeles, and San Francisco "gay" scene. Sirico was seen as the new Moses leading his flock homosexuals out of bondage and into a new land of religious and political freedom. Homosexual archivists like Gary Atkins consider him a pivotal figure in the history of the "gay" civil rights movement, and they are correct. His entrepreneurial genius united, organized, and gave purpose to the fledging "gay" Seattle community at a time when they were confused, divided, and subjected to a well-organized vice-squad. He pioneered legal gay marriages, challenged vice laws,

organized and led protests and marches, preached in churches and on the radio, and built a gay infrastructure that exists for the most part to this day. His public victories in Seattle include the founding of the first “gay” church, the creation of a new “gay” theology, and a new political paradigm that shifted the debate on homosexuality from the morality of homosexual acts to the civil rights of gays and the repeal of laws against sodomy and hustling, and the obtaining of marriage licenses for and performing homosexual marriages, including his own anticipated “marriage.”]

Murray explanation of Sirico’s arrest is passed off as a mistake due to “journalistic confusion.” [In fact, Sirico was incarcerated by the Seattle police in October 1973 when he interfered in the arrest proceedings of two young homosexuals outside a local bar at 2 o’clock in the morning. . Further, the Mark IV incident of April 10, 1976, was accurately reported by the *Seattle P-I*.]

Murray concludes with his assurance to Pastor Johnson that Sirico has repented of his past sins and reformed his life as evidenced by “his pastoral work and the integrity of his personal life.”

Bishop Murray Letter 1

Bishop Murray Letter 2

2005 Bishop Murray appoints Father Sirico, Parochial Vicar of St. Mary Church in Kalamazoo.

2006 Bishop Murray appoints Father Sirico the pastor of St. Mary Church. Rev. Mark J. Vyveman, C.S., takes over the position of Parochial Vicar. The parish has one Saturday Mass, one Sunday Mass and only 2 weekday Masses.

The Acton Institute opens up its Rome office.

2007 St. Philip Neri House now has four residents including three priests – enough to erect an oratory and be incorporated into the Confederation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri. The residents are Father Sirico, superior, Father David Grondz, Father James Richardson, and Brother Basil, an associate of Father Grondz from the latter’s Benedictine days.

Both Father Grondz and Father Richardson were ordained by Bishop James A. Murray for the Diocese of Kalamazoo on May 13, 2006 at the Cathedral of St. Augustine. In addition to their assignment at St. Philip Neri House, both are also engaged in pastoral work for the diocese.

Of these, Father David Grondz has had the longest and most intimate relationship with Sirico. Grondz began his vocational journey with the Benedictine Order, but left. He then went to Detroit’s Sacred Heart Seminary, but again left, this time under a cloud of accusations of moral turpitude. [In its investigation of Father Sirico and St. Philip Neri House, the Congregation Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life will need to investigate the seminary records of all the residents of the religious community.] Sirico then arranged for Grondz to attend the North American College in Rome. Grondz was ordained in 2006 by Bishop Murray.

February 7, 2007 Randy Engel sends Open Letter ““On the Suppression of St. Philip Neri House, Kalamazoo, Michigan” to Franc Cardinal Rodé, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Rome. Electronic copies of the Open Letter are sent to 72 Oratorian Houses world-wide.

Feb. 14 The Rome office of the Oratorian Confederation releases a formal statement that houses in formation although recognized by the Ordinary of a Diocese are not official oratories or members of the Confederation. Therefore, they come under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

April 22 Bishop Murray announces that he has submitted his resignation to Rome as he will reach the age of retirement, 75, on July 5, 2007.

The Question of Conversion

It is difficult to talk about the issue of “conversion” in the case of Father Robert Sirico because he has had so many of them.

Sirico has publicly discussed his experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and later, the gift of tongues, at the age of 7 seven and 11. He has stated that he knew he was homosexual at age 13, although it is unlikely that he acted out until his late teens. At the age of 19 he converted to Pentecostalism. At the age of 22 he converted to the “gay” Metropolitan Community Church. At the age of 25 he politically and morally converted to Libertarianism.

Sometime in his late twenties or early 30s, Sirico says he underwent another conversion and re-discovered his Catholic roots.

In one version of his conversion story, Father Sirico says that he encountered Courage and became friends with Father John Harvey, the founder of Courage, and that this reignited his interest in the priesthood. He says that Fr. Harvey encouraged his vocation and supported him in his decision to enter the seminary. [That Father Harvey would have encouraged an inveterate homosexual with Sirico’s background to enter the priesthood is highly unlikely as Harvey is on record as opposing the entrance of known “gay” activist into the priesthood.]

Another version is given by Sirico in an interview with Zenit on April 19, 2005. Sirico says that it was the authenticity of the life of Pope John Paul II that drew him back to the Church. He said he began to undergo a deep interior conversion, went to confession and his vocation of becoming a priest, a vocation he sensed as a child, was reborn

Sirico’s entrance into the Paulist Order in 1982 raises other serious issues.

There is the question of why Sirico would choose a “gay friendly” order like the Paulists, thus exposing himself to further homosexual temptations.

There is the question of what the Paulists knew or did not know about Sirico’s homosexual history including his plans to “marry” another man. This question is closely connected to the

validity of his ordination in 1989, a matter Rome needs to examine very carefully.

The sincerity of Sirico's call to a religious vocation is drawn into question, when less than a year after his ordination, Sirico establishes the Acton Institute and adopts a new persona of business man and entrepreneur. Sirico had taken a vow of obedience to his Paulist superiors, but this did not hold him back from pursuing a new career at the expense of his religious vocation.

Sirico's appointment as the superior of a religious community, St. Philip Neri House in the Diocese of Kalamazoo in 1998, raises additional red flags.

That Bishop Murray would appoint a priest with Sirico's homosexual background to oversee a house where young men come for spiritual direction is the height of insanity. The issue of homosexuality aside, what religious qualifications does Sirico possess that make him a candidate for the superior of a religious community. Certainly not the virtue of obedience to his superiors as clearly demonstrated by his track-record with the Paulist Order. Piety and Devotion to Holy Mother Church? One would asphyxiate himself waiting to hear a deeply spiritual Catholic sermon from his lips. Alas, the poor soul does not even know how to say the Rosary.

In her Open Letter of February 7, 2007, to Franc Cardinal Rodé, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Randy Engel called upon the Congregation which is charged with the oversight of oratories in formation to establish an independent board of inquiry to investigate Father Sirico and St. Philip Neri House, with the goal of suppressing St. Philip Neri House and removing Father Sirico as its superior. This is the ultimate purpose of posting **The Sirico Brief**.

If you agree with this line of action please send a letter of support to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Rome. If you have already sent a letter of concern to the Congregation, please send a follow-up note. [See the Open Letter above for addresses and other contact information.]

Alto quien vive!!

Morality and Markets
Letter from Fr. Harvey
IRS Salary Information

This text was prepared by Randy Engel, author of *The Rite of Sodomy – Homosexuality and the Roman Catholic Church*. [See www.riteofsodomy.com or call 724 327 7379 for ordering information.]

Engel would like to extend her appreciation to Dr. Vida Barr who assisted in the retrieval of important articles and documents connected with the Sirico investigation.

Also, Engel would like to acknowledge the ground-breaking work of Catholic writer Thomas J. Herron, whose insightful article on Father Sirico and the Acton Institute, "Father Sirico's Perversions: The Seduction of Catholic Economics and The Economics of Catholic Seduction," appears in the May 2007 issue of *Culture Wars* magazine (www.culturewars.com) edited by E. Michael Jones.

SIRICO, Marie Sirico
New York, NY

Passed away on December 4, 2003. She was the devoted wife of the late Jerry Sirico; cherished mother of Carol and Lou Pannunzio of Florida, Junior "Tony", and Carmine Sirico of NY, and Father Robert Sirico of Grand Rapids/Kalamazoo, MI. Also surviving are 7 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. She is reposing at Andrew Torregrossa & Sons Funeral Home, Brooklyn, NY. Mass of Christian Burial at Regina Pacis Roman Catholic Church, Tuesday, December 9 at 10:15 a.m., Father Robert Sirico, Celebrant. Memorial contributions in Marie's name can be made to St. Philip Neri House, 219 Woodward Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49007. Published in the Kalamazoo Gazette on 12/7/2003. (Posted by a volunteer-no family connection)

<http://boards.rootsweb.com/localities.northam.usa.states.michigan.counties.kalamazoo/9777/mb.ashx>

INFORMATION RELEASABLE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Name

Sirico, Robert A

Branch of Service and Serial/Service Number(s)

United States Navy/ D10 14 40

Dates of Service

August 18, 1969 to January 20, 1970

Duty Status

Discharged

Rank/Grade

SA

Salary

N/A

Source of Commission

N/A

Promotion Sequence Number

N/A

Assignments and Geographical Locations

See Attached

Military Education

N/A

Decorations and Awards

National Defense Service Medal

Transcript of Court-Martial Trial

N/A

Photograph

N/A

Place of Entry

AFEES, FT, Hamilton NY.

Place of Separation

Bremerton, WA.

FOR DECEASED VETERAN ONLY

Place of Birth**Date of Death****Location of Death****Place of Burial**

NOTE: N/A denotes information is not available in the veteran's records

* SEE ART. B-2305, BUPERS MANUAL

[illegible]

MIRACLE CLAIMS TESTED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORD

-A. Ralph Johnson

SECTION I. BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

The world today is full of conflicting claims by those professing to be guided by the Holy Spirit, while teaching a babble of contradictory doctrines. It is obvious they cannot all be right. The Bible's teachings are by inspiration of the Holy Spirit (1Pet. 1:20, 21; Jn. 16:13). It is manifestly impossible for The Holy Spirit to be in conflict with His own words. It is therefore the aim of this study to carefully examine modern claims of spiritual gifts by the words of the Spirit.

I. A SOUND BASIS FOR JUDGMENT

A. GOD COMMANDED “BE NOT DECEIVED!” 1Cor. 15:33

1. 1Thes. 5:21. Prove all things (in reference to spiritual gifts).
2. 2Cor. 13:5. Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith.
3. 1Jn. 4:1. Prove the spirits; because of many false prophets.
4. Mt. 24:4, 11-13, 24, 25. Take heed that no man deceive you.
5. Mt. 7:21-27. Many will say, “Lord, Lord, We prophesied, cast out demons and did many wonderful works,” but He will say, “I NEVER knew you.”
6. 2Cor. 11:13-15. Satan's ministers appear as ministers of righteousness.
7. 2Thes. 2:3, 9-12. Do not be deceived by “wonders,” even in God's house.
8. Gal. 1:6-10. Reject even angels or apostles who pervert the gospel.
9. Rev. 2:2. Test those who claim to be apostles (cf. 2 Co. 12:12).
10. Rev. 13:13, 14. False prophets will deceive the world with great signs.
11. Rev. 16:14. Demons will work miracles.
12. Deut. 13:1-3. Jannes and Jambres imitated signs of Moses (2 Tim. 3:8).
13. 1Kings 13:1-24. God punished a man who believed a false prophet.

B. GOD'S WORD IS THE ULTIMATE RELIABLE STANDARD OF EVALUATION.

1. The Scriptures are inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16).

- a. Jn. 14:15-18. The Apostles were guided into all truth (Jn. 20:22, 23; 16:7, 8, 12-15).
- b. Mk. 13:11. The Holy Spirit gave the message.
- c. Pet. 1:20, 21. No scripture ever came from the prophet's opinion.
- d. 1Cor. 14:37. The things written by Paul were the commandments of God.

2. Truth and error are distinguished by the word of God.

- a. Mt. 7:24-29. Wise men build on the rock by hearing and obeying. Foolish do not.
- b. Jn. 8:47. He that is of God hears God's words.
- c. 1Jn. 4:6; 3:24. God's Spirit distinguished by obedience to the word.
- d. 2Tim. 3:14-17. The word makes us wise and thoroughly furnished to every good work.
- e. Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12. The word is the “sword of the Spirit.”
- f. Heb. 4:12. The word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword.

- g. 1Jn. 5:13. It was written so we might know and believe.
 - h. Jn. 8:31, 32. Abide in it and know the truth to be free. (Jn. 17:17 “Thy word is truth”)
 - i. Is. 8:20. No light is in those who walk not according to the word.
3. **The word of God is the basis upon which all shall be judged.**
- a. Jn. 12:48. By it we shall be judged in the last day (cf. Mt. 7:21-23).
 - b. James 1:21. The word of God is able to save our souls.
 - c. Rom. 10:13-17. We are saved through hearing the word. Faith comes by hearing (Note: We walk by faith. 2 Cor. 5:7).
4. **The word of God is the final authority.**
- a. Rom. 3:3, 4. *Let God be found true and every man a Liar.*
 - b. 2Tim. 2:13. God cannot contradict himself.
 - c. Jn. 10:35. The Scriptures cannot be broken.

II. GENERAL EVALUATION OF CLAIMS.

“If they walk not according to this word there is no light in them.” -Isaiah 8:20

The Greek word, “Charisma,” (Strong’s # 5486) is translated “gift,” in the New Testament. In 1Cor 12 this word is used to refer to the miraculous gifts given by the Holy Spirit (or, “Holy Ghost”). Therefore, in this study we use it to include all claims to exercise the powers listed in 1Cor. 12:4-10. The basic issues are the same, whether Mormons, Seventh-Day Adventists, “Moonies,” The Metropolitan Church, Children of God, Four Square, Assemblies Of God, Pentecostal or United Pentecostals. They diverge in many respects but they all claim to have the “charisma” or “gifts” of the Holy Spirit.

WITH GOD, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

We want to make it clear that we do not question either God's power or the fact that He works among His people today. The issue is not what God CAN do but what He WILLS to do. God answers prayer but that does not mean He gives these people power to do miracles. God CAN raise up seed unto Abraham from the very stones of the earth (Lk. 3:8) but if some group claims that people who come to their meetings can have stones turned to babies, we have every right to challenge them. Questioning the claims of men is in no way doubting the power of God. God Himself charged us to make careful evaluation (Rev. 2:2).

Insisting on evidence is not the same as “seeking a sign.” We need no sign (Mt. 16:1-4) to convince us that Jesus is the Messiah or to know he is coming. We accept the scriptures and “sign of Jonah” (the resurrection). For us, ample evidence has been provided. *We walk by faith, not by sight.* (2 Cor. 5:7).

“With God, all things are possible” (Mk. 10:27). The claims of men often prove impossible. They claim but do not show the true manifestations of the Spirit. We are told to *“prove all things”* (1 Thes. 5:21; 2 Cor. 13:5). *Many false prophets have gone out into the world* (1Jn. 4:1; Rev. 2:2; 2 Co. 11:13-15; Mt. 7:21-27).

Those who run here and there after people who claim miraculous powers are ignoring Jesus' warning

against seeking signs (Matt. 12:39; 16:4). In Matt 7:21-23 Jesus said:

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (cf. Lk. 6:46-49).

The pattern for comparison is the word of God provided by the Holy Spirit (Heb. 8:5). We want to know if they speak according to His word (Is. 8:20) and if they do what He says (John 2:3-6; 3:7-10).

“By their fruits ye shall know them” (Mt. 7:16, 20). A sheepskin coat may look like the real thing but it does not make one a sheep. Gorgeous blossoms in May do not guarantee nourishing fruit in September.

A. THE PERFORMANCE FRUIT

1. The PATTERN OF PENTECOST

On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:) the Holy Spirit was poured out to guide them into all truth (Jn. 16:13). This was necessary because they as yet had no New Testament scriptures. Through the centuries many have claimed to have those powers (Ac. 8:18, 19). If they really had what was given on Pentecost they should manifest what took place on Pentecost. Unfortunately, time and again, we have weighed their claims and found them wanting.

They fail to show a single manifestation but they provide an abundance of excuses.

- a. No sound from heaven “*as of a mighty rushing wind*” fills the whole house and attracts thousands of people (Ac. 2:2, 6).
- b. The Holy Spirit does not come visibly “*upon*” them. There is neither the form of a dove nor tongues like as of fire (Ac. 2:2, 3, 17, 18, 33; 8:16, 18; 10:44, 45; 11:15; 15:8, 9; 19:6; 1:32, 33; Lk. 3:22).
- c. Their signs are not openly manifested in the presence of unbelievers (Ac. 2:5-13. cf. Mt. 9:2-6; 12:10-13; Mk. 2:5-12; 3:1-6; Lk. 5:21-26; 6:6-11; 8:34, 36; 13:14-17; 14:1-6; 22:51; 1Co. 14:22).
- d. They not only cannot speak in EVERY language under heaven, (Ac. 2:5- 11; cf. 1Co. 14:22) but, other than what they learn by normal means, they cannot speak in ANY language under heaven.

They claim that somewhere, someone, was heard to say that he heard someone talking in some language, but none of these are ever able to be documented. In one case with which I am acquainted, (Ben Alexander) the man was told he was talking in Hebrew. However, since Ben was Jewish and learned Hebrew as a child, he knew better.

In a case here in Seattle a girl was told, by a woman who had supposedly studied French, that she was talking, “perfect French.” We recorded a French lady reading some passages from the Psalms and played the tape for the woman who made the claim. She was unable to translate it. How could she know the girl was speaking “perfect French” if she could not even understand the language?

e. In a number of cases, (mentioned even in “Glossolalia,” by Don Barnett), in order to test them, people intentionally spoke gibberish, or some language known by them, and the so-called “interpreter” gave a false translation.

2. Their “signs” fail to be such as to confound unbelievers.

- a. They should so “manifest” the Holy Spirit's presence (1Co. 12:7) as to confirm the inspired source (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3, 4).
- b. Skeptics should be confounded (Ac. 2:7; 1Cor. 14:22).
- c. The evidence should be indisputable (Ac. 4:16).
- d. Lame men should be instantly healed (Ac. 4:16 cf. 3:1-11; Jn. 3:2).
- e. A man born blind was healed (Jn. 9:16, 18) and later believed (9:36).
- f. Lazarus was raised on third day in the presence of all (Jn. 22:44, 47; 12:10, 11).

3. Unlike the biblical powers, they must advertise their miracles to get a following

Ac. 2:6. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together

Mk. 1:44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man 45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city,

Mk 5:43. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it

Matt. 9:30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. 31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country

Lk. 5:14 And he charged him to tell no man:

Matt. 8:4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man;

Mark 7:36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;

Jesus told people NOT to tell. If they had the powers of Pentecost they would get the results of Pentecost.

4. They do not manifest ALL of the miraculous powers.

They claim the powers are for today yet they make excuses for failing to show them all. I do not mean to say that any single individual must have all of the powers, but if they were meant for today then they should all be present. I have yet to see any indication of men walking on water, stilling storms, turning water to wine, multiplying loaves and fishes, drinking poison without being hurt or raising the dead, plus multitudes of other Biblical miracles.

Not only the magnitude, but the variety of New Testament manifestations helped verify that God was behind them. Inability to do this casts serious doubt upon their claims.

One of the most characteristic features of modern “Pentecostalism” is the discrepancy between performance and what is revealed in the New Testament. Marvelous claims are made, but sound criteria for evaluation is rejected. When pressed, their claims lead only to dead ends with no similarity to what they profess. Instead, we are met with an endless series of “explanations,” excuses, and abuse.

5. Some of the things they practice match paganism rather than what is found in the Bible.

Where, in the New Testament, do we find the “swoons,” “slain in the Spirit,” “shakes,” “quakes,” “barks,” “jerks,” “holy rolling,” “holy laughter” and other such things?

Where did any Christian come back time after time to get rid of this or that “demon” as modern charismatic teachers claim? When we become Christians Jesus binds Satan (Matt. 12:29; 1Jn. 4:4). How can the Holy Spirit dwell in a temple with demons? (2Cor. 6:15, 16)

- a. Claims of being “slain in the Spirit.”

Matt. 12:29. A boy who had a demon fell down when a demon went out. He certainly was not receiving the Holy Spirit.

2 Chron. 5:13 - 14.

“The house of the Lord was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house”

This is “evidence” that the Holy Spirit causes people in the church to pass out all over the place?

Acts 9:4. Paul fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

Nothing is said here about this being any “overpowering of the Spirit.” Not only Paul, but all of those who were traveling with Paul fell to earth (Acts 26:11). Were all of these receiving the “overpowering of the Spirit”?

Paul was certainly not receiving the power of the Holy Spirit because he had did not receive it until he reached Damascus and had prayed there for three days (Acts 9:17).

1Cor 14:24-25. Nor was the fact that the unbeliever fell down and worshipped God when the thoughts of his heart were made manifest by the prophets any “precedent” for Christians to be “slain in the spirit.” This was a natural response. The other prophets were to be “judging,” not passed out on the floor.

Rev. 1:7. John, in a vision saw Jesus in a glorified form and fell down as one dead.

Nothing is said of the Spirit making him fall down. It was a natural response to an awesome situation. Certainly none of the Apostles or Jesus went around making people fall down by blowing on them or pushing on their foreheads –much less having someone stand behind them as a “catcher.” It looks more like a side-show than anything else.

In the Bible, people sometimes fell down but not one of them appears to be anything like the modern claims of being “slain in the Spirit.”

Rev. 19:8; 22:8. John fell down to worship angels. Did the Holy Spirit cause him to do that or was it their natural response to the awesome sight?

Acts 10:25. When Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and **fell** down at his feet, and worshipped him. Was he being “overpowered by the Spirit”?

Acts 5:5, 10. Ananias and Sapphira fell down and died. God caused it, but I see no precedent in this for what is to take place in the church service.

John 11:32. Mary, the sister of Lazarus fell at the feet of Jesus.

John 18:6. Those who came to take Jesus in the garden went backwards and fell down.

1Kings 1:39. When the fire of Jehovah fell and consumed the burnt offering the people fell on their faces.

Mat. 27:65. The guards at the tomb of Jesus “became as dead men.”

Gen. 17:17. Abraham fell upon his face and laughed when he heard that he was to father Isaac.

Lev. 9:24. When fire consumed the burnt-offering the people fell on their faces.

So what? Where is any indication God intended for the Holy Spirit to knock a bunch of people down in the gatherings of the church?

What does all this have in common with Benny Hinn or some other Pentecostal preacher blowing a whole audience over? Where do we see Jesus, the apostles, or even the prophets doing such a thing? Where was it ever advocated or practiced?

People passing out from such mass influences are nothing new or surprising. People faint from hysteria in pagan cults. Kids in a classroom have been known to do it. When I was a kid, it was a common game. I can make myself pass out any time I please.

Remember the Girls that used to pass out when Frankeee Snotra sang? Women even pass out when President Clinton shows up. Big deal!

TRANCES

People in trances in the Bible are cited for justification of the practice. The fact that individuals were sometimes given special messages in trances, dreams or visions is no “precedent” for the modern practice of masses of people getting “slain in the Spirit” at public gatherings. If that is what they claim, where is the evidence of their visions being prophetic? I would just as well accept the visions of Mrs. Eddy of the Christian Scientists, the Moronic visions of Joseph Smith, or those of Mrs. White of the Seventh-day Adventists.

The fact is that God teaches that the prophetic gift was to pass away. (1Cor. 13).

Neither the term “slain in the Spirit” nor anything resembling it is found in Scripture.

This thing is no different than what took place among the Mormons, the Shakers, or the Moonies.

If we are to believe their claims, it is remarkable that neither Jesus, the Apostles nor anyone in the Bible had “Spirit empowered preaching accompanied by hundreds of listeners fainting, shouting, and dropping to the ground as if felled by a giant cannon shot.”

b. Claims of “Holy Laughter” (called “The Toronto Blessing.”)

This thing has been known in pagan and “Christian” cults before. Recently it was revived in the Vineyard Churches. The Holy Spirit supposedly sends them into hysterical laughter.

Scriptures in the Bible about laughter.

Gen. 17:17. Abraham fell on his face laughing when God told him that Sarah was to bear Isaac.

Gen. 18:12. Sarah laughed at the idea that she would have a child at her age.

Ecc. 3:4. There is a time to laugh.

James 4:9. Let your laughter be turned to mourning...

Nothing here about the Holy Spirit causing whole congregations to fall down laughing.

B. THE TEACHING FRUIT

Are Charismatic teachings consistent with the words of the Spirit?

True prophets were guided into ALL truth (Jn. 14:26; 16:13). Those who do not speak in harmony with the scriptures cannot be speaking by the Spirit (Is. 8:20). If anyone perverts the gospel, or brings a different one, he is to be rejected (Gal. 1:6-10; 2 Jn. 9-11; Deut. 12:32--13:3).

Among those who claim miraculous powers we find a babble of conflicting teachings. Mormons claim that Joseph Smith and their “apostles” are prophets. Seventh-day Adventists contend that Mrs. White was inspired to guide God's people today. The “Jesus Only,” people repudiate others who make similar claims. The Four Square church contends for Aimee McPherson’s claims of revelation. The Assemblies of God churches disagree with the rest while claiming the same powers. On and on it goes in utter confusion, yet each contends that we should not question their claims. In turn, all of them are in conflict with the Holy Spirit’s teaching and work.

1. They teach contrary to what God reveals concerning salvation.

- a. They deny that we are, “baptized into Christ.” (Rom. 6:3-7, 17, 18, 22 cf. Col. 2:12, 13; Gal. 3:26, 27 cf. 2 Co. 5:17; Mt. 28:19; Ac. 8:16; 19:2-5 cf. Rom. 8:1; 1Cor. 12:12, 13; 10:1, 2, 6, 11 cf. Ex. 14:29, 30)
- b. They deny that when we are baptized our sins are “washed away,” we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and we are, “saved.” (Ac. 22:16; 2:38; 1Pe. 3:21; Mark. 16:16; Rom. 6:3-7, 17, 18, 22; Col. 2:12, 13)
- c. They deny what God teaches concerning being “born of water and Spirit” (John 3:3-5 --cf. “water” in 3:23; 1Jn. 5:6, 8; Heb. 10:22; Ac. 8:36-39; Eph. 5:26;)

2. They don't have the Lord's supper each first day of the week as set forth in the New Testament

(Acts 2:42; 1Cor. 11:17, 18, 20, 24-26, 33, 34; cf. 16:2; Heb. 10:25).

3. Many of them teach that all Christians are to speak in tongues.

The Scriptures teach that all do NOT speak with tongues (1Cor. 12:30). All do not have the same gifts.

Paul's statement that he would be glad if they all spoke with tongues is often cited (1Cor. 14:5). However, the statement proves exactly the opposite. Paul was telling them that unless the tongues were interpreted, it was better to prophecy than to speak in tongues. Tongues edified the individual but prophecy edified the whole congregation. He does not say that all would or could do so. To the contrary, he had shown in chapter 12 that each had different gifts and not all had the same. No one member can be the whole body.

4. They disregard God's regulations on the use of spiritual gifts in the church (1Cor. 14:27-35).

- a. Rather than limiting the messages to three in a service, they encourage many to speak in tongues (14:27 -cf. 14:29).
- b. They permit many to speak at the same time (14:23, 27, 30-31).

This is excused on the basis that when the Spirit gives a message in tongues they must give the message or it would be resisting the Spirit. However, God says they are to keep quiet, and that the Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the prophets (14:32). "God is not a god of confusion" (14:33).

- c. They Speak without an interpreter. God says that without one they must keep silent. (1Cor. 14:27, 28)

5. Their women speak in the public assembly, contrary to scriptural teaching (1Cor. 14:34-36).

"Mother" Ann Lee (Shakers), Ellen G. White (Seventh-day Adventists), Aimee McPherson (Four Square), and Kathryn Kuhlman (Assemblies of God), are only a few of the more notorious violators of this scriptural teaching.

6. They make a false distinction between the "gift of tongues" and the "sign of tongues."

This is to avoid the plain scriptural teaching that all do not speak with tongues (1Cor. 12:30) and the restrictions God gave for its use (1Cor. 14:27, 28). They claim these scriptures apply only to the "gift" or "message" in tongues, not to the "sign," or "prayer" tongue. No such distinction is made in scripture.

- a. The restrictions in 1Cor. 14, clearly apply to tongues in general, whether in prayer (14:12-20) or in a message (14:21-23).
- b. The term, "sign," is specifically applied to tongues in only two places in the New Testament.
 - 1) The first is Mark 16:17.

Note that there are several different "signs" listed. If "tongues" is necessary for all who have the Holy Spirit then so are all of the other gifts.

It does not say tongues is “THE sign” of the Holy Spirit. In fact, it says nothing about these signs being received when one receives the Holy Spirit. It is speaking of them following those that believe. Must every believer have these signs?

Furthermore, there is nothing to indicate these tongues are any different from tongues mentioned elsewhere. It says nothing about it being a “prayer language.”

2) The second is in 1Cor. 14:21, 22 where it is quoting from Is. 28:11 concerning messages given to hard-hearted people. It was a sign, not to believers, but to unbelievers (1Cor. 14:22 cf. Acts 2:7, 8). The term, “sign,” both singular and plural, is often found in the New Testament applied to many other things than tongues.

c. Similarly, “gift” is not speaking only of a message in tongues. One cannot reasonably separate 1Cor. 12 from chapters 13 and 14, which apply equally to tongues in prayer (14:13-17). In fact, 12:7 calls all the gifts, including tongues (12:10), “manifestations,” which has much the same meaning as a “sign.”

For those who insist on such distinctions, it is very revealing to photo-copy 1Cor. 12, 13, 14 and have them try to use colored pens to highlight which statements refer to the “gifts” and which to the “sign.” The distinctions are arbitrary and absurd. Rarely do two of them ever agree.

d. Some appeal to Acts 2 to show that the tongues on Pentecost were different from those at Corinth. However, neither Peter nor Joel make any distinction.

These tongues can not be shown to be prayers. It says they were speaking “the mighty works of God” (Ac. 2:11). Joel only mentions signs and prophecy and Peter says nothing to define the nature of the tongues spoken. In fact, in not one single case anywhere in Acts did it indicate it to be a prayer tongue. In Ac. 19:6 it says they “spoke in tongues AND PROPHESED,” and in 10:48 they spoke with tongues and “MAGNIFIED GOD,” which, as in both chapter 2 and 19, indicated prophecy.

Any supposed difference between tongues on Pentecost and at Corinth is due to careless reading. Both could be understood by the people who spoke that language. Neither could be understood by a congregation of people who did not know the language. On Pentecost people from all nations were gathered. Corinth was a local assembly speaking the local language.

7. They often deny that we can have the Holy spirit without speaking in tongues.

They teach that one first becomes a Christian and then receives the Holy Spirit with the sign of speaking in tongues. The scriptures teach otherwise.

Every Christian has the Holy Spirit.

a. Rom. 8:9 “*If any man has not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.*”

1Pe. 1:10-12 shows the “Spirit of Christ” was the Holy Spirit which guided the prophets.

2 Pe. 1:19-21 shows that all prophecy was by the Holy Spirit (cf. Ac. 16:6, 7 “*The Spirit*

of Jesus...” - A.S.V); Philip. 1: 19; Jn. 14:18, 23; Eph. 2:22).

b. Rom. 8:4-16, 23-27. If one does not have the Spirit of God:

-he has a dead spiritual mind (8:6).

-He can not please God (8:8)

-He can not receive life to be raised up (8:11)

-He can not be a child of God (8:15, 15)

-He can not have the spirit to make intercession for him (8:26, 27).

These things can only be through the Holy Spirit.

c. The Church at Rome had the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5; 8:9-17), yet had “*no spiritual gift*” (Rom. 1:11).

OBJECTION: “Rom. 12:6 indicates the Romans had Spiritual gifts.”

ANSWER:

Paul is speaking of the many diverse functions of the body in general. The whole body of Christ was not at Rome.

d. Eph. 1:13, 14. The Holy Spirit is the “earnest” (down payment) of our inheritance as God's own possession. We are sealed in the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13; 4:30).

e. Jn. 3:3-5. To see the kingdom, we must be born of the Spirit.

f. 1John 5:4, 7, 8. Those who are begotten of God have the testimony of water, Spirit and blood, which agree in one (cf. Heb. 10:22).

g. Ac. 2:38, 39. All who are baptized for the remission of sins receive the “gift” (Greek: *doorea*) of the Holy Spirit, not, “gifts” (Greek: *charisma*).

h. Ac. 5:32. All who obey him receive the Holy Spirit.

i. Tit. 3:5, 6. We are saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

j. Gal. 5:25. We live by the Spirit. Without it we are spiritually dead (Rom. 8:6).

k. Jn. 7:37-39. Those who “drink” of Jesus have the Holy Spirit. When one drinks of the water of life he never thirsts again (Jn. 4:10-14; Rev. 22:17).

l. 1Cor. 12:12-13. In order to be a part of Christ's body we must be baptized and all “DRINK OF ONE SPIRIT.” (cf. Heb. 6:4; 1Cor. 10:1-2; Mt. 28:18, 19; Rom. 6:1-7; Gal. 3:27).

OBJECTION: Some contend that 1Cor. 12:12-13 is speaking of “baptism in the Holy Spirit,” not water baptism.

ANSWER: Compare 1Cor. 12:13 with other passages that speak of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The Greek structure here is different. It indicates the Holy Spirit is the means, rather than the element in which we are baptized.

1Cor. 12:13. *“By one Spirit we were all baptizxed into one body.”*

en	eni	pneumati	heemeis	pantes	eis	en	soma	ebaptistheemen
by	one	Spirit	we	all	into	one	body	were baptized

Compare with the following passages on Holy Spirit Baptism. They are entirely different.

Matt. 3:11.

Autos	humas	baptisei	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
he	you	shall baptize	in	Spirit	Holy

Luke 3:16

autou Autos	humas	baptisei	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
He	you	shall baptize	in	Ghost	Holy

John 1:33

houtos	estin	ho	baptizoon	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
the same	is	he which	baptizeth	in	Spirit	holy

Acts 11:16

	humeis	de	baptistheesesthe	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
	ye	but	shall be baptized	in	Ghost	Holy

Mark: 1:8.

	autos	de	baptisei	humas	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
	he	but	shall baptize	you	in	Spirit	Holy

Acts 1:5

de	en	Pneumati	baptistheesesthe	Hagioo
but	in	Spirit	shall be baptized	Holy

The baptism in 1Cor. 12:12-13 is that which puts us into the body of Christ (cf. Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3). If we are in Christ we are a new creature, old things are passed away (2Cor. 5:17). There is now no condemnation (Rom. 8:1). The Holy Spirit is very much involved in our being born again (Jn. 3:5; 1Jn. 5:8; Eph. 1:13, 14; Ac. 2:38, 39; etc. See above).

OBJECTION: “In Acts 8:15 Christians did not have the Holy Spirit.”

ANSWER:

What they had not yet received was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit UPON them. “UPON” indicates the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit--perhaps because it was a visible sign (cf. Ac. 2:3, 17; 8:16; 10:44; 11:15; 19:6; Mark 1:10).

In contrast with Jesus, who while on earth had the Spirit without measure (Jn. 3:34), and had to go away in order for anyone else to receive it (Jn. 16:7), Christians received different measures of the Spirit (Eph. 4:7). Just as they could be “filled with the Spirit” more than once (Ac. 4:31; Jn. 3:34, 35), they could receive the spirit in different measures and different ways.

8. While they claim the same Spirit their teachings are in conflict.

United Pentecostals, Mormons, Assemblies of God, Moonies, etc. just do not mix, yet they all profess some or all of those claimed by others. How can they all be guided by the same

Spirit? Since none of them seem to have any greater power than the others, it would seem that none of them have what they claim.

9. They are often misled by false teachers.

Does the Holy Spirit teach contradictory things to different men and different groups?

If they had the gifts of either prophecy or discerning of spirits, false teachers should be detected and exposed. True prophets would be guided “into all truth” (Jn. 16:12; 1Cor. 14:37).

EXAMPLES:

a. “Mother” Ann Lee, of the Shakers. (1776)

She purportedly was able to speak in over 72 languages and has been repeatedly cited by tongues advocates to prove they have continued through the centuries.¹ However, Ann Lee² claimed to be Jesus Christ, returned in a woman's form!

b. Joseph Smith and Mormon leaders have claimed to have the spiritual gifts.

Sherrill, who has long been touted as some authority on the works of the Holy Spirit, cited the Mormons for support (p. 77). How in the world can Mormons be filled with the Holy Spirit when they follow a false-prophet who participated in polygamous adultery and taught the grossly pagan concept of many Gods who had become so by progression from being men?

c. Sun Myung Moon was spawned in the charismatic movement in South Korea.

Rev. Moon teaches his followers to believe that the mission of Jesus failed and that he is the new prophet and Messiah from the East who has come to restore all things. They teach that Jesus was the natural birth resulting from sexual relations with someone other than Mary's husband, Joseph (Zacharias the priest) and that the crucifixion was unplanned and unnecessary. They also believe in concealing what they believe under the Justification of “heavenly deception.”

There is no substantial difference between the practices of the Moonies and those of other charismatic preachers. I went on a trip to Korea with over a hundred preachers, most of them in the tongues movement. I took video pictures of them all together talking in “in tongues.” At the end of the trip most of them signed a document claiming that Moon was “spirit led.” It looked a lot more like the whole kit-and-caboodle were spirit possessed!

d. United Pentecostals.

They are at odds with the others over the nature of God and other issues. Some Church of God groups are at odds with other charismatic groups.

¹ John Sherrill, THEY SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES, p. 77
Donald Lee Barnett, GLOSSOLALIA, p. 28, 1969 ed.).

² ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA., 1956)

10. They claim that being baptized in the Holy Spirit is the “baptism of fire” (Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16)

ANSWER:

The statement about being “*baptized with fire*” is immediately followed, by the words, “*whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.*” This was a continuation of the sentence. There was no verse distinction in the original.

Note also that this is the only mention of being baptized in fire. Mark 1:8; Acts 1:5; 11:16, nor any other passage mentions it.

Note that these also omit the statement concerning the chaff being burned up with unquenchable fire. Therefore, the fact that wherever one is omitted, so is the other, would further confirm that the two statements relate to each other and not to baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The citation in Acts 1:5 has reference to what the apostles were to receive, and thus no mention is made of them being baptized with fire.

The only other thing the baptism of fire advocates have to try to bolster their case is Acts 2 where it speaks of “tongues like as of fire” sitting upon each of them. However, this does not say they were baptized in fire, and the evidence of the other passages negates that conclusion.

A. THE BEHAVIOR FRUIT

1. They profess that they know Him but do not obey what He says.

- a. Mt. 7:20-27. Hearing and obeying is more important than miracles.
- b. Lk. 6:46. He is Lord only to those who obey (cf. Rom. 6:16-18).
- c. Jn. 8:47. He that is of God hears the words of God.
- d. Jn. 14:15, 21, 23, 24. Those who do not keep his sayings do not love him.
- e. Jn. 15:14. We are His friends IF we keep His commandments.
- f. Ac. 5:32. The Holy Spirit is given to those who OBEY.
- g. 1Jn. 2:3, 4, 5. He that says he knows him but does not obey is a liar.
- h. 1Jn. 3:24. The Spirit is identified by obedience to his commands.
- i. 1Jn. 4:6. The Spirit of truth or error is evaluated by whether they follow the teachings of the Apostles.
- j. 1Jn. 5:2, 3. Loving God requires keeping His commandments.

2. What they claim as “fruit” does not prove Scripturally good under examination and over time.

Zeal, enthusiasm and “love” among charismatic believers are often cited as “fruit of the Spirit.” However, since such contradictory groups as “Moonies,” Mormons, Children of God and Assemblies of God make similar claims and the same “fruits,” we see that something is wrong with this reasoning. Do not Mormons as well as Pentecostals manifest love? The scriptures clearly show that such superficial conclusions are invalid.

- a. Matt. 7:20-23. Jesus specifically warned against accepting what appeared to be clothing of sheep, even if they profess to prophesy, cast out demons and do many mighty works in his name.
- b. 2Cor. 11:13-15. Those who serve Satan may appear to be ministers of righteousness.
- c. Matt. 6:2, 5, 16. Fasting, giving alms, and making long prayers are done by hypocrites (Matt. 6:2, 5, 16).
- d. 1Cor. 13:1-3. Speaking in tongues of men and angels, prophesying, knowing all mysteries, bestowing all one's goods to feed the poor, and even giving one's body to be burned, may still profit nothing.
- e. Matt. 5:46. Heathens have love, but godly love includes obedience to what God says (Jn. 14:15, 21, 23, 24; Mt. 7:21, 24).
- f. 2Thes. 2:11. Do they do what God says, or are they only following a delusion of their own heart?
- g. 1Ki. 18:28-29. The 450 prophets of Baal certainly had a lot of enthusiasm. Elijah put them to the test. They leaped about the altar and cried aloud, but no fire came.
- h. Rom. 10:2. Paul acknowledged that the Jews had a zeal but, *"not according to knowledge."*

I do not wish to paint all charismatic people black. Many are very sincere. My own wife came from the "holy rollers," as they were then called. However, that does not mean they are not deceived. *"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Prov. 16:25).

3. It is simply not true that those who speak in tongues somehow have a special corner on spirituality.

Even when tongues were present in the times of the Apostles, it did not make them spiritual. The church at Corinth was one of the most divided and troubled churches recorded.

They often have serious problems that no power they claim resolves. Biblical authority teaches that we must not assume that some appearances of righteousness necessarily validates their claims. Evil fruit properly and necessarily raises questions about their claims. I have had considerable experience with charismatic people over the last 50 years and there is a pattern of tendencies which is very disturbing.

The first congregation I served was almost half Pentecostal. Some years before, two women had come and held a "revival meeting." They gained a significant following and split the church. They then moved to a hall in town and started a separate congregation. In time they got into a fight among themselves and split again. One of the factions returned and in time again became embroiled in conflict with the other members. The preacher tried to deal with the problem but finally decided it was more than he could handle. I was called and being young and inexperienced, accepted with little idea of what I was getting into.

I worked hard trying to develop communication. All I got for my trouble was thrown physically off the property of their leader and a deaf ear from his followers. However, in time we pulled the church together and the charismatic people pulled out. That experience introduced me to several characteristic problems that seem almost inherent with them.

- a. They were impossible to placate.
- b. No scriptural teaching that raised any question about their practice would be considered.
- c. They regarded no one as spiritual that did not accept their claims without question and adopt their

loud demonstrative behavior.

- d. If they could not have things their way you could count on trouble.
- e. If they could not turn the congregation on to tongues they would tear it up.
- f. If they could not have things their way they would pull out and take as many as possible with them. I don't consider that "fruit of the Spirit."

4. Some charismatic groups have even sent "missionaries" into other churches to proselytize, resulting in strife and division.

All across this land, churches that have accepted charismatic people have been riddled with strife and division. Indeed, a church within a few miles of us has been split twice.

5. They are notoriously shallow in the knowledge of the word of God.

Feeling becomes the final authority and the Bible forced to fit. A thorough, balanced knowledge of the Bible is lacking. Any attempt to seek a careful examination of scripture is disdainfully called, "head religion."

6. Unstable and insecure

Rather than trust in the lord and walk by faith, they must rely upon miraculous manifestations to keep them pumped. This appears to result from a combination of low self-image and a feeling of insecurity, which translates into a need for something bigger than God's ordinary providence to keep them reassured and feeling important. The result is a roller coaster of highs and lows and the need for another "fix" to keep them pumped.

7. Inclined to Exaggeration

Claims of miraculous manifestations are grossly distorted with little or no foundation in fact. They will dogmatically insist, often with grand embellishments, on claims of the miraculous, with no attempt at verification. It is almost as if they were playing a game of, "Can you top this"! Some stories I have heard right from the pulpit would take top honors in a Liar's Club. The result is inflated ego and a considerable gullibility. I say this not only from my own observation. Numerous people among them have confided their own embarrassment at this tendency.

8. Dependency on some great person seems vital to their security.

The Jim Joneses, Joseph Smiths, Sun Young Moons, Aimee McPhersons, Ann Lees, Herbert Armstrongs, David Bergs, A. A. Alans, Oral Roberts, Jim Bakkers, and Jimmy Swaggarts seem crucial to their emotional dependency. Like flocks of starlings they fly from one healer or "prophet" to another. On their buildings and advertisements the most prominent feature of praise is not Jesus, but the name of the Evangelist. Example: "ORAL L. ROBERTS UNIVERSITY"

Here in Seattle we have gone through the "Jesus People Movement," the Community Chapel movement, and lately, Casey Treat who expounds a "Prosperity Gospel" in which he

unblushingly tells people that God wants him rich --and expects his followers to make him that way. Of course, there are numerous lesser lights, all trying to compete for the spoils or prestige (cf. Rom. 6:18).

9. A superiority that borders on arrogance often seems to be inherent.

There is a kind of pushy, gloating, smug superiority accompanied with contempt and hostility to any realistic evaluation. As one girl haughtily proclaimed, "You're doubtin' and doin' without while we're believin' and receivin'." A homosexual girl, gave me the put-down that we did "not have the Spirit." I Finally pointedly told her that whatever it was that she had, I did not want. She was the one with the problems!

It sometimes manifests itself as outright hypocrisy. They can gossip, undermine and be loose with the truth yet tell us that if we were just not so blind and dishonest, we could be like them! Big deal! What I see is that if I would be dishonest and willing to sell out my integrity and the welfare of others, I could make big bucks. Sorry, but that is not my ambition (2 Co. 11:19, 20).

10. The leaders have an almost obsessive preoccupation with money.

If there is anything that is characteristic in charismatic preachers it is the creative and ingenious ways they can induce people to part with their money. Witness the Oral L Roberts' claim that if he did not raise a million dollars God would strike him dead! Witness the claims of the health and wealth preachers like our local Casey Treat of Christian Faith Center, who claim, "God wants me rich!" Witness the huge sums diverted to their own bank accounts by Jim and Tammy Bakker for which they went to jail. This emphasis smells of scam all the way to the bank.

No less smelly are their lawsuits against each other and reports by people in their organizations of money received in responses to pleas for children or mission works in other countries diverted to their own use. The amazing thing to me is how much people seem to enjoy being fooled.

11. Consider the failure of their "prophets" and "discerners of spirits" to expose the scoundrels that are so often attracted or produced in the movement.

Messages straight from God are heady stuff! The deceiver often begins a bit cautiously, claiming to be merely "following the Lord's leading." Success in gaining a following encourages him to begin relying more and more upon "signs" or miraculous claims in leading his following. These get progressively more exaggerated until he begins feeling that whatever he decides is the leading of God. Since no one can listen to what God is telling him, he soon discovers that the more extravagant the claim the more those who follow signs give and exalt him in holy fervor. Such power and inflation of self-importance is intoxicating in the extreme. Eventually the distortion of reality carries him and his followers beyond all restraints. In his self-delusion he becomes convinced that his thought or desire is a "message from God." The word of God is only used to lend credibility to his claims. No matter what he does, his words are the actual authority. Consider the following.

a. The “**Children of God**”

The “Children of God” was led by David Berg, who calls himself, “Moses David”. He was later charged in a state attorney general's report with gross sexual abuses. I have some literature by them with poems supposedly given “in tongues” which are too obscene to publish. One is entitled, “Sex Works.” Another is filled with profanity against preachers.

b. The “**Jesus People**” movement.

The “Jesus People” movement was started by Linda Meissner, a former worker with David Wilkerson, writer of “The Cross And The Switchblade.” Later she left her husband and joined the “Children of God,” resulting in a public legal struggle over properties they had accumulated. I met Linda at “The House of Joshua,” a male commune here in Seattle, during a confrontation with Robert Sirico, one of their representatives. She heard of my discussion with Mr. Sirico and came over to order me out.

c. **Robert Sirico**

Sirico later went on the radio with a “healing ministry” and got a big write-up in the news papers. He was backed by a number of charismatic leaders in the community. However, in time the “fruit” ripened and he hit the headlines as organizing a gay church (The Metropolitan Church of Seattle) and performing homosexual marriages. A year or so later he made the headlines in a police raid in Los Angeles where “slaves” were being sold for up to \$75.00, complete with paddles and leather restraints for sado-masochistic relationships. The last I heard he had joined the Roman Catholic Priesthood.

d. **Troy Perry**

Troy Perry, a Pentecostal preacher, founded the Metropolitan Community Church of Los Angeles, primarily for homosexuals, and wrote a book entitled, “THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD AND HE KNOWS I'M GAY.”

e. **Jim Jones**

Should we overlook Jim Jones and the infamous Jones Town tragedy, when over nine hundred people were seduced into murder and suicide under the claim that he held special powers from God? Here again were homosexual and other acts of depravity.

f. **Aimee McPherson, founder the Four Square Gospel Church**

Nor are these things confined to the “fringie” elements of the Charismatic movement. Mrs. Aimee McPherson, **founder of the Four Square Gospel Church**, was the sensation of the country over her meetings in a cottage by the sea and her public disputes with her mother. Read about it in “Storming Heaven,” autobiography of Milton Berle prepared by Lately Thomas, (p. 123-129).

g. Don Barnett of Community Chapel

Locally, here in Seattle, **Pastor Donald Lee Barnett of Community Chapel** (3,000 members) made big headlines with his “spiritual connection” doctrine in which people danced with and looked deep into the eyes of those not their mates and found something that made them get into bed and out of their marriages. The result has been a bundle of lawsuits, splitting of the church and his ultimate firing. However, he has started over with a few hundred loyal followers. This illustrates the depth of gullibility and the lack of any guidance of the Spirit.

h. A. A. Allen

A. A. Allen, for years was one of the best known Pentecostal traveling Evangelists. His theme was, “God does not want you sick. Come and receive healing” [And bring a full purse -ARJ]. However, he himself was beset with serious deterioration in his knees which at that time could not be healed. Further, several years before his death from acute alcoholism, he publicly denied being arrested for drunken driving in Knoxville, Tennessee on Oct. 21, 1955, forfeiting a \$1,000.00 bond, even though the court records proved beyond question that he was the man.

i. Marjoe Gortner

Then there was the child wonder, **Marjoe Gortner** who, from age three, supposedly was preaching and healing by special powers. However, in time he publicly renounced the whole thing as a sham, saying, “It was all memorization and business, and I lied to reporters about dreams and visions from God that I never had.” Passing these off as outdated cases does not answer the question. If the charismatic churches had what they claimed, why were they not able to detect and expose these things?

j. Jim Bakker of the television P.T.L. Club

Again, we recently saw an abundance of fruits ripening on the Assemblies Of God tree as **Jim Bakker**, head of the P.T.L. (“Praise The Lord.”) Club, who ripped off the “ministry” for millions, had sex with a fellow male preacher and, along with him, sexually assaulted a secretary, Jessica Haun. He was exposed by good old **Jimmy Swaggart**, another multi-million dollar Television charismatic Preacher.

k. Jimmy Swaggart

Ironically, Jimmy had also accused a fellow TV Evangelist, **Marvin Gorman** of fornication, and got him defrocked. Then, having knocked off his chief rivals, a funny thing happened on the way to fame and fortune.

Evangelist Gorman, nursing a grudge, settled the score by taking some very incriminating photographs of **Swaggart** coming out of a motel room with a known prostitute. A few interviews with the “girls” and Jimmy also was greatly embarrassed. To top things off, Gorman sued Jimmy and won ten million dollars for lying about his sex life. Of course, people who buy into these deceptions can stomach almost anything. Most of these guys

were soon back doing their thing, except for Gorman who lost his ministry and Bakker, who got about forty years (but is now out) for misusing the funds. People who follow such men are certainly not being guided by the Spirit.

I. Peter Poppoff

Finally, there was good old **Peter Poppoff** who told people all about themselves while “healing” them. It sounded so convincing that people willed themselves healed, even though they were not. --That is, until he met up with The Great Randi, who has spent his life acquainting himself with the ways people are fooled.

Randi could not deny that Poppoff was phenomenally correct in the things he told people. It was simply too good to be true. Randi smelled a rat. So, he brought in a device for detecting radio waves and tuned into Poppoff's wife feeding the information to her husband through a wireless ear receiver from cards the people filled out in advance! So, why could not the “discerners of spirits” detect the fraud? They were obviously of a kindred spirit.

In defense they cite leaders in other churches who have fallen. True, but these other leaders are claiming no such gifts. If they were, I would also say they were false prophets. The key issue is their claim of the miraculous gifts. If they had these gifts they should be able to expose the hearts of the wicked (Ac. 5:1-10; 1Cor. 12:10; 14:24, 25, 29).

They will vigorously deny that such instances are representative of the charismatic movement as a whole. A few charismatic leaders doing wrong does not prove that they are all bad. However, it certainly shows that there are some very wolfish acting scoundrels professing to be sheep, and it is therefore both proper and necessary to question them on the basis of Matt. 7:15. The rot is clearly there. The only question is just how deep does it go? Unfortunately, there seems to be almost no end to these kinds of problems, --too much appeal to vanity, --too much money, --too much power, --too many “suckers.”

Where are their discerners of spirits? (1Cor. 12:10; Ac. 5:1-14; 16:16-18; 2Ki. 5:20-27)

The issue is not the large percentage of problem people or that the leaders are so often guilty of deception, immorality and exploitation but that while claiming apostolic powers, they cannot detect and expose the frauds. The apostles knew the hearts of those who were lying (Ac. 5:1-11) and the prophets exposed the hearts of unbelievers (1Cor. 14:24, 25). However, modern “prophets” claim the gift of discerning spirits (1Cor. 12: 10), yet I, with no miraculous gift, can see through these impostors better than they.

What I have presented here is only a tip of the iceberg. There are multitudes of lesser lights being exposed all of the time--and very likely a lot more getting away with it. Again, I say, the fundamental problem is not that such people do turn up but that **while they claim to have the powers given by the Holy Spirit, they cannot discern and expose these people as did Peter with Ananias and Sapphira** (Ac. 5). All kinds of justifications and excuses are given but the fact is that Jesus did warn that those who had such fruits were to be rejected.

Healing: A matter of faith?

Religion



By RAY RUPPERT
Religion Editor

Healing by faith has both a valid history and a checkered past.

From apostolic times until the present, the belief in the healing ministry has been accepted and upheld by many in various denominations.

There also have been charlatans. The unscrupulous have found that illness is a fertile field for making money by preying upon the credulity of those in pain.

Because of these opposing views, a fair understanding of a healing ministry has become difficult.

But let's try.

Robert Sirico, 19, came to Seattle about a year ago and began a healing ministry. He has drawn large crowds to monthly services at Bethany United Presbyterian Church. A service is planned at 7:30 p. m. February 8.

Among those attending the services on November 9, 1970, was Mrs. Flornell A. Marion, 62, unable to walk without crutches and severe pain after two automobile accidents.

Since that healing service, Mrs. Marion no longer needs crutches; her spine, kneecaps and hip are in line; the pain has gone.

A physician who had attended Mrs. Marion during her suffering was not surprised, for reasons which have to do with faith if not with miracles.

SIRICO'S OWN EXPERIENCE with religious phenomena began when he was 7, a Roman Catholic, preparing for First Communion and learning the Act of Contrition. As he prayed, "it was as though God and I were together and I was speaking directly to him."

Sirico was 11, preparing for Confirmation, when he spoke in tongues.

"I was kneeling in the church before a crucifix," he said. "As I looked up, I saw the love He had hanging there on that cross for me personally. I went to speak to Him . . . it came out in another language.

"That I believe to be my baptism in the Holy Spirit."

Sirico no longer is Catholic. He was ordained by the Full Gospel Ministers Fellowship, Chicago. He came to Seattle after being stationed in the Navy at Bremerton. He was released from the Navy because of his clergy status.

Sirico became involved in youth ministry in the Seattle area and became aware that healings were taking place around him. His ministry shifted from youth to healing.

He talked about how healings occur:

"Generally, I believe in the laying on of hands. It's scriptural. That's why I practice it. But I don't believe in it as a point of contact.

"I believe that your faith in the Holy Spirit is your point of contact. You don't need anyone to touch you or you don't have to touch anyone."

What is his own role in the healing?

"I'm a spectator. I really am. I know that I'm not the healer.

"This is probably one of the most important things to me. I learned that God does not and cannot share His glory. The reason for healing is to give glory to God.

"A servant of God, that's all I am. I'm no special medium of healing. I don't profess to have the gift of healing. I believe the gift belongs to the Holy Spirit."

Sirico is uncomfortable with some faith healers. "I use the term although I hate it," he said. He criticized some as being motivated by money. Yet he added:

"Still, healings do occur, actual physical miracles occur at their services. The way I look at it, God used the Apostle Paul, but God also used the jackass."

Sirico said that he was not necessary for the healing to take place.

"I believe in God's sovereignty," he said. "I believe that those people came to that service that night expecting God to move. God is going to honor their faith . . .

"I don't know, I really don't know, what my actual position is. To tell the truth, I don't want to know. I'm afraid that if I did know, I would think more than I ought about myself.

"The way I look at it, I'm just there conducting things. I'm not the healer. I'm not the Saviour. I just watch it, like everybody else."

Offerings at the services support the healing ministry which is being incorporated as Truth in Healing.

MRS. MARION WAS INJURED in an automobile accident on March 15, 1966. After a year and a half of recuperation, she still had immobility in her knees, a hip, a shoulder and her back.

In late November, 1969, she was in another accident.

She described her condition: "My right hip was out of the socket a little bit; my kneecaps were out of place two or three inches; my vertebrae were bent like 'Vs' instead of being equal marks."



Robert Sirico gestured during a service of healing.—Staff photo by Richard S. Heyza.

She quoted one of her doctors, "You're in such a critical condition I don't see how you walk."

After some months, Mrs. Marion was examined by orthopedic specialists at a hospital.

"They decided they could help me," Mrs. Marion said. "They said something about stainless steel in my hip and plastic kneecaps. But I'd have to lose some weight."

She returned to the hospital in October, 1970.

"Another doctor thought it would be better if he broke my right leg in four places and just reset it . . . to bring the leg back in line," Mrs. Marion said.

"But they weren't too sure I would last through the surgery."

Mrs. Marion was despondent. She went home — to spend most of her time in bed. Once, when she couldn't sleep, she listened to radio station KTW and heard Sirico talk about healing and prayer.

With some reluctance and misgiving, Mrs. Marion decided to attend the service of healing on November 9. Several times she almost backed out, but finally she was seated in the crowded church.

"I was hurting so bad I was just sitting there gritting my teeth," she said.

She remembered that at one point she had said: "God, I can't take this any longer. Take me home tonight or heal me. I can't live any longer like this."

The congregation stood to sing a hymn.

"My knees began to knock together," Mrs. Marion said. "I'd been warned my right knee might become disengaged, break. So I sat down real quick and grabbed my knees . . .

"The pain was worse than anything I'd had up to that time. Then a streak of lightning went through me from head to toes and I turned cold. I've never been so cold in all my life. I thought God had taken me at my word . . .

"Then, suddenly, I was warm all over, warmth I can't describe. Somebody put his arms clear around me and hugged me and said, in a voice as clear as yours or Robert's, 'Everything is going to be all right now.'

"When the 'now' was said, I heard someone else say, 'It's you, isn't it?' I looked up and Robert was standing in the aisle."

Mrs. Marion did walk without her crutches. She went up and down a four-step stairway.

"I sang, and then we sang," she said. "I've never had

such joy. I don't mean happiness. I mean joy, the kind you can't describe. The kind that you just feel you could float."

She went back to her doctor for a through examination, including X-rays. Mrs. Marion quoted her doctor, "It's incredible; I don't believe what I see."

She commented, "I didn't believe in healing. But I guess I laid it on the line: 'God, heal me tonight or take me home.'"

ONE OF THE SPECIALISTS who had examined Mrs. Marion during her period of suffering said that her back pain was of a typical psychosomatic nature and her knee troubles were of a type that could improve with a program of weight loss and exercise.

He also said there was very little, if anything, of a physical, organic nature wrong with her.

He also said her recovery at the healing service was entirely within the realm of possibility because many people with such ailments are not able to establish rapport with a physician.

And many physicians, he said, fail to recognize that motivation, faith, belief in the physician — physical or psychic — are likely to produce results that surgery cannot.

The suggestion of resetting Mrs. Marion's legs or giving her plastic kneecaps was mentioned as a way of getting her started on a weight-reduction and exercise program, he said.

Apparently, she was not motivated sufficiently until she went to the healing service, he said.

All this may be a question of semantics.

One person's "motivation" may be another person's "faith."

After Jesus cured the leper who returned to praise Him, He said, "Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole."

Mrs. Marion did use crutches and was in pain. That no longer is true.

Was it faith or motivation that healed her?

DIALOGUE



BY EARL HANSEN
Religion Editor

Not Much Rejoicing in Plans for a 'Gay' Church

"A Christian church for homosexuals—here?" "Can't the police do something about it?" "A church of queers for Christ's sake?" "Whatever happened to the old Bible truths?" "It's difficult to accept, let alone understand. We used to have healing services in our own church led by the young man starting this so-called church. Now he says he's been homosexual all along."

These remarks are typical of the reaction to the Rev. Robert Sirico's announcement this week that he is homosexual and will start a church here especially for homosexuals. His declaration that he is "proud and glad that God has made me this way" was met with startled disfavor.

Sirico for the past two years has been prominent in the area's Charismatic Renewal movement, with his "Miracle Healing" services promoted to capacity crowds by hosting ministers and priests involved in the "spirit-filled, speaking-in-tongues" phenomenon. He was often billed as "a spirit-filled young man whom God has blessed with a marvelous, healing ministry," by the more than 70 ministers, priests and laymen of the area's "Charismatic Presbytery," to which he belonged.

"He had me fooled. I thought his healing services were blessed by God," an elderly Queen Anne woman reported.

"That's going to be part of the tragedy out of this," a spokesman for the Charismatic Presbytery asserted. "Many won't be discerning. They'll assume all healing services are a fraud. Scads of people were told that this man was God's man. We're sick about it. We loved Bob and still do. The situation is enough to gag a maggot."

The 20-year-old Rev. Sirico, an ordained Pentecostal, says he suppressed his homosexuality until four months ago, but now with biblical misconceptions clarified he is ready to begin a ministry here especially among the homosexual community. His will be the 30th church of the Metropolitan Community Churches, a Los Angeles-based denomination founded in 1968.

But exceptionally hard times may be ahead, since efforts by the area's Charismatic Presbytery will reportedly be the first organized opposition the denomination will have faced in its spread to the major cities of the U.S.

More than 20 members of the CP prepared a statement after Sirico and two homosexual companions reportedly "walked out belligerently and defiantly" from Thursday's meeting of the group.

The statement, written mostly by the Rev. Dennis Bennett, rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, expressed "deep love and concern for persons with homosexual problems." It told of individuals and small groups that had sought to counsel and dissuade Sirico.

The statement declared:

"Mr. Sirico is not actually ministering to the homosexual community in starting a 'gay church,' but really condoning and encouraging what the Scripture and the Church clearly recognize as a serious sin."

"Ministry to the homosexual community would involve helping the homosexual to be delivered and healed and to take an effective and normal place in society."

Thus are the lines drawn, for Sirico says the "blessings of the Holy Spirit are being passed onto the homosexual community," that they're not exclusively owned by the Charismatic Renewal people.

"My beliefs have not changed," Sirico regards himself as a fundamental Christian. "I have a relationship with the Lord and a peace that I never knew existed," he smiled. He says he has repressed his homosexual feelings since he was 13.

To a CR member who Sirico says offered to "cast the homosexual demon out of me," he countered, "Go away or I'll cast the heterosexual demon out of you." To others he quotes from the Book of Acts, "Call not uncommon what God has cleansed."

He admits losing many personal friends who "feel they can no longer associate with me." Included is his own family, at least temporarily. "My mother's reaction has been, 'Come home and have some lasagna and you'll feel better.'"

The tall, lean, likeable young man smiles frequently. "I'm hoping to be married to a beautiful man in Los Angeles whose work is translating for the deaf. I've never been so happy," he added.

But it was with looks of anguish that members of the CR spoke following Thursday's confrontation. Their joint, written statement ended on a note of "deep regret and grief at his (Sirico's) falling away."

Wavering voices suggested a genuineness. Sirico had walked out. He had not been "disfellowshipped" as he predicted he would be.

"I love him. He's been deceived. He wasn't like this before," Rod McDougal explained. With eyes misty and his voice breaking, McDougal of the "Jesus People" told his version of how Sirico, his car full of belongings, came to be turned away at McDougal's door from a ready meal and a place to stay.

Sirico had told this writer earlier of being rejected and abandoned upon declaring his homosexuality. McDougal's story is that Sirico chose to remain with



his homosexual companions and rejected offered help "to see him through this sickness."

McDougal, who said he and his wife have fasted and prayed for Sirico, agreed with other members of the CR on a unified stand against Sirico's plans for a new church here.

"I've worked with dope addicts, prostitutes, runaways, homosexuals, thieves, all sorts of people," McDougal explained. "But to help anyone they've got to try to stop surrounding themselves with ones with weaknesses like their own."

And therein lies the heartbeat of the Charismatic Renewal group's opposition to Sirico's stand.

The Rev. Dennis Finch of Faith Temple Community Church, one of the CR movement's area leaders, reported that he and others have followed Scripture in going individually and as small groups to Sirico "to reason with him."

"But Bob was adamant and refused to think he might be wrong. We told him there was hope for re-

lease, so how can he say he's been rejected and we didn't offer help?" Finch reasoned.

"We're not just dealing with a physical condition here, but with a spiritual condition that opens the door for many people, especially for many young people struggling in this area. There are latent homosexual possibilities in some people and with certain exposures, certain condoning..."

The Rev. Richard Denham, in whose Queen Anne Bethany Presbyterian Church Sirico held some of his healing services, explained that Sirico went to New Mexico and Los Angeles in February where he "worked over a bit of Greek in the New Testament" with persons sympathetic to a condoning of homosexuality within Christendom.

Sirico was befriended by the Rev. Troy Perry, founder of the MMC denomination, in Los Angeles, and in announcing his intentions to begin a church here declared Wednesday:

"The harsh stand of most churches has driven many homosexually-oriented men and women—especially the idealistic young—to suicide. It has destroyed in others the dignity and self-esteem that is the foundation of a healthy personality and a productive career."

"The gay men and women who have overcome this self-hate to live full lives have generally had to reject Christianity utterly to do it, because Christianity is generally represented as incompatible with their nature."

The Metropolitan Community Churches are meeting a great need by bringing the assurance of the love of Christ to gay people on the terms of self-acceptance that healthy people must live by.

Sirico's plans here, based on the idea that the Church's history of "excommunicating, scourging or burning of 'faggots' as heretics and sinners is an arrogant perversion of the Christian law of love," are welcomed by some.

Tim Mayhew of the Seattle Gay Alliance said that "in the work of re-educating people who have derived their moral standards from religious teachings, it is helpful to have the authority of God on our side."

But Presbyterian Denham cites the New Testament as proclaiming that there are things so shameful you don't even discuss. "If one believes in the Bible,

then it is the Authority, the Court of Last Appeal, there are Divine principles and order," he asserted.

"Homosexuality is not acceptable according to God's Divine Plan. In a submissive society there are losses of absolutes and we can get sucked in and succumb to the darkness and it's we who get broken, not the Divine Plan," Denham explained.

The Rev. Eugene Drayton, the black leader of the House of Prayer of All Nations, said members of the CR had tried to reason with Sirico that "man is simply prone to sin, but that God heals and He can heal anybody." Results, he confessed, had gotten them nowhere. "Bob is like a drowning man," he added.

Drayton described as vague Sirico's charges that "if the church purged itself of homosexuals it would be limping." The homosexual has said there are area ministers and church leaders, especially in the field of music, who are as he is.

Today, however, the smiling Sirico doesn't act like a drowning man. If he is of a group that is rewriting the rules of the Bible, perhaps the Holy Spirit whom the Charismatic Renewal people have been proclaiming for so long has power to change anybody—will reveal them right and "heal," Sirico.

The youthful, would-be church leader, did, however, break one rule this week. Bob Johnson, manager of the Broadway Theater, says that no Sirico-led service will be held at the Broadway.

Sirico announced the site before signing any contract. "There's no possible way of them getting the theater now," Johnson advised.

He's going about it all wrong, what with a press conference and all. Maybe he should start small, and build from there."

Despite efforts by CR people to discourage their members and friends from attending, Sirico's May 1 "Miracle Healing" service at the Seattle Center Playhouse was packed to capacity. But these were mostly people wanting healing or to witness healing.

His new effort will be with persons not wanting healing, persons most likely wanting assurance that they're O.K. the way they are. Persons at the least not envious of the life-styles of what others call normal."

Sadly so, says Denham, "It is the old story repeated of persons who go from doctor to doctor until they find one who will say what they want to hear."

Letters to the Re

Re your article, entitled "Area Church Leaders Stop Short of Denouncing War":

If war is popular the churches get their hands in the blood by sending in ministers to bless the killers. If war gets unpopular they get on the bandwagon and have farce meetings like the one you attended.

Getting good publicity with these meetings tickles enough people to keep following blindly.

HELEN NEWLIN
2211 Kamber Rd.
Bellevue

Your column "Too Busy for Peace" with the accompanying Collins cartoon "There Isn't a Problem That Can't Be Bombed," might have done more for President Nixon to have seen than all his alleged conferences with our military minds prior to his latest decisions.

R. G. A.
Bellevue

I'm getting lots of comments on the article you did on me. ("Chaplain-writer Finds His Niche," P-I, May 6.) You have "some" audience! I'm not sure if all of them are like the guy who sent the enclosed, but enough of them are. (Enclosed are articles entitled, "The Truth About Hell" and "God's World of Tomorrow," by "Frank and Ernest" of World-wide Radio Program.)

JOSEPH T. MCGLOIN, S.J.
Marymount Military Academy
Tacoma

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that, all other factors being the same, if a communist government in Saigon were facing a savage attack from an immoral, oppressive, dictatorial fascist regime in Hanoi, the "Seattle Ecumenical Witness for Peace" would join activists demanding President Nixon increase the tempo of bombing, not urging him to stop.

F. W. ANDERSON
Seattle

Thanks for your article on the Armstrongs and the Worldwide Church of God. We have been somewhat of succors (sic) in that we did enjoy Garner Ted Armstrong on television, thought he was dynamic, and took their magazines because he urged us to.

But we never even thought of the Church affiliation. We have our own church (Lutheran), so were not at all interested.

However, occasionally I sent \$5 because we felt we should more or less help pay for the publications we received. What a fool I was. I just can't get over such a man as Herbert Armstrong. We really were asleep...

ANDY AND MARGARET LARSEN
Moses Lake

So the Catholic bishop walked out on the voting at the peace workshop. More power to him!

As Wayne Morse said they would back in '63, the coffins start coming home.

The clergyman that said the funeral words on Saturday, on Sunday is looking out at the mother of the young man just buried. He is to tell her her son dies in an immoral war, I suppose.

'Fish' Participants

Pastor to perform homosexual marriages

As pastor of Seattle's first church organized primarily to minister to the homosexual community, the Rev. Robert Sirico said yesterday he will perform homosexual marriages.

The Metropolitan Community Church of Seattle will have its first service at 11 a. m. May 21 in the Broadway Theater, Mr. Sirico said.

The Seattle church will be linked to the Metropolitan

Community Church of Los Angeles and becomes the 30th church in the nation openly serving homosexuals.

Mr. Sirico, 21, ordained a Pentecostal minister, has been in Seattle for about two years, conducting a service of healing with the support of several Queen Anne churches.

His announcement that he is himself a homosexual and that he is beginning the new



Rev. Robert Sirico

church has led to a split with his backers in the Robert Sirico Foundation. Mr. Sirico said his entire board has resigned.

He said that most of his life, aware he was a homosexual, he took the position that homosexuality was a perversion and condemned in the Bible, but said his views have changed.

Citing in particular First Corinthians 6:9, Mr. Sirico

said he now understands the Bible to condemn "trying to change one's sexual orientation."

State law refusing marriage licenses to adults of the same sex are now under legal attack, Sirico said. He added, however, that as a religious ceremony, homosexual marriages can be performed by an ordained minister.

He said the board of the

Robert Sirico Foundation, organized to support his healing ministry, could not approve of him as a homosexual and considered it a perversion.

In his healing ministry, he said, he had found it impossible to "totally deliver" a person from homosexuality and had seen some become so despairing as to commit suicide.



'Gay' Church: Bodyguards to Keep it Gay To The P-I

BY EARL HANSEN
Religion Editor

Protected by bodyguards, the author of "The Lord Is My Shepherd and He Knows I'm Gay," is here for the weekend. He's the Rev. Troy Perry of Los Angeles, the celebrated (some say notorious) founder and leader of a Christian (some say anti-Christian) denomination especially for homosexuals.

Bodyguards this weekend are also protecting Seattle's gay minister, the Rev. Robert Sirico.

Advertisements of Perry's appearances and the official sanctioning into the denomination tomorrow of Sirico's three-month-old congregation has been followed by threats from anonymous "Christians." One caller reportedly hung up on Sirico with the following:

"Maybe your church will burn down with Perry in it."

It was one of the latest threats in what Sirico claims has been ongoing harassment ever since he surfaced as an avowed homosexual, right with God, happy with what he is, and freed from an "oppressive" segment of Christendom.

Last year Sirico's "Spirit-filled ministry" was a hot item, with his "healing services" widely promoted by the area's Charismatic-Renewal Movement. They speak in tongues. Its members are currently among the more vocal church people in opposition to a gay church here.

One Sirico's spirit-filled, former admirers began her letter to him:

"If you were a John Doe I would not write the way I do. I would not expect him to know what you should know. But you, a minister, are doing a vile and filthy sin in the name of my wonderful Lord."

Another letter writer included the following:

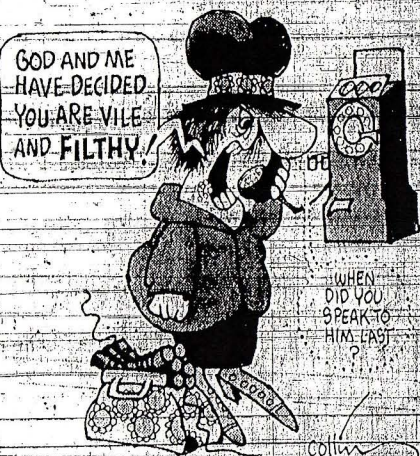
"Robert, you never should have started those meetings to let a bunch of us who fully trusted you be dragged down to hell with you. Thanks to the shame you brought to the Whole Body of Christ... Shame... Your image will always follow me to death's door... Your damnation will follow you until God says, 'Robert, your name is called to the pit.'"

May your followers and marriages be gaul to your soul. God curse and spue you out of His Mouth..."

Ideas Shared

And these ideas are apparently shared by a host of opponents of the gay minister's current mission, a church which tomorrow becomes officially a part of the Metropolitan Community Church, Perry's denomination for homosexuals.

This column of May 13, entitled, "Not Much Rejoicing in Plans for a Gay Church," quoted no less than a half-dozen "spirit-filled" ministers, all former Sirico



associates, who vehemently claimed him to be a stricken and fallen man. They've campaigned to keep their flocks away from him.

To which the gay minister smilingly admits: "I've lived in the same kind of tower they live in. But I just wish now that every homosexual would turn lavender for an hour."

And the hour he's talking about is the Sunday church hour. If he's right, each of the men quoted in the mentioned column, plus many others, would be able to "look to their left and to their right and see in lavender men whom they now speak of as being 'used of God' or 'blessed of God.'"

According to Sirico, homosexuals who do admit their situation to their ministers have prayed for, had the demons cast from them, been virtually rolled on the floor, and yet their sex orientation is the same as it was before.

The one-time "miracle service" leader continues to challenge his former Christian teammates to produce one case of an avowed homosexual whom they've seen "cured." He regards homosexuality as not illness, but that those who would oppress others unlike themselves are, in fact, "the sick ones."

Exorcised Demons

Just the thought of "fags" or "queers" setting up a Christian church that condones and blesses their lifestyles seems to trigger actions which dominated support Sirico's claim.

One church minister, upon learning of his son's homosexuality, is reported to have first prayed over them, exorcised the demons out of, then sent his son to a psychiatrist, and finally tried "beating it out of him."

Sirico contended that if this writer were approached by a gay man, "I might well react by taking a swing. Without admitting that I'd removed the jacket to Perry's book when a couple across a coffee counter

saw what I was reading, the remark went uncontested. Does one swing at what he doesn't understand?"

And one might have trouble letting pass remark of how great it is for two men in bed "to hold one another close and confess together, 'Isn't God wonderful.'"

"Homosexuality is real and you can't cast it out. And we didn't crawl out of a sewer," Sirico asserts. And his citing of the church's history of attempting to "exorcise the demons out of anything it cannot handle or understand," may be valid.

Following one of his services which are held Sunday afternoons and evenings at the Capitol Hill Methodist Church he recalls how "a tall, young man pressed something into my hand."

"It was a torn pass to the gay baths. 'I've come home after being away from Christ for six years,'" Sirico heard tell.

Baptized in this area's premier "Spirit-filled" church, the man had had to "relegate what he was to the baths on Saturday night for the pure sex of it."

Persons formerly suicidal and people "knifed, rejected and persecuted by the church," will reportedly be among the congregation that tomorrow will be chartered as the 43rd church of Troy Perry's four-year-old denomination.

Have Lasagna

Sirico, whose mother still thinks he ought to "come home and have some lasagna and see a psychiatrist," contends:

"If it means I have to ruin my reputation and lose friends and family in order to save someone from suicide, then it just has to be."

He attests to his newly found denomination's belief that Jesus, were he alive today, would be found among those whose church "is not a vacation land for saints, but a hospital for sinners."

And split with the remainder of Christendom over what is considered sin, the "yet-remaining fundamental," former Pentecostal preacher likens his church's current struggles for gay liberation with the civil rights movement of the late fifties.

"If I have to be the person here who says, 'I ain't movin' to the back of the bus,' then so be it," Sirico reasoned.

The word "Church," he reminds followers, "as used in the New Testament means 'called out ones' and a 'body of believers.' You can have a church without a building, but you cannot have a church without dedicated people."

Thus with bodyguards to make certain that he and Perry are not muzzled tonight and tomorrow, during their calling together of "oppressed and knifed" Christians, a church will be chartered in the old Methodist building behind the giant, Group Health Hospital.

Perry, whose efforts to lead a "straight" life by marrying and having children ended in a suicide attempt, begins his book:

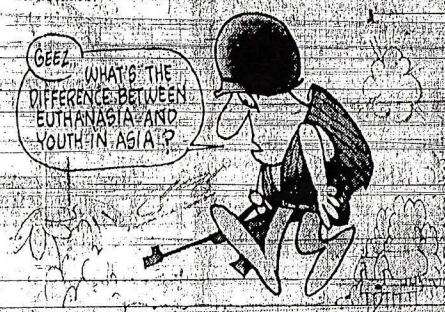
"I am not a creature from the outer darkness. I am a homosexual, a man of flesh and blood. And I have a few things to say..."

Many reject any suggestion that he's any kind of a group health leader, but this weekend a whole lot of people will dine and worship together in a church and not feel rotten.

Readers' Letters

Religion Editor

In my 91 years I have never heard an approach for the gain before such as the current idea of having a government board appointed to permit mercy killings (euthanasia) in cases of useless and impaired brain structures.



This would be no more unjust or immoral than sending our boys to wars to be maimed or killed.

There must be some control to prevent the unscrupulous from rushing in to claim only the assets. This should not be a decision of the medical profession. Surely this would show as much mercy to our aged as we now show to our pets.

FLORA CULP PETERSON
315 Malden Ave.

Re: your column on Kathryn Kuhlman at the Arena.

You did an unfair job. I was there and I felt the Holy Spirit more than I ever have before.

I really feel sorry for you because you must really be spiritually blind.

You see, I can understand where your head is at because mine used to be in the same place. I could never believe that miracles like Jesus did would happen today. You see, until you meet Jesus Christ face to face you'll never believe in such things.

You see, Jesus died on the cross for you. Even if you were the only person in the world, he would have died. He loves you so much. He took your place (punishment) because you're a dirty sinner and deserve to die.

But when you ask the Lord to forgive you for going your own way and not his, Jesus comes into your life in the form of the Holy Spirit.

Please give Jesus your life. He really is a neat dude. He gives you peace, joy and love. But you can't go halfway. The Lord can't stand trippers.

And after you've given yourself to Him, go to another Kathryn Kuhlman service. Maybe you'll get healed. You certainly will get blessed.

DEB TESTMEYER
2800 W. Hayes

Regarding the Kathryn Kuhlman meeting, I was one who stood waiting for 40 minutes with many others, and on reaching the door being told no more could be admitted.

I felt so sorry for some of the poor cripples who



"The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it's the same problem you had last year."
—John Foster Dulles

THE LIMA NEWS

Serving Northwest Ohio More Than 88 Years

Weather

Sunny and warmer today with highs in the upper 80s. Mostly fair, warm and humid tonight and Sunday. Lows tonight will be in the mid and upper 60s. Highs Sunday will be in the lower 90s. Probability of rain near zero today and tonight. See weather map on page 4.

24 Pages, 2 Sections

Vol. 89, No. 188

SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1973

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10 Cents

Baptist Minister Accepts Call Of Homosexual Cincy Church

CINCINNATI, Ohio (AP) — The Rev. Robert Sirico, pastor of the newly formed homosexual Metropolitan Church of Cincinnati, said Friday that "being gay is not something you do, but something you are."

Sirico, a licensed Baptist minister, was called this week by a group of 30 persons who worshiped at unitarian church since Easter. He quickly accepted the position as minister.

He said the church is not interested in converting heterosexuals to homosexuality. Sirico said the church, which claims 20,000 members in the U. S., Canada and England, has

many non-homosexuals as members.

Members use "gay," "Homophile" and "Homosexual" to identify themselves and the membership is white, non-white, male, female, gay and "straight," Sirico said.

Sirico, who came to Cincinnati from a congregation in Seattle, Wash., said he declared himself a homosexual two years ago, adding that he had had sexual relations with no one.

"Being gay is not something you do, but something you are," he said.

Where other churches seek

sinners, Sirico seeks homosexuals who have no church.

"We went to the bars and found great interest," he said.

The MCC national is "fundamentalist but not legalistic," and its members and ministers preach that the "primary thing in the Gospel is that God loves us . . . God loves everyone."

Sirico said he scorns Christians who choose biblical verses that condemn homosexuality and ignore verses that condemn practices he said are more socially accepted today.

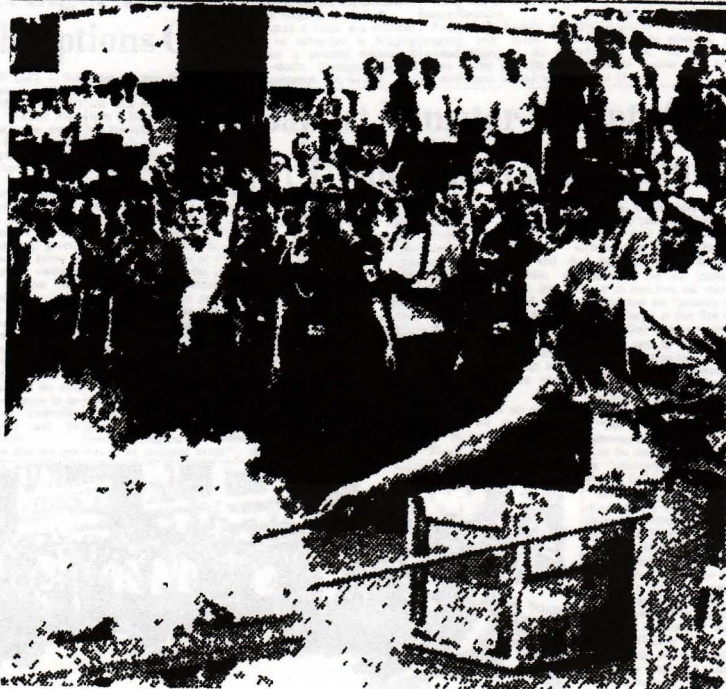
"The great oppressor of homosexuals in history has been the church," he said, with its "misinterpretations of the word of God."

Sirico said many MCC churches have been burned, including "the Mother Church" of the founder, the Rev. Troy Perry, in Los Angeles.

Both members and clergy have received threats, he said, "but we're going to worship God anyway." "God must be terribly sickened" by the sight of racially and sexually segregated churches, he said.

Sirico said the Metropolitan Community Church is considering renaming its organization in memory of the Rev. Bill Larson, pastor of the New Orleans, La., gay church.

Larson burned to death several weeks ago.





Gay Marriage

Rev. Robert Sirico prepares communion for Anthony Sullivan (L), and Richard Adams (right background), who were married April 21 in Denver. The ceremony

was the nation's fifth "openly gay" wedding. The Rev. Freda Smith (right foreground) assisted in the ceremony. (UPI)

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Despite newlywed status **Gay fears deportation**

United Press International

An Australian homosexual who married an American man in Boulder, Colo., said Tuesday in Los Angeles he is afraid he will be deported despite the fact he is now an American citizen by marriage.

Anthony Sullivan married Richard Adams of Los Angeles Monday in Boulder, in the only county in the nation permitting issuance of marriage licenses to homosexual couples.

The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Robert Sirico, a Los Angeles gay rights advocate who accompanied the men to Colorado.

At a news conference Tuesday on their return to

Los Angeles, Sullivan said he came to the U.S. on a tourist visa in 1972 and had to check with the Immigration and Naturalization Service every few months.

"This is a horrible way to live," he said.

He said he married an American woman in 1974 so he could stay in this country but separated two months later.

"The Immigration Department continued to hassle us as to the status of our marriage," he said. "We decided we could not perpetuate a lie, so in March of this year I had the marriage annulled."

He said he and Adams decided to marry so he

could maintain his citizenship status.

"I believe that our relationship is blessed by God and, as of yesterday, legalized by the laws of this country," he said.

Rev. Sirico said he sent a telegram to President Ford asking him to defend Sullivan's right to "share his life" with Adams.

An attorney for the newlyweds said Sullivan would apply to the U. S. government to become a permanent resident of the country "because he is married to an American citizen."

Think small, use a Classified Ad for big results. Place your ad today! HE 2-5959.

(12/86 He now says he left this 17 years ago)

Exceptional Church Is Accepted

BY JOEL CONNELLY

With only a single dissent on the final voice vote, the Church Council of Greater Seattle yesterday voted into membership a congregation that serves Seattle's homosexual community.

But approval of the Metropolitan Community Church application touched off lengthy debate, with some council board members conveying expressions of dissent from within their denominations.

The debate was not without moments of humor. It included an exchange between a Catholic priest, a Jewish rabbi, and the mainly Protestant members of the council board.

"Through the ages it's been said that a special interest group shouldn't

have its own church," said Fr. Edward Hogan. "If accepted, none of you would have churches today."

"That's true, Father," added Rabbi Arthur Jacobovitz, a Jewish observer to the council.

The issue of a "special interest church" for homosexuals was central to yesterday's debate.

"Can a church rightly be so narrowly and exclusively organized?" asked the Rev. David Yeaworth, an opponent of membership. "We know of racism, chauvinism, poor stewardship people, divorces, etc., in the churches . . .

"But they do not exist to perpetuate these conditions: rather, the light of the Gospel is brought to bear upon these conditions through the openness of

persons sitting under the Word together."

The Rev. James Fairbrook, another opponent, described the Metropolitan Church's application as "a self-serving request to be recognized in a separate identity."

The Rev. Bruce G. Parker, chairman of the council's membership committee, said that the Metropolitan Church "is not a congregation limited to homosexuals."

"But why a piling up of homosexuals in this particular church?" asked Parker. "It is because in some denominations those who acknowledge homosexuality aren't particularly welcome . . .

"I know many churches represented here have homosexual members in good standing. It is my hope that they won't need to

leave in order to find a place of welcome."

Fr. Hogan, supporting membership, noted that "the church council is made up of churches that the Catholic Church doesn't agree with doctrinally and morally . . ."

"Jesus said to accept everyone," added Catholic laywoman and council board member Marie Van Bronkhorst.

Board members also noted that while the Metropolitan Church was eligible for membership by signing an emphatically Christian preamble to the council's constitution, Unitarians and Jews—not accepting Jesus Christ as son of God—must still sit as observers.

"I'd like to have a church council where everyone can join," said one minister.

"Amen!" replied Unitarian observer Marge Lueders.

Coverage of Gays

ROBERT SIRICO

Los Angeles Times (1886-Current File); Oct 8, 1975; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times (1881 - pg. B4

Coverage of Gays

As a person who helped organize the sit-in and protest in front of The Times building last year (as a result of your poor coverage of gay events), I must say you have come a long way.

Your recent coverage of events pertaining to the Gay community—the Willie Brown bill passage, gays admitted to the police force, Oliver Sipple, and your most recent story on gay political clout in San Francisco (Sept. 30) shows a real change and improvement, something I, as a gay person, appreciate.

How depressing life must be for those prime examples of homophobia, those ancient oppressors of people, who suddenly find that they themselves are the "queers."

Yet, I would urge people not to respond in hate, but with love instead. Hate will never rectify the wrongs done us, but love can make the future a better place to live.

ROBERT SIRICO
Executive Director
Gay Community
Services Center
Hollywood

Police Raid Private Club Gay Auction

Police in Los Angeles raided what they called a homosexual, sado-masochistic "slave market," purchased one for \$16 and then made 40 arrests. Gay community leaders said Sunday the event was merely a fund-raising affair.

Undercover agents infiltrated the "male-slave auction" at a private health club Saturday night, arresting 40 persons under a slavery statute and two others on outstanding traffic warrants.

Capt. Jack Wilson of the Los Angeles Vice Squad said undercover agents went to the Mark IV Health Club on information obtained several weeks ago that a homosexual auction was to be held.

Robert Sirico, executive director of the Los Angeles Gay Community Center, said Sunday the auction was staged to raise money for the center — "just like high school slave auctions," in which prominent students and faculty members are auctioned off to perform such tasks as carrying the "master's" books to class or cleaning up the lunch area.

Wilson said the slaves in this case were volunteers but that the tasks were sexually oriented — often along sado-masochistic lines.

"You can rent paddles there so you can keep your

slave in line," he said. "You can put them in leather harnesses fashioned in a bizarre manner for restraint. It's a very humiliating experience."

Wilson said slaves were usually kept in subjectivity for 24 hours after their "purchase."

Sirico derided the officer's characterization. "I've bought people in slave auctions and just had them clean my apartment," he said.

Sirico said the master of ceremonies Saturday night was a heterosexual mother of two young children. Police said she was the only woman there and was one of those arrested.

Bail was set at \$5,000 for those taken into custody under a law that Police Lt. Dan Cooke said is usually used against male pimps selling a female prostitute to another pimp.

Sirico said there had been no arrests under the servitude statute for 22 years.

Cooke, a press relations officer, said about 65 officers took part in the operation and some of them witnessed acts of copulation and sodomy prior to the auction.

Wilson said the building in which the auction was held was equipped with "dungeons and cell blocks." In the dungeons were all forms of chains and articles of restraint. It was very dimly lit.

He said the nude "slave" would be led to the stage by an auctioneer and inspected by the potential buyers. The auctioneer would display the slave's wares, and the auctioning would begin.

Slaves went for \$10-\$75, Cooke said, with the police department picking up one for \$16.

"There were two more yet to be auctioned after him, so we went in and liberated them," said Cooke.

Sirico said, "If they (the police) were interested in preventing harm to anyone they could have stopped it. They knew about it for three weeks."

San Marino Schools Set Talks Crew

The San Marino School Board will name the district employees entrusted with handling confidential material pertaining to collective bargaining under the new state bargaining law which goes into effect July 1.

The employees named will process correspondence and other materials in bargaining negotiations between the school board and groups chosen by teaching and

'Male Slave Mart' Raid In L.A. Called A Mistake

By AP, P-I Staff

Los Angeles police arrested 40 persons Saturday night after infiltrating what they called a homosexual, sado-machoistic "slave market," observing "acts of copulation and sodomy," and purchasing a man for \$16.

But the director of the Los Angeles Gay Community Center, Robert Sirico, former pastor of a Seattle church which ministered to homosexuals, told The P-I by long distance call yesterday that police actually had broken up a "harmless fund-raising event."

Capt. Jack Wilson of the Los Angeles vice squad said undercover agents went to a "male-slave auction" at the Mark IV Health Club. He said the club was operated by a "sado-masochism cultist group called The Leather Fraternity."

Wilson told Associated Press that nude "male slaves" were led to the stage by an auctioneer, and inspected by potential buyers.

"Slaves sold for \$10 to \$75, with a police department undercover agent picking one up for \$16," Wilson said.

The police officer said that the slaves were volunteers, but their tasks were "sexually oriented — often along sado-masochistic lines."

"You can rent paddles there to keep a slave in line," said Wilson. "You can put a slave in a leather harness fashioned in a bizarre manner for restraint. The harnesses are available there."

Wilson said a purchased slave usually stayed with his "master" for 24 hours after the time of purchase.

The officer said vice squad detectives found dimly-lit dungeons and cell blocks for confinement of slaves, "and chains and other types of articles of restraint."

In all, police arrested 40 persons under a slavery statute, and two others on outstanding traffic warrants.

Bail was set at \$5,000 for those taken into custody on the slavery charge, under a law usually designed to be used against male pimps who sell a prostitute to another pimp.

Roberto Sirico, executive director of



REV. ROBERT SIRICO
1973 Seattle photo

the Los Angeles Gay Community Center, said the auction was staged to raise money for the center — "just like high school slave auctions in which students are auctioned off to perform tasks such as carrying books to class or cleaning the lunch area."

Sirico, who established a church especially for homosexuals in Seattle in 1972 and operated it until last year, denied that there were any open "acts of sodomy or copulation."

"The master of ceremonies at the auction was heterosexual mother of two young children," Sirico said. "She told me that she didn't see any of the acts police claimed they saw."

"Police are trying to portray this as a sick, seamy event, when in fact it was nothing but a fun night, and a money raising event," Sirico said. "Part of the money was earmarked for the center's successful venereal disease treatment clinic."

Sirico said the dungeons and cell blocks, and restraint devices, were there only to serve as "props," adding realism to the fun auction.

"The slave which the undercover policeman bought told the officer that he would take part in no sexual activities," Sirico claimed.

Sirico charged that Los Angeles Police Chief Edward Davis is "out to get" the gay community.

"This was the first use of the slavery statute in California in 21 years," Sirico said.

L.A. police blasted

Gays claim 'overkill' in slave auction raid

Associated Press

Gay community leaders complained today about the arrest of 40 persons in what Los Angeles police called a sado-masochistic slave market.

"The police department is trying to portray this as a sick, seamy event, when in fact it was just a fund-raiser," said Robert Sirico, executive director of the Los Angeles Gay Community Center. Part of the money raised, he said, was to be used for the center's venereal disease treatment clinic.

Sixty-five police department undercover agents infiltrated what they called a male slave auction Saturday night at the Mark IV Health Club and arrested 42 persons under a rarely applied slavery statute, a vice squad spokesman said. Two others were arrested on outstanding traffic warrants.

Capt. Jack Wilson said the building in which the auction took place was equipped with "dungeons and cell blocks. In the dungeons were all forms of chains and articles of restraint. ..."

He said the "slaves" were led to the stage nude by an auctioneer and "inspected by the potential buyers."

Slaves went for \$10 to \$75, said Police Lt. Dan Cooke. Police officers said they purchased one for \$15.

Sirico said the auction was staged to raise money for the center, "just like high school slave auctions."

"If they (the police) were interested in preventing harm to anyone they could have stopped it. They knew about it for three weeks. Do they arrest high school and college students who hold slave auctions?"

The raid "is a direct act by the police department to discredit the image of gay people in this community for legislative gains," Sirico contended.

Aides to County Supervisor Ed Edelman and City Councilwoman Peggy Stevenson also came to the defense of the gay community at a Sunday news conference. They termed the auction harmless.

However, Cooke said, "I find it very difficult to compare the selling of high school students, usually girls to wash cars, to this kind of thing in which a variety of sex acts were taking place."

The master of ceremonies was a heterosexual mother of two young children, Sirico said. She was among those arrested.

Bail was set at \$5,000 each for those taken into custody under a law Cooke said is usually applied to male pimps selling a female prostitute to another pimp.

Wilson said investigation of the private club began several weeks ago when literature on the auction began circulating.

Wilson said the Mark IV was maintained by a group calling itself "The Leather Fraternity" as a private club for homosexuals and sado-masochism enthusiasts.

"It's the 'S-and-M' culture," Wilson said. "The slave is voluntarily engaging in these acts — sexually oriented — not just relating to sodomy and oral copulation."

"You can rent paddles there so you can keep your slave in line. You can put them in leather 'harnesses' fashioned in a bizarre manner for restraint. It's a very humiliating experience."

Wilson said slaves were usually kept in captivity for 24 hours after their "purchase."

Sirico derided that characterization:

"I've bought people in slave auctions and just had them clean my apartment," he said.

Morris Kight, a longtime gay rights activist in Southern California, called the raid appalling and a "peculiar excess of police power."

"Absolutely nothing was happening there," Kight said. "It was meant to be just a fun evening."

Wilson said not everyone was arrested, because, "We were only interested in the principals — management, the ticket-takers, those overtly engaged in the auctioning, the slaves and those persons who bid on them."

Cooke said there was so much evidence investigators were still at the scene cataloging it Sunday afternoon. The evidence included a double stock, chains, harnesses and other "sado-masochistic paraphernalia."

Involuntary-servitude rap dropped in 'slave auction'

Associated Press

Los Angeles County Dist. Atty. John K. Van de Kamp said Friday his office will not press charges of involuntary servitude against 40 persons arrested at a "gay slave auction" in Hollywood two weeks ago.

Van de Kamp said, how-

ever, that he is still investigating the possibility of filing charges of pandering or prostitution against those arrested.

"While we view the police arrests as proper, we do not believe that 'involuntary servitude' is the proper statute, if there are any, under which to prose-

cute," Chief Deputy Dist. Atty. Steve Trotti said. "This decision was reached after extensive interviews with those involved. Other interviews are scheduled for the weekend, and we should reach a decision by early next week whether or not to prosecute on other charges."

Robert Sirico of the Gay Community Services Center called the decision "a victory for the gay community."

"It is obvious that the grand expenditure of police power and money was misguided and extremely wasteful," Sirico said. "I view the police action much like I viewed the movie 'Cleopatra'—elaborate, expensive and a big flop."

Sirico said an auction in Hollywood Friday night to raise funds for the defense of those arrested would go on as planned.

Lights black out again

Downtown Long Beach streets were blacked out briefly for the second straight night Friday when an automatic switch failed to turn on street lights, a Southern California Edison Co. spokesman said.

The control failed to turn on the lights at 6:43 p.m., and they remained off until workmen switched them on manually at 7:20 p.m., District Manager George Hanawalt said.

Only street lights were affected by the malfunction, and residential and business customers in the area had uninterrupted electrical service, he added.

The area affected was bounded roughly by Atlantic Ave., the Long Beach Freeway, Fifth St. and Ocean Blvd., he said.

Other street-light malfunctions darkened two downtown areas Thursday night.

PARTY HOPES TO QUALIFY FOR STATE BALLOT

BUD LEMBKE

Los Angeles Times (1886-Current File); Sep 26, 1977; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times (1881 - 1985)
pg. OC3

PARTY HOPES TO QUALIFY FOR STATE BALLOT

Libertarians Will Mount 1978 Gubernatorial Campaign

BY BUD LEMBKE

TIMES POLITICAL WRITER

The Libertarian Party of California is working up a master plan to run a slate of candidates for governor and other state constitutional officers.

This was reported by the party's state chairman, Ray Cunningham, a San Francisco engineer, during a visit to Orange County over the weekend.

Cunningham said in an interview that running the slate next year and the resultant exposure will enable the party to qualify by 1979 as an official party on the California ballot.

That will require getting 63,000 voters to register as Libertarians. Cunningham said the party has in-

creased its registration from 3,500 to about 5,000 in the last few months.

The party believes in greatly reducing government "interference" in personal lives, including the abolishing of most regulatory agencies.

"We're sometimes looked on as a far-out group, not related to today, to the real world," he told a Libertarian conference attended by about 125 persons at the Registry Hotel in Irvine Saturday.

He maintained, however, that the party is in a good position to capitalize on voter disenchantment with government.

"People are burned up about taxes and education," he said.

He contended that the Libertarian beliefs will strike a responsive note if they are made known. He said the Libertarian Party can make them known only by becoming expert in the political process. He urged party members to become expert in computerized mailings, fund-raising, building up reference material, communicating and other campaign techniques.

He said in an interview that the party operates on a budget of about \$35,000 a year, but that it is "shooting for a budget of \$375,000" for next year's campaign.

Another speaker, the Rev. Robert Sirico of San Francisco, organizer of

Libertarians for Gay Rights, said the Libertarians philosophy of opposing infringement on private rights can appeal to liberals.

Noting recent revelations that the American Civil Liberties Union once cooperated with the FBI in building up files on "radicals," Sirico quipped: "We turn out to be to the left of the ACLU."

He listed five areas where the Libertarians and "liberals" are in agreement: deregulation of drug manufacture, possession and use; decriminalizing of prostitution and pornography; extending rights to homosexuals, and allowing mental patients to be free if they don't break any law.

"Conservatives are trying to use pornography and (stirring up a reaction to) gay right to turn America around, to conservatize America," he said.

He emphasized that Libertarians have views that some things, such as sadomasochism, are morally wrong, but they don't believe government should censor them.

David P. Bergland of Huntington Beach, the Libertarian national chairman and the party's candidate for vice president last year, told the conference that Democratic and Republican approaches to tax reform are bound to fail.

"People aren't dumb, and there is no such thing as a free lunch," he said.

He added that the answer to rising taxes is to "get government out of violating people's rights by eliminating all regulatory agencies."

Pursuit of truth Acton Institute marks 10 years of studying ties between religion, economics; [All Editions]

[Charles Honey / Press Religion Editor. The Grand Rapids Press.](#) Grand Rapids, Mich.: [Nov 11, 2000.](#) pg. B.1

Copyright Booth Newspapers, Inc. Nov 11, 2000

An African bishop sees hope for his country's future in the ideas bubbling out of a Grand Rapids think tank.

Bishop Bernard Njoroge Kariuki flew from Nairobi, Kenya, where he oversees half a million Episcopal Church members in Kenya. He recently spent a weekend in Florida with 26 seminarians and clergy from around the world, discussing how faith can help create a virtuous and prosperous society.

It was sponsored by The Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty, which from its bookish office in downtown Grand Rapids quietly crusades for the wedding of religious freedom with free enterprise.

Acton's critics -- and there are plenty -- say that is just sprinkling holy water on unbridled capitalism. Not Bishop Kariuki. He is returning to Kenya hoping to persuade leaders that good morals and good business go hand in hand.

"I think what they have is what is needed in the Third World," said Kariuki, 50, who will say a prayer at Acton's 10th anniversary banquet tonight at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel. He says Acton's arguments make perfect sense for a country struggling with famine and corruption. "Tying together morality with economic development is going to work wonders."

Kariuki's words gratify the men who founded Acton in the upstairs apartment of a Heritage Hill flower shop. Today, it boasts 27 staffers, a \$3 million budget and a front-row seat at congressional hearings and international conferences.

"That's all we ever wanted, was just to get to the table," said the **Rev. Robert Sirico**, a Catholic priest and Acton's president. "Then the arguments themselves will either be persuasive or be knocked down."

About 400 friends and supporters tonight will celebrate Acton's rise as a respected though controversial institute. The \$100-per-plate event features longtime supporter and philanthropist Sir John Templeton, who will receive Acton's first Faith and Freedom Award.

Backed by an impressive list of wealthy givers, including the VanAndel and DeVos families and Great Lakes Mazda founder Peter Cook, Acton has grown into a multifaceted nonprofit organization, reaching far beyond its West Michigan home base.

It recently held a symposium in Connecticut on welfare reform, and in two weeks will co-organize a conference at the Vatican on global economy and the family, along with a local colloquium on the environment. Next year, it will stage 16 student conferences as far away as Brazil and Prague, conduct retreats for executives and publish at least 10 books.

Within its expanding quarters in the Waters Building, scholars churn out journals and papers on topics such as debt forgiveness and the biblical foundations of business ethics. Computer wizards fashion a Web site in Chinese and Spanish while staffers plan a Center for Entrepreneurial Stewardship.

Meanwhile, Sirico gives his sharp, conservative take on economic and social issues in Wall Street Journal op-ed pieces, national media interviews and Acton's flagship publication, Religion & Liberty.

All this fits into a philosophical framework that asserts human freedom is best served by free markets regulated more by conscience than government.

"Our whole world view is freedom is necessary but not sufficient for the good society," said co-founder and executive director Kris Mauren. "We want a society that is free and virtuous, where people act for the common good."

In Acton's book, that means less government interference, more individual responsibility and a greater appreciation by clergy and corporations of the moral obligations of business.

If those look like the convictions of staunch Republicans such as Acton board member Betsy DeVos, Mauren insists Acton rejects political labels.

"We look at everything from the view of human freedom. 'Does this promote human freedom?' If the answer is yes, we're generally for it."

But critics contend Acton conveniently lends a Christian veneer to right-wing causes. Local social activist the Rev. George Heartwell has said Sirico provides "a theological justification for the accumulation of wealth."

Sirico insists he is "not a preacher of the free market," but is primarily concerned with tying economics to moral principles he believes will benefit the poor and wealthy alike. Some of his stands, such as calling for an end to the Cuba trade embargo, have miffed some conservatives, he says.

"I can't say that I don't err in terms of my own pride," he said of his high profile. "But I know that my conscience is clear. What I'm doing is motivated essentially out of a sincere conviction that these insights need to be shared for the sake of vulnerable peoples."

It was their shared convictions that motivated Sirico and Mauren to organize Acton, beginning with a student seminar funded by both Democrats and Republicans.

They met at a Bible study in 1986, when Sirico was a graduate student at Catholic University of America and Mauren was studying economics at Johns Hopkins University. They clicked on religious and economic issues, including Sirico's concerns about Liberation Theology, a Marxist-influenced approach to poverty then popular in seminaries.

They organized a campus seminar featuring three economists, with funding from the student clubs of both political parties. About 100 students paid \$5 to attend. Its title: "Who's Afraid of Freedom?"

They jokingly call that Acton's first seminar. But the vision didn't crystallize until four years later, when Sirico was a priest in Grand Rapids and Mauren working for Westin Hotels in Hawaii.

While in Guatemala delivering a paper on Liberation Theology, Sirico approached an international foundation official, Alejandro Chafuen, about funding for a research assistant. Chafuen told him, "You're thinking too small. You need to institutionalize yourself."

Sirico did, enlisting Mauren to help run it on a trial basis. Chafuen now sits on Acton's board of directors.

"I had this sense the timing was right," recalled Sirico, 49. "Nobody was doing it."

Helped by \$80,000 from a Chicago philanthropist, they set up an office in Mauren's apartment. They outgrew it in a year, moving to the Waters Building with three full-time employees.

Since 1991, the institute has grown steadily in resources and scope. Though Mauren and Sirico are Catholic, two-thirds of their staff is Protestant, and its conferences attract a wide range of religions and nationalities.

In 1995, it crested \$1 million in revenues, mostly from foundations, individuals and corporate contributions, and is projected to top \$3 million this year. Donations come from nearly 4,000 givers, ranging from a few bucks to \$100,000, and only 10 percent to 15 percent come from West Michigan, Mauren says.

Sirico flatly denies any money comes with ideological strings attached.

"I have never had anybody come to us and attempt to pressure us to say something we didn't believe in," Sirico said.

What Acton believes in is known to local audiences largely through its Lord Acton Lecture Series, featuring speakers such as former Christian Coalition strategist Ralph Reed and theologian Michael Novak. Sirico has gone toe-to-toe in debates with such ideological adversaries as Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and cosmic spiritualist Matthew Fox.

Sirico relishes the fray of conflicting ideas, saying, "It's easy to respect people you agree with. The challenge is to respect people you don't agree with."

Many don't agree with him, including Ben Haven, a student intern at the institute. The Calvin College freshman says he leans toward socialism, but feels welcome at Acton.

"It's a great environment," said Haven, 18, who works on the Acton Web site. "We can challenge each other's beliefs and learn from each other."

Sidney Jansma Jr. said he learned much at an Acton retreat for business executives aimed at integrating faith into their businesses. The president and CEO of Wolverine Gas & Oil Co. said the retreat reinforced his belief that businessmen need to be good stewards of their God-given resources.

"Their greatest contribution is legitimizing conservative thought from a Christian perspective," said Jansma, 57.

That's exactly what some critics object to.

The Rev. Michael Crosby is a Catholic friar active with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, which tries to promote social justice through corporate investments. Crosby says Acton's conservative bias skews Catholic social teachings that emphasize the economy's effects on the poor.

"They not only sprinkle holy water, they canonize capitalism," said Crosby, of Milwaukee. Sirico, he adds, "acts as a religious legitimator of the status quo, and he blinks at the fallout."

Sirico says Crosby has an "anti-business mentality," adding, "He loves the poor so much, he advocates policies that ensure there will be a lot more of them."

Peter Vander Meulen gives Acton credit for tackling political and economic issues based on Christian teachings. He does the same, as coordinator for social justice and hunger action with the Christian Reformed Church and a principal organizer of the local Call to Renewal anti-poverty coalition.

But Vander Meulen says Acton is fighting for the wrong things, such as defense of private property as the basis of creating wealth, while neglecting needs of the poor.

"The Acton Institute is defending, from a Christian perspective, those of us who really don't need any defending," Vander Meulen said.

A CRC colleague, however, says Acton provides a "thoughtful alternative" to the leftward bias of much academic and religious economic thought.

John Bolt, a professor at Calvin Theological Seminary, said Acton's views are refreshing and "rooted in a profoundly Christian commitment."

Admitting his views are easily caricatured as "country-club theology," Sirico insists concern for the poor and vulnerable is at the heart of Acton's mission.

"The church's social teaching is formed to protect the vulnerable," Sirico said. "I think a free economy tends to benefit the poor to a greater extent than a controlled economy does."

Meanwhile, he and Mauren eagerly oversee Acton's future ventures: increased international programming, a stronger outreach to business leaders, work in developing nations. And they issue a standing invitation to their critics: Come find out what we're really about.

"We are all about the pursuit of truth," Mauren said.

"Nobody has the whole truth," added Sirico. "But that doesn't mean we don't have some of it."

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Paulists at St. Lawrence Church preparing welcome for centennial; [COMMUNITY ZONE 2 Edition]

[Kevin Duchscher](#), [Staff Writer](#). [Star Tribune](#). Minneapolis, Minn.: [Oct 15, 1987](#). pg. 03.Y

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The only Paulist community in Minnesota is celebrating this year the centennial of the southeast Minneapolis parish church it has staffed since 1915. And Sunday it will welcome back former parishioners and friends to join in a special homecoming liturgy.

St. Lawrence Catholic Church, 1201 SE. 5th St., was established in 1887 when Bishop John Ireland split it off from St. Anthony of Padua Church, the original Minneapolis Catholic parish. St. Lawrence's first church - serving a parish that encompassed the mill district, the settlement of St. Anthony and farms near Larpenteur Av. - was a wooden building at the corner of 7th St. and 12th Av. SE., two blocks northeast of the present church.

Paulists are Roman Catholic priests belonging to the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle, founded in New York in 1858. Ireland asked them to staff St. Lawrence in 1915 because of the church's proximity to the University of Minnesota and the Paulists' work with Catholic students. The present church-school building was completed in 1922, with expansions and renovations in 1951 and 1970.

Today, the staff includes three Paulists - the Rev. Don Campbell, pastor; the Rev. Robert Cary, associate pastor; and Robert Sirico, a seminarian who directs the young adults program. Marilies Young, a layperson, has charge of the religious education program.

What is unusual about St. Lawrence? "I suppose it's the diversity of the community we have, and the fact that it's always been a community . . . welcoming new people," Cary said.

And with good reason. About one-third of the congregation consists of students, who usually move in and out of St. Lawrence in step with the progress of their education. And then there are the converts and the alienated Catholics whom the staff of the Paulist Education Center have led to the church. For a long time the parish has sponsored instruction in the faith for non-Catholics, and in recent years has worked at healing the wounds of inactive Catholics.

Registered parishioners come from more than a dozen metropolitan zip codes. Cary said that many are drawn by the church's reputation for liturgical excellence. The parish "puts a lot of emphasis on liturgy and on preaching," he said. "We've always had a very strong preaching tradition in our community."

The homecoming mass, which begins at noon Sunday, will be concelebrated by several former pastors. The Rev. Richard Walsh, pastor from 1970 to 1978, will preach the homily. An ice cream social will follow mass. The final centennial event, an ecumenical Thanksgiving prayer service with neighboring southeast Minneapolis churches, is scheduled for Nov. 19.

Workshop on choirs

A workshop for elementary and junior high school church choir directors, led by choral directors Richard and Kathryn Hoffland, will be held at Zion Lutheran Church in Anoka from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 24.

Activities will include sight reading of anthems, directing techniques, performance and recruiting ideas, and ideas for starting children's choirs. The Hofflands also will demonstrate rehearsal techniques with each of Zion's three youth choirs.

The Hofflands have conducted choral groups and workshops in most of the 50 states. They were on the staff of the Paul Christiansen Choral Schools for 35 years and are on the staff at Millikin University, Decatur, Ill. They received an Alumni Achievement Award from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn.,

for their contribution to youth through music. The cost of the workshop is \$25, which includes a music packet and lunch. Registration officially closed today, but people still interested may contact Bruce Phelps at 427-5291 or 421-1980. Zion Lutheran is at 4th Av. and Adams St.

Talk on pastoral letter

Terry Dosh, historian and lecturer, will speak about the American Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on justice and the American economy at 7:30 p.m. Sunday in Notre Dame Hall at St. William's Catholic Church in Fridley. He will focus on the historical basis for the letter and offer a capsule summary. Dosh is a former Benedictine monk and professor at St. John's University in Collegeville, Minn. He has a doctorate in church history and for three years has been a frequent lecturer about history and social justice. He also works as executive secretary of CORPUS, an association of married former priests. St. William's is at 6120 NE. 5th St.

Tiede to be installed

The Rev. David Tiede, former chair of the New Testament department at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, will be installed as president of the seminary at a 4 p.m. service Sunday at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

Tiede, a native of Le Center, Minn., has been on the faculty since 1971. He was department chair from 1980 to 1986 and acting dean of academic affairs from 1982 to 1983. He is a graduate of St. Olaf College in Northfield and the seminary and received his doctorate from Harvard University. Tiede and his wife, Martha, have two children and live in Arden Hills. Luther Northwestern has the largest Lutheran theological faculty in the world, with more than 60 men and women. It offers seven degree programs, including a doctor of theology program started last month. The public is welcome to attend the installation and reception following the service. Central Lutheran is at 333 E. Grant St.

Talk on AIDS ministry

Sister Joanne Lucid, coordinator of the AIDS ministry for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, will discuss "The Church's Ministry to AIDS Victims" at Calvary Lutheran Church's adult forum, 10:05 a.m. Sunday. Lucid, who works out of Riverside Medical Center in Minneapolis, has master's degrees in theology and advanced clinical pastoral education, and in spirituality and supervision. Calvary Lutheran is at 7520 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley.

Sex abuse conference

An interdenominational conference for clergy about sexual victimization is scheduled Nov. 2-3 at Temple Israel in Minneapolis. The conference will examine the significance for the church of sexual abuse, develop awareness of sexual abuse issues and provide information about crisis intervention and referral.

The Rev. Margo Maris, an Episcopal priest, will deliver the keynote address Nov. 2. The Rev. Larry Mens, executive director of the Minnesota Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, will respond to the keynote address and be a panelist. The conference is sponsored by the Twin Cities Metropolitan Church Commission, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, the Rape and Sexual Assault Center, the Violence in Significant Relationships Committee of the Minnesota Councils of Churches and Temple Israel. Registration must be made by Oct. 23. For more information, call Jan Schwartz, director of the Rape and Sexual Assault Center, at 825-2409.

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Church's musical drama tells of Christ's passion; [COMMUNITY ZONE 2 Edition]

[Kevin Duchscher](#), [Staff Writer](#). [Star Tribune](#). Minneapolis, Minn.: [Mar 10, 1988](#). pg. 06.Y

Copyright Star Tribune Newspaper of the Twin Cities Mar 10, 1988

University of Minnesota students and parishioners at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Minneapolis are bringing the story of Christ's passion and resurrection to life.

"The Women at the Tomb," a musical drama based on New Testament stories, will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and March 19 in the sanctuary at St. Lawrence's, 1201 SE. 5th St. The production comes on the heels of a successful Christmas program also put together by producer/director **Robert Sirico** and musical director Jayne L. Traynor.

The drama uses seven scenes from scripture, focusing on Christ's ministry and events leading to the crucifixion, and climaxing with the resurrection. A cast of 14 will sing commissioned works by Yale University music student Tim Olsen, accompanied by cello, piano and flute.

The production includes period costuming, professional lighting and dancing. A smoke machine will be used to dramatize the resurrection scene.

But Sirico said the effects and flourishes are only a means to an end.

"We're trying to create a worshipful atmosphere so people aren't just entertained but presented with a story of the passion and resurrection through a contemporary medium," Sirico said.

He knows something about contemporary media. A deacon and recent divinity graduate of Catholic University in Washington, D.C., he formerly produced and was host of a public affairs program for KNBC-TV in Burbank, Calif., and currently is developing a television program for alienated Catholics. He will be ordained a priest of the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle (the Paulist Fathers) sometime in the next year.

Sirico said art and the Catholic Church are naturally compatible. "The mass uses dramatic forms and gestures," he said. "I think that's why the whole Catholic sense has lent itself very easily to drama," whether in the movies, on stage or television.

"Catholic tradition is intrinsically open to the various forms of art. It's not a tension," he said.

Traynor, music coordinator and choir director at St. Lawrence's, agrees. "The arts are and always have been important to the church," she said. The drama affords an opportunity "to use a variety of art forms, music, drama and dance, for instance, to re-tell the story of Easter."

Both performances will be free and open to the public. The annual St. Joseph's Day Feast hosted by restaurant owner Giovanna D'Agostino (Mama D) will take place in the St. Lawrence cafeteria before the March 19 production.

Rev. Taylor installed The Rev. Phyllis J. Taylor was formally installed Sunday as pastor of the First Congregational Church in Anoka. Taylor has worked at the church since October.

Other churches in the Eastern Association of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ were represented at the installation. The Rev. Richard Gerber, chairman of the Church and Ministry Committee of the Eastern Association, and the Rev. Dan Vander Ploeg, associate minister of the Minnesota Conference, assisted with the service. The Rev. Curt Johnson, a church member, was the

liturgist, and the Rev. William Johnstone, Taylor's brother and senior minister of Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee, preached.

Taylor grew up in Minneapolis, and received a doctorate in religion and the arts from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif., last May. She was most recently pastor of the Seventh Avenue Congregational Church in Denver. First Congregational Church is at 1923 3rd Av. S., Anoka.

Rev. King begins duties The Rev. David King, most recently pastor at First Baptist Church in Salem, Ore., will begin his duties as senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Minneapolis Sunday when he preaches at the 11 a.m. service. He will be installed later.

King, ordained by the Conservative Baptist Association in 1966, also has worked at churches in Lake Grove, Ore.; Bloomfield, N.J., and Collinsville, Ill. King graduated from Wheaton College, Portland State University, Denver Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary and did postgraduate work at St. Louis University. He has served on the board of Judson College in Elgin, Ill., and Dallas Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary.

King and his wife Marie Elaina have four children. First Baptist is at 1020 Harmon Pl.

Retreat for jobless The Cenacle Retreat House in Wayzata will sponsor a retreat for the unemployed the weekend of April 8 to 10. The retreat will not be a workshop on how to find a job, but a chance for those struggling with unemployment to be helped spiritually. There is no charge to those making the retreat or to spouses, who are encouraged to attend. Space is limited. The retreat house is at 1221 Wayzata Blvd. For more information, call Cenacle at 473-7308.

Aid for abuse victims A series of evening programs for women who have experienced rape, sexual abuse, exploitation and other forms of sexual violence will begin at 7 p.m. Monday at Lutheran Social Services, 2414 Park Av. S., Minneapolis. The four-night series, "Spirituality and Sexual Violence," will use presentations, discussions, storytelling and guided meditation to examine survival and healing, prayer and theological issues for survivors. The series is designed for education and support, not therapy. Referrals are available.

The series will continue from 7 to 9 p.m. March 21, March 28 and April 4. Lutheran Social Services will provide parking and security escort. Space is limited. Besides Lutheran Social Services, the series is sponsored by the Twin Cities Metropolitan Church Commission, Lutheran Campus Ministry and the Sexual Violence Center of Hennepin County. For information about registration and fees, call the Rev. Sally Hill at 870-3660.

Volleyball marathon For 24 straight hours Feb. 26 and 27, about 55 senior high school students from Redeemer Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, All Saints Lutheran Church in Minnetonka and Christ Lutheran Church in Marine-On-St. Croix participated in a Volleyball Marathon to raise money for Minnesota Foodshare and a trip to San Antonio for the National Youth Gathering of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America this summer. More than \$5,000 in pledges was raised and more than 100 pounds of nonperishable food collected for food shelves.

Community welcomes entries from the public for this column. Please mail or deliver to: Community News/ Religion Column Star Tribune 425 Portland Av. S. Minneapolis, Minn. 55488

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did=54376826&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=3587&RQT=309&VName=PQD](http://0-proquest.umi.com.mplwebcat.mpllib.org:80/pqdweb?did=54376826&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=3587&RQT=309&VName=PQD)

D EMOCRACY IS A MEANS AND NOT AN END.

ITS MORAL VALUE IS NOT AUTOMATIC BUT

DEPENDENT ON THE END WHICH IT PURSUES

AND THE MEANS WHICH IT EMPLOYS.



ACTONINSTITUTE

A SPECIAL REPORT CELEBRATING 15 YEARS

The Acton Institute for the Study of Religion & Liberty

"The time has come for religious institutions and leaders to treat entrepreneurship as a worthy vocation, indeed, as a sacred calling. All lay people have a special role to play in the economy of salvation, sharing the task of furthering the faith by using their talents in complementary ways. Every person created in the

image of God has been given certain natural abilities that God desires to be cultivated and treated as good gifts. If the gift happens to be an inclination for business, stock trading, or investment banking, the religious community should not condemn the person merely on account of his or her profession or success in it."

Rev. Robert A. Sirico,



The Mission of the Acton Institute is to promote a free and virtuous society characterized by individual liberty and sustained by religious principles

"Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."
John Emerich Edward Dalberg, Lord Acton

The Acton Institute for the Study of Religion & Liberty takes its name from the great Cambridge historian, religious thinker, and champion of freedom, John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton, the first Baron Acton of Aldenham.

Since its founding in 1990 by Kris Alan Mauren and the Reverend Robert A. Sirico, the Acton Institute has developed into one of the world's leading think tanks and educational centers. A nonprofit and nonpartisan organization, the Institute educates business and religious leaders in the basic principles of theological reflection, morality, and economics, namely that a just and stable society can only exist in the context of economic freedom and personal moral responsibility, guided by religious principles. Acton presents religious liberty, virtuous behavior, and entrepreneurial initiative as the keys to a culturally and economically prosperous civilization.

In large measure, the Acton Institute is a response to ideologies that threaten to undermine the inherent dignity of the human person. These ideologies erroneously posit that free enterprise – by its very nature – exploits workers, perpetuates crime and poverty, and creates environmental breakdown. Many adherents to these ideologies advocate that government, and not free enterprise, ought to be the driving force in society. Where once these movements were identified with socialism, today frequently they are marching under the banner of the social or welfare state, or anti-globalization activism. Even some clergy and religious organizations endorse these misconceptions in the name of Christian charity, thus lending religious credence to what are in truth harmful economic and social policies.

To counteract these errors, the Acton Institute draws from the rich tradition of Judeo-Christian social teaching to educate lay people and clergy in the principles of free enterprise and individual liberty. These principles are not original to Acton; they are rooted in basic truths about the human person. Above all, Acton is committed to the human person, promoting human dignity, freedom, and creativity. Through a genuinely ecumenical and nonpartisan partnership across religious traditions, the Institute encourages leaders throughout the world to pursue economically and morally sound policies worthy of the human person.

From the beginning, the Acton Institute has achieved its educational goals in seminars, conferences, papers, lectures, periodicals, and personal relationships. In a short fifteen years, Acton has grown from a modest

office in Grand Rapids, Mich., to an international presence, touching the lives and minds of some of the world's best thinkers and doers.

Acton approaches its mission to promote a free and virtuous society in a variety of ways. The flagship of Acton's educational efforts is the Toward a Free and Virtuous Society (TFAVS) conference, an academically rigorous student outreach. More than 1,600 seminarians, graduate students, and business leaders have attended these conferences in North America, Latin America, Europe, and Africa.

In addition to TFAVS, Acton's senior staff lectures approximately 100 times per year at conferences, schools, and seminars. Acton staff makes another 100 or so appearances each year on international television and radio outlets such as CNN International, the BBC, Fox News, Ave Maria Radio, and the Laura Ingraham Show. Acton commentators are widely published in leading newspapers, and are frequently called on by journalists to offer expert analysis.

Acton sponsors various national and international events around the world. Our work has taken us to, among other places: Argentina, Australia, Benin, Brazil, Czech Republic, England, France, Guatemala, India, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru, Portugal, Taiwan, Thailand, Venezuela and Zambia.

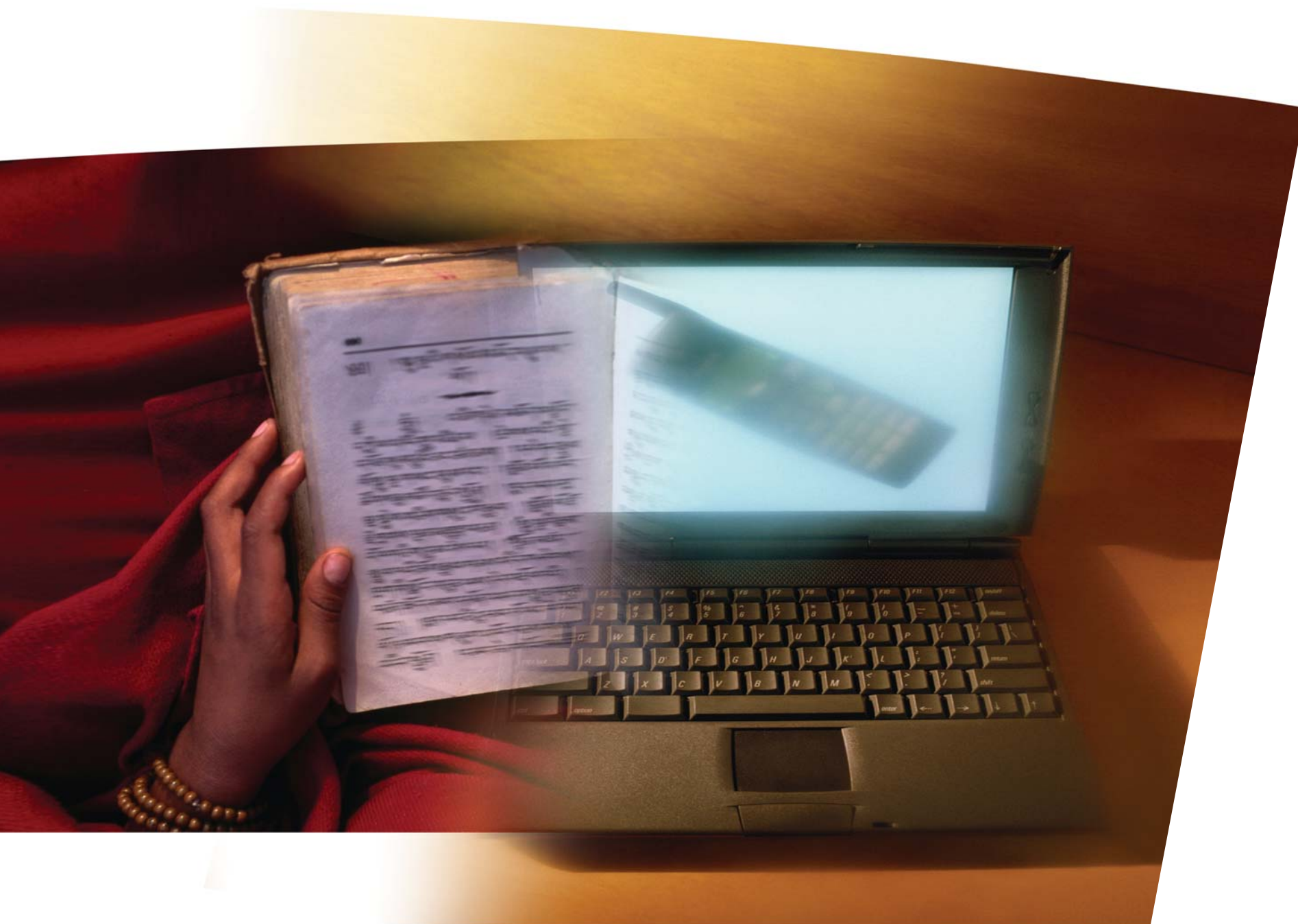
Acton's publications are varied and celebrated, offering top-of-the-line scholarship and lucid instruction on a range of matters, from timely issues like tort reform to timeless ones like the history of Protestant and Catholic social thought. Acton scholars publish a host of editorials, commentaries, monographs, journals, and books that are used in economics and theology classrooms from Princeton to Oxford.

Through the generosity of its supporters, the Acton Institute has recently had the opportunity to expand its influence to an even wider audience. In addition to the Center for Academic Research (CAR), Acton is now home to the Center for Effective Compassion (CEC), and a host of awards such as the Calihan Scholarship, the Homiletics Award, and the Catholic High School Honor Roll. In 2003, Acton launched an international office in Rome. The demand for Acton's lecturers, publications, and conferences grow steadily, and Acton's message of freedom, dignity, and economic liberty is reaching more people than ever before. There is no doubt that Acton's advocacy for the human person is continually finding new legs, reaching new ears, and looking ahead to an ever greater future.

A New Integration

"Liberty is the prevention of control by others. This requires self-control and, therefore, religious and spiritual influences; education, knowledge, well-being."

John Emerich Edward Dalberg, Lord Acton



As we mark our 15th anniversary with this special report, we look back with a sense of gratitude for the outpouring of support that has helped the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion & Liberty achieve so much in such a short period of time. We look ahead with optimism – and not a little bit of awe – when we consider how much is yet to be done.

We have been making the intellectual case for the moral potential of free enterprise and free markets in an unparalleled forceful, coherent way since the Institute's founding in 1990. It is little wonder that this achievement was recognized in 2004 and again in 2005 with a Templeton Freedom Prize for Excellence in Promoting Liberty, a program administered by the Atlas Economic Research Foundation.

The moral message of the Acton Institute is essentially twofold. First, it exhorts religious leaders to use sound economic analysis as a tool for discerning how to address the questions of poverty that they confront as part of their ministry. Second, it urges entrepreneurs and business executives to integrate their faith more fully into their professional lives, and to strive after higher ethical standards in their work.

The Institute's work has led many religious leaders to consider the immoral consequences for the social order that proceed from collectivist and welfarist economic policies. There are also numerous testimonies as to how the Institute's work has actually changed the minds of religious leaders about the market, free enterprise, and their moral qualities. We've shared many of these comments here in this report.

When we look back to our founding in April 1990, and the events that were shaping the world, it was truly an amazing year and one that was momentous for the cause of liberty. With the fall of the Berlin Wall in late 1989, the nations of the former Soviet Union were fitfully reaching for independence. By 1990, Romania was suffering civil war. Poland was already sweeping away an oppressive communist system with its weak economy and taking steps to transform itself to an independent and democratic country with a fast growing free-market economy. It would elect Lech Walesa president before the year was out. Elsewhere, the Sandinistas were defeated in Nicaraguan elections and the devotees of Liberation Theology were in hasty retreat. And Friedrich August von Hayek, the Austrian economist who had done so much for the cause of liberal democracy and free markets, who had been maligned and ignored by devotees of the welfare state, was celebrating a long overdue acclaim and appreciation.

It may be tempting for some to believe that the threat of socialist-inspired economic systems, and the very real threat they pose to human dignity and liberty, has passed from the scene. This is a dangerous misperception.

Today, the threat of distributivism and central planning wears various costumes: the anti-globalization movement, class struggle, the "social welfare" or big government state, a radical environmentalism that views productive economic activity as the culprit for a host of real or imagined ills. These ideologies are embraced, sad to say, by many clergy people and religious leaders who still interpret social and ethical issues – particularly questions of wealth and poverty – with discredited socialistic thinking.

Our aim is to inoculate the religious community against the specious claims



Kris Alan Mauren
Executive Director

Rev. Robert A. Sirico
President

Kris Mauren *Rev. Sirico*

of the religious left which seem to have such an appealing tug for the morally sensitive heart. That aim is to discover, from among all religious traditions, the future pastors, theologians, directors of social service agencies, the heads of denominations and the missionaries of the next millennium who can carry the message of a "free and virtuous society" back into the world. This is a new integration – to reassert God into the marketplace, and morality into public life.

A challenging, counter-cultural message? Certainly. Likely to be controversial? Without doubt. But it is a message that all of us – and perhaps most of all religious leaders, business people and entrepreneurs – need to hear loud and clear.

Toward a Free and Virtuous Society Conferences

"No civilization has survived or flourished without a religious foundation. Nor have the great classical liberal thinkers neglected the spiritual dimension of man. From the writings of late Scholastics to eighteenth-century economists, they have always discovered a linkage between faith and freedom."

Rev. Robert A. Sirico,
A Moral Basis for Liberty

The Toward a Free and Virtuous Society (TFAVS) Conference, Acton's flagship event, is an intensive seminar for future religious leaders that offers an introduction to the moral foundations of personal and economic liberty. The seminar combines an in-depth treatment of economic principles with the study of policies that promote freedom, justice and virtue.

TFAVS explores the nature of the human person and the created order from the perspectives of Scripture and natural law, examining concepts such as justice, equality and stewardship. In addition, these seminars focus on applying the principles of economic liberty to complex issues such as poverty, welfare reform, the environment, and globalization. The program is intellectually demanding; participants are required to do advanced reading and must be prepared to offer comments and defend their views during question and answer sessions. Coming from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds, TFAVS participants are treated to three days of rigorous, focused learning. Established in 1990, the conferences are held three times a year in North America and have also been held in Latin America, Europe, and Africa.



Rev. John Nunes, a Lutheran pastor and a frequent Acton lecturer, is an expert on urban mission and social theology

brings together the Institute's diverse communities. This annual combined conference, first held in 2005 in Grand Rapids, Mich., includes TFAVS, but also reaches out to TFAVS alumni, those who work in social service fields, high school teachers, and business people and entrepreneurs. Together, the combination of these groups illustrates not only the hunger of students and leaders to be educated in ethics and economics, but also the unique position Acton holds to meet this need in an efficient and enlightening way.



Acton's student conferences offer an introduction to the moral foundations of personal and economic liberty by combining an in-depth treatment of economic principles with principles of social justice and a right understanding of the human person.



In 2005, the TFAVS program was awarded the Templeton Freedom Prize for Excellence in Promoting Liberty in the Student Outreach category. Templeton judges lauded the program for its "outstanding work in improving students' understanding of the causes and consequences of individual freedom."

Under the tutelage of some of the world's most accomplished scholars, clergy, and businesspeople, attendees are exposed to the rich history of religious and economic thought. Attending seminarians and graduate students in theology, religion, philosophy, and related fields receive a full fellowship to TFAVS, covering room, board, and registration. A limited number of attendees also receive scholarships to cover transportation costs to and from the conference. All attendees receive a selection of materials from the Acton Book Shoppe.

Keying on the success of TFAVS, Acton has launched a new event that is a significant extension of Acton's educational outreach – a four-day combined conference called Acton University that

"The Towards a Free and Virtuous Society Conference ... was a fortifying supplement of sustained economic thinking to a malnourished education. My fears that this would be a one-viewpoint kind of place were soon assuaged. There was as much constructive critique of American policies as there was praise for my country's most successful strategies. The speakers included Catholic, Evangelical and Reformed Christians, each distilling economic and political wisdom through their own traditions."

Matthew Milliner, 2004 Alumnus,
Seattle, Wash., Conference



Rev. Roger Landry, visiting here with students, is an authority on the thought of Pope John Paul II

Religious Leaders

While most think tanks educate policy makers, academics, and the public at large, the Acton Institute has the vision to educate and influence America's current and future religious leaders all over the world. Our mission is grounded in the strongly held belief that any effort to change the culture and institutions in this country must include a prolonged dialogue with shapers of the moral consensus. Even in the United States, with its reputation as a religious culture, this work is critically important. Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in 1831 that "religion in America takes no direct part in the government of society, but it must be regarded as the first of their political institutions."

For much American history, individual liberty and moral responsibility were part of the shared moral vision. The country was founded by men and women who knew that its greatness was secured by integrating morality and faith with the principles of freedom. William Penn said that "the God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time." More recently, President Ronald Reagan argued during his famous "Evil Empire" speech that "freedom prospers only where the

and independence from governmental assistance through their sermons and good works.

While Acton educates seminarians through the Toward a Free and Virtuous Society conferences, it works at the diocesan and denominational level and with large churches to promote the compatibility of Christian faith with individual freedom and the free-enterprise system. Church officials often resisted our message at first – they were largely misinformed about free markets and expected the government to solve the problems of society. Given our organizational growth, strong professional relationships, and heightened reputation, these barriers have slowly fallen away.

Acton's work with religious leaders includes the following programs:

The **Protestant Leadership Project** has helped Acton become a trusted resource on economics and market-based policies for seminarians, ministers, theologians, and parachurch organizations. The Institute is fostering an environment where these ideas can be seriously debated, developed, and advanced within the Protestant church.

The **Catholic Leadership Project** is guided by the vision of Pope John Paul II's 1991 social encyclical, *Centesimus Annus*, which



(left) Cardinal George Pell, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Sydney, Australia, was the keynote speaker at Acton's 2004 annual dinner in Grand Rapids; (center) Rabbi Daniel Lapin of Toward Tradition shares a lighthearted moment with Dr. Marvin Olasky, Acton senior fellow, at the 1994 annual dinner; (right) Pope John Paul II is presented with a copy of "The Social Agenda" from Cardinal Van Thuan in 2000. The compilation of Catholic social teaching was edited by Rev. Robert A. Sirico and Rev. Maciej Zieba and published by the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.



blessings of God are avidly sought and humbly accepted."

Acton targets this unique niche audience of ministers and pastors because they exert enormous influence on the thoughts and actions of millions of Americans. The number of people who embrace religion has increased gradually over the past two decades. Nearly two-thirds of Americans consider religion to be very important in their lives. Sixty-two percent of voters attend religious services at least twice a month. And nearly half are willing to see churches "express their views on day-to-day social and political questions."

The need for Acton programming is great. Most seminaries provide little or no formal training in free-market economics. If their studies address economics it at all, it takes a redistributionist approach without focusing on how a growing economy and individual liberty offers the most hope for the poor. Seminarians are also likely to be mentored by more senior ministers who can behave as enemies of a free and virtuous society, often using imagery like the "evil empire" to describe the global economy. We provide them with the tools they need to promote the benefits of self-sufficiency, free enterprise,

set a new tone and emphasis for Catholic social teaching. Our efforts have helped the church hierarchy take a more positive view of business, entrepreneurship, and the free market.

The Toward a Free and Virtuous Society Religious Leaders Conference helps Acton to reach new audiences by supporting ministers and lay leaders working in America's inner cities. The participants are inspired by the conference material and appreciate the opportunity to network with like-minded ministers and community leaders.

The **Protestant Leaders Conference** brings together influential Protestant pastors and successful business leaders to reflect on the entrepreneurial vocation. These seminars seek to improve relationships between business people and their pastors, examine the nature of commerce, and improve community stewardship.

The **Homiletics Award** is Acton's annual competition that recognizes and promotes outstanding achievement in effective Christian preaching. It is one of the Acton Institute's many programs designed to assist future religious leaders in developing an understanding of the relationship between morality and the marketplace.

Center for Effective Compassion

"The taxing power is neither necessary nor sufficient for the exercise of human compassion. If people have the motivation and means, voluntary charity will meet the needs of the poor more fully than can any government bureaucracy or government-funded private bureaucracy. The theory of today's welfare state is that people need material provision. But material provision apart from spiritual values is destructive when not tied to certain reciprocal obligations, moral and spiritual."

Rev. Robert A. Sirico,
Can Charities Make Up for Welfare Reform?



"Through the Network Savings & Training Program, participants learn the discipline of saving, repairing credit, as well as learn life skills. People who were never taught the value (impact?) of bad credit, why it stays with you, and not knowing what to do about it are given the self-sufficiency tools that they, in turn, pass on to their family and neighbors."

Rev. Brian Gearin,
Network Savings & Training Program
of Enterprise Development, Inc.,
Boston, Mass., (First Place, 2004
Samaritan Award)

The human person is at the heart of Acton's work and ideas. In its mission to promote a free and virtuous society, Acton articulates a powerful truth of social service work: the dignity of the human person requires that when the individual is in need, only positive and long-term solutions are acceptable. Such solutions are possible when service providers know and understand the individuals they seek to help.

Unfortunately, many social service programs are designed to address social trends instead of the concrete needs of individuals. Governmental programs especially have proved ineffective in meeting individuals' needs. If the modern welfare state has proved anything, it is that throwing money at social problems simply is not the answer.

The reason for this is clear: State and federal governments are not best suited to help the individual because they cannot treat the deeper problems – the spiritual and moral poverty – that only other individuals can address. It is an established fact that the most

In addition to the Awards Program, the CEC produces the Samaritan Guide, an online database of more than 500 of the country's most successful charities. The list is compiled of applicants to the Samaritan Awards and provides detailed analyses of the strengths of these organizations. The Guide serves as a hub where effective charities and potential donors can more easily find one another. The Guide also acts as an assessment tool for the charities themselves, outlining areas of particular success and potential improvement.

The efforts of the CEC extend to the academic realm as well. The CEC has worked with social scientists Beryl Hugen and Fred De Jong of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., to publish the first nationwide study on the influence of faith in human service programs. The study has been published in three segments



Pam Martin speaks at the 2004 CEC conference in Grand Rapids.



The Center for Effective Compassion brings together experts on nonprofit management and executives of charities to share practical, hands-on information at one-day conferences. The CEC's Samaritan Award recognizes some of the nation's leading private charities with cash prizes and donated services.

efficient and effective way to meet the needs of an individual is by entrusting the task to those agencies closest to the individual: families, religious congregations, community outreach centers. As the principle of subsidiarity reminds us, the closer one is to the need, the better that need is met.

To identify and promote those charities that best impact the needy, the Acton Institute established the Center for Effective Compassion (CEC). Since its inception in 2003, the CEC has dedicated itself to the crucial components of lasting change: increased accountability and interpersonal relationships.

A cornerstone of CEC's efforts is the Samaritan Awards Program. Each year, the CEC awards one \$10,000 prize and nine sets of capacity enhancing prizes (valued at more than \$1,000) to charities that best promote individual dignity and personal responsibility. To define the criteria for these awards, the CEC collaborates with a national panel of social scientists, drawing specifically on the groundbreaking work of Dr. Marvin Olasky, Acton Institute Senior Fellow and author of *The Tragedy of American Compassion*.

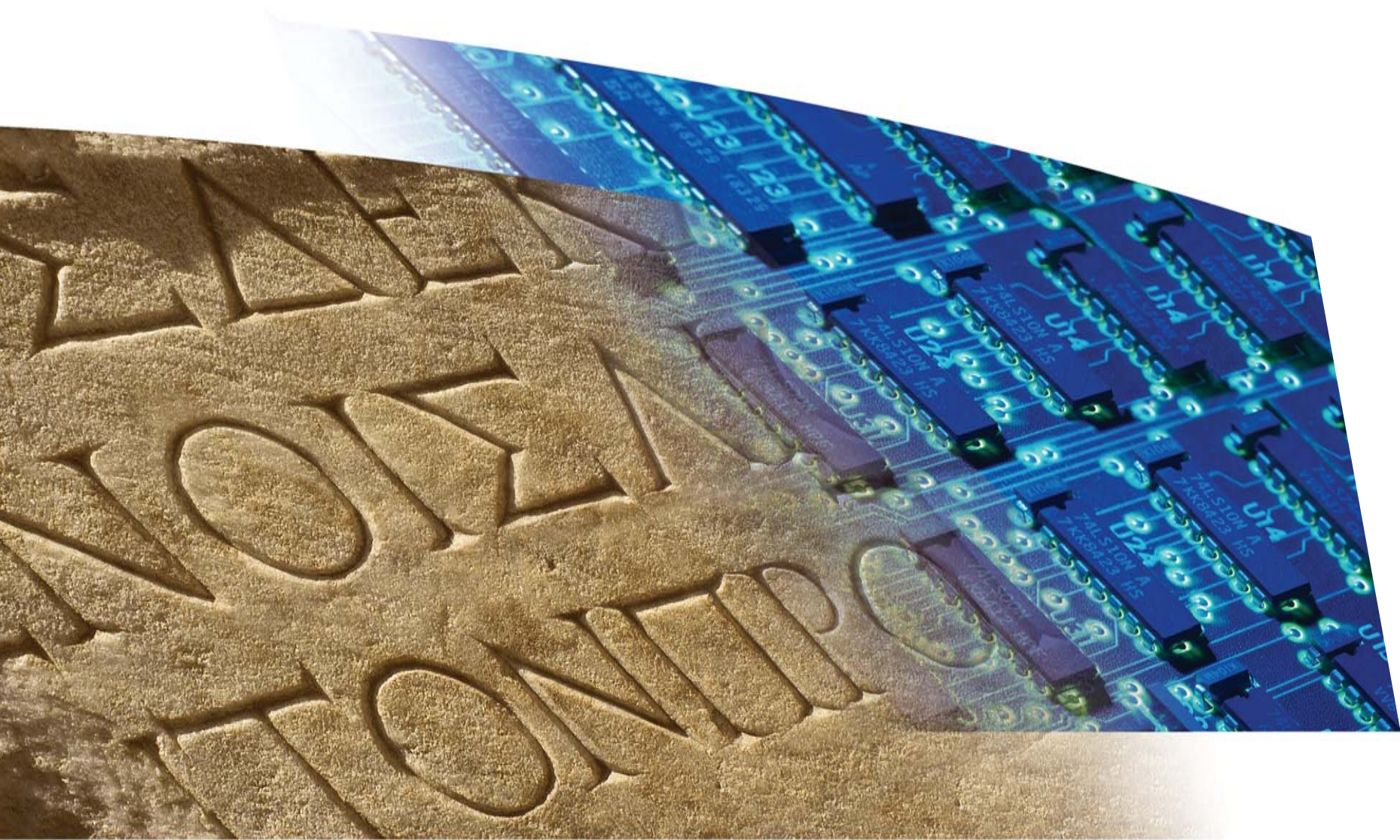
as a part of the Acton Institute's *Policy Forum*, a resource for policymakers.

While the CEC promotes the principles of effective compassion, it also takes special care that charities and donors are given more than simply principles and advice. In the Toward Effective Compassion conferences and in training seminars around the country, the CEC ensures that philanthropists and social service entrepreneurs meet face to face and develop the interpersonal relationships that stand at the heart of effective compassion.

Center for Academic Research

"While a life of prayer, study of Scripture, and pursuit of virtue are integral to the formation of Christians, those who wish to be of genuine assistance to the economically disadvantaged and marginalized surely need some understanding of the workings of a modern economy. Unfortunately, many theological schools and seminaries do not offer courses that provide their students with such knowledge."

*Dr. Samuel Gregg,
Economic Thinking for the
Theologically Minded*



"The principle of stewardship and the related imperative that the goods of the earth are intended for the good of all require that human beings treat natural resources not merely as objects to be exploited for short-term pleasure, but as gifts that are to be used responsibly, with a view to their preservation for future generations."

*Kevin E. Schmiesing, Ph.D.
Acton Research Fellow,
How Not to Protect the Environment*

Religious instruction is one of the most powerful influences on society and those charged with teaching at seminaries, universities, and from the pulpit, must inevitably come to grips with economic questions. Therefore, it is crucial that the seminaries and other centers of learning for religious leaders provide solidly scriptural, orthodox instruction in all areas that touch on faith, morality, and economics.

The Acton Institute seeks to assist seminaries and universities involved in shaping these future religious leaders by providing a comprehensive, scholarly base for the integration of sound theology, philosophy, and an understanding of the market economy. The audience we reach out to is diverse: seminarians, business leaders, policy makers, and clergy. Acton's primary means for accomplishing this outreach is the Center for Academic Research (CAR).

There is literally no other serious, scholarly organization in the world doing what the CAR does. Availing itself of Catholic, Protestant, and



*Dr. Samuel Gregg, Director,
Center for Academic Research*

necessary to articulate the Institute's message to non-academic audiences.

The CAR publishes the book series *Studies in Ethics and Economics*, the *Christian Social Thought Series*, and the semi-annual, peer-refereed *Journal of Markets & Morality*. The journal has an annual circulation



Orthodox scholars with distinguished careers in philosophy, history, theology, and economics, the CAR blends sound theological, moral, and economic thought to provide the academic community with a comprehensive view of economics that is firmly rooted in human dignity. More than 170 professors throughout the world are using CAR materials at schools such as the Pontifical Lateran University, Princeton University, Oxford University, the University of Navarre, University of Notre Dame, Georgetown University, Regent University, the University of Freiburg, and the John Paul II Institute for the Study of Family and Marriage. CAR scholars are invited to lecture on a regular basis around the world, and the department's scholarship also provides other Acton programs the intellectual material

growth rate of 10 percent and an article submission-to-publication rate of an outstanding 10-1. *Markets & Morality* articles are used in classrooms around the world, from Japan to Austria, Australia to Peru.

Although outside scholars are occasionally invited to pursue long term research projects with the CAR, the department's materials are generated largely in-house by its staff of scholars. Staff members, led by Dr. Samuel Gregg, have distinguished records in publication, education, and research, and devote themselves to exploring the relationship between faith, economics, and moral philosophy.

The work of the CAR is guided by an uncompromising commitment to human dignity, economic liberty, the recognition of the benefits of a limited government, and faith in the one true God. Above all, the investigations at the CAR are directed to the pursuit of truth. With this unique blend of faith and economics, the CAR serves as the mind behind Acton's work.

Public Policy



Acton’s aim is to build a new integration – to reassert morality into the marketplace, and morality into public life. In our policy work, we draw from all religious faiths, but primarily the one we know best – the Judeo-Christian tradition. We reach out to citizens, policy makers, politicians, pastors and priests, theologians, directors of social service agencies, the heads of denominations and the missionaries of the 21st Century.

Acton continues to build common ground on moral, economic, and social issues among Protestant groups representing a vast cross-section of the broader evangelical movement by focusing attention on the importance of ecclesiastical structures, the Christian tradition, doctrine, and the interpretation of Scripture.

We draw from the ancient ethos of the Eastern Orthodox churches on questions of wealth and poverty, economics and trade. Our August 2004 *Religion & Liberty* interview with Nikolas Gvosdev, a senior fellow at the Nixon Center, examined the state of liberty and economics in post-communist Russia. Vigen Guroian, a leading expert on Orthodox Christian ethics, has written on environmental and cultural issues for Acton.

In the rich tradition of Roman Catholic social teaching, Acton played a significant

But such thinking denies the proper relationship between man and nature. By promoting a scriptural view of environmental stewardship rather than protectionism, Acton encourages policy makers, businesspeople, and religious leaders to enact the truth about themselves as persons: they are the summit of God’s creation and are charged with the creative employment of the world’s resources. Preserving the integrity of creation is not only compatible with freedom and human flourishing, but the three are dynamically interrelated. Environmental stewardship is a great gift and a grave responsibility that all must recognize.

Educational Choice

So too are children a great gift and a great responsibility. The Acton Institute wishes to remind policy makers, however, that this gift and responsibility belongs first of all to parents and not to the government. Therefore, government ought to ensure parents the freedom to exercise their God-given rights as the primary educators of children. Acton proposes a competitive educational system, one in which parents can choose their children’s schools. This increased parental involvement in the educational system

that a business is functioning well, and affirms the importance of business as a calling. The Institute advocates a strong civil society – the best antidote to unscrupulous business dealings – rather than burdensome government regulation that inhibits human freedom and stifles innovation and creativity.

International Trade

When countries are isolated from the global economy, the regimes that govern them are given perverse incentives to harm the material well-being of their citizens. Because there is an essential relationship between a free, open economy and a free and prosperous people, the Acton Institute is committed to the free exchange of goods and services between persons. Acton supports efforts to remove barriers to trade between nations and to bring all persons into the circle of exchange.

Technology and Regulation

A free economy implies that governmental regulation ought to be kept to a minimum. This applies to technological creativity as well. Since high technology plays a vital role in

Moral Markets

In addition to producing the academic, philosophical, and theological basis for a free society, the Acton Institute also ensures that its message reaches those who manifest freedom in the business world. Acton does this by reaching out to a very specific and often overlooked group: entrepreneurs.

Contrary to the common and harmful stereotype, professional enterprise is a holy calling, a legitimate means to help build the Kingdom of God. By nature, entrepreneurs are those who connect resources to human want or need. This initiating spirit can be steered toward selfishness and materialism, or toward the works of faith; Acton looks to do the latter.

Just as Acton educates religious leaders in the economic aspects of ethics, it educates businesspeople in the ethical aspects of economics. In publications and in seminars held around the country, Acton delineates the principles of the entrepreneurial vocation to those not used to hearing encouragement from religious circles. Because this group is often alienated by religious leaders with erroneous views of capital and economics, Acton’s message is particularly well-received and yields an ever-increasing enthusiasm in free markets, ethics, and faith.

It is not enough to preach morality to make a difference in the business world; one must also understand economic truths that operate in particular instances. Acton advocates a system of business ethics that reflects a genuine synthesis of moral theology and sound, successful business practices. To that end, Acton publishes or distributes a variety of materials useful to business people. Examples include *The Entrepreneurial Vocation* by Rev. Robert A. Sirico; *And Why Not?: Morality and Business* by Francois Michelin; and *The Fire of Invention*, by Michael Novak. In these publications, the Acton message becomes clear: A vibrant and sustainable economy cannot exist without an ethic based on human dignity, truth, choice, and transparency.

Acton also hosts a number of seminars and conferences for business leaders looking to integrate their faith with their profession. The annual Acton University features extensive learning opportunities for business people and entrepreneurs on important ethical questions. Additionally, Acton offers one- and two-day regional seminars for business people. Designed for business executives and entrepreneurs, these seminars feature noted scholars and entrepreneurs to offer detailed insights into the nature of business and faith.

By reaching out to the business community, Acton illustrates the importance of solidarity among people of all vocations. Just as religious leaders must use their talents to build the kingdom of God, so must entrepreneurs offer their talents to provide the necessary resources and economic know-how. Acton serves a unique role as moderator between these two groups.



Acton works with business people and entrepreneurs to affirm their role as builders of the Kingdom of God.

Acton has identified six key areas for its public policy work: Environmental Stewardship, Educational Choice, Effective Compassion, Business and Society, International Trade, and Technology and Regulation.

and ongoing role in developing economic thinking among the faithful. Two documents stand as landmarks: *Rerum Novarum*, written by Pope Leo XIII in 1891, and *Centesimus Annus*, written by Pope John Paul II one hundred years later. By offering profound insights into the nature of work, society, and the human person, these two documents have inspired Acton not only to continue its educational work, but to apply the principles of freedom and dignity to other areas of public policy as well.

Acton’s policy work is enhanced by a staff of distinguished adjunct scholars including Dr. Marvin Olasky, author of *The Tragedy of American Compassion*, and Jennifer Roback Morse, a leading expert on marriage, family and social ethics and author of *Love and Economics: Why the Laissez-Faire Family Doesn’t Work*.

Environmental Stewardship

A growing movement of Christians advocates something called ‘creation care’. The movement suggests that nature is somehow better off untouched by human hands and needs to be protected from the inevitably corrupting influence of humanity.

coupled with increased competition among schools will improve education for all children.

Effective Compassion

When it comes to caring for the poor, governmental intervention creates more problems than it solves. The Acton Institute promotes the principle of subsidiarity which says that a need is best met by those closest to it. In other words, the most effective means of caring for the poor are found not in governmental programs, but in the family and the community. By promoting responsibility and pro-active community involvement, Acton hopes to encourage policy makers to place the solutions to poverty in the hands of those who truly make a difference.

Business and Society

Commerce is an essential component of the culture of any society, enabling individuals to serve freely the needs of one another through mutually beneficial exchange. Acton acknowledges the legitimate role of profit as an indicator

improving the lives of consumers, entrepreneurs ought to be free from undue restriction and allowed to enact their God-given vocation to connect resources with human need.

Rather than quick-fix, feel-good political solutions, the Public Policy initiatives of the Acton Institute offer solutions that take into consideration the overall good of humanity. By measuring public policy proposals against reasoned historical and spiritual analysis, Acton scholars offer more comprehensive critiques and solutions that reach beyond the bounds of economic matters.

“Corporations must manage assets professionally and transparently, be fair to employees, and be environmentally conscious. Who doesn’t agree that corporations must not pursue profit at the expense of justice and must not attempt to defy regulations designed to protect the public? Corporations must be as attentive to the needs of the community as they are to the demands of the bottom line.”

Rev. Robert A. Sirico
The Ethical Challenge for Business

International Programs

"May God abundantly bless your work and existential ideals. I deeply appreciate the opportunity you gave me to participate in this very meritorious Spanish Homiletics Award. It was clearly a challenge and an adventure for me from the start. Nevertheless, I have the satisfaction of having participated and expanded my vision and thought."

Oriel Concepción Martínez, Panama, Spanish Homiletics Participant



Acton is reaching a new generation of religious leaders all over the world. Recent conferences were held in (left to right) Zambia, the Netherlands, and Kenya.



Aside from an increase in international conferences, Acton has widened its influence in other ways. Acton scholars continue to lecture at conferences and universities around the world. The Institute has broadened the Lord Acton Essay Competition and the Homiletics Award to include a Lord Acton Spanish Essay Competition and a Spanish Homiletics Award. Additionally, Acton's Web site is now available in English, Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian. But perhaps Acton's most visible step toward international influence came in 2002 with the establishment of an international office in Rome. From this strategic post in the heart of Europe, Acton's message of freedom and virtue acts as a counterbalance to the increasing secularization and soft socialism of European society. Under the direction of Kishore Jayabalan, former policy analyst for the Vatican, the Rome office will help to promote Europe's religious heritage and articulate the case for economic liberty and limited government in a continent that, despite the experience of communism, remains deeply resistant to such ideals.

The world is growing smaller. Thanks to technological advancement and global markets, ideas disseminate faster than ever before. Globalization has created the opportunity both for great prosperity and for great error.

Acton Institute has taken the initiative to expand its international influence. This wider reach has taken shape in the form of more TFAVS Conferences, awards programs, and lecture tours, not to mention a new office in Rome.

In addition to the regular TFAVS in North America, Acton has expanded the program to numerous countries, including Mexico, Guatemala, Zambia, Kenya, Austria, the Czech Republic, and the Netherlands. In 2002, Acton hosted the "Faith and Liberty" conference for religious, business, and political leaders in Peru. In recent years, Acton has hosted two conferences for the Bishops of Mexico and one for the Bishops of Kenya. The Institute has also created an International Affiliates program where Acton alumni from around the globe are being trained to host conferences in places such as Austria, Argentina, Brazil, Kenya, Slovakia and Zambia.



Participants at an Acton conference in Kenya.

"I would like to thank the Acton Institute for making it possible for me to participate in the conference "Towards a Free and Virtuous Society" held in Antigua, Guatemala. Truly it was a very useful experience, and it really exceeded my expectations."

Pedro Méndez Dager, Venezuela, Guatemala TFAVS Alumnus



"Thank you once again for your great and thoughtful contribution in London. Thank you for taking time to talk to so many people and thank you to Acton for making this visit possible. We greatly see the need to give voice to the ideas you are working on, and hope that you too were happy to meet some of the young people who attended your lecture. It is clear that many of these people are grateful for such opportunities to meet you and talk to you and to explore these ideas in more depth. People were extremely interested by your presentation - I expect the majority of those who attended have never heard this material before. I hope and pray that we all do what we have to in order to continue to spread the ideas which will be the underpinning of a new culture of life in Europe. Thank you once again for your great contribution to this mission."

Emilia Klepacka, United Kingdom

Acton and You



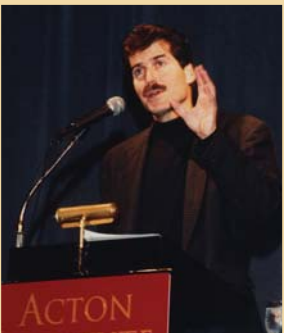
Cato Institute's Daniel Griswold discusses the benefits of free trade at the Acton Lecture Series



Economist Robert Genetski makes an argument for Social Security reform at the Acton Lecture Series

As Acton celebrates its 15th year of promoting a free and virtuous society, the institute has redoubled its efforts to reach out and educate its friends and supporters across the country. From modest beginnings, we are now the premier free-market think tank that integrates morality and sound economics in the United States and around the world. We are making a difference because we do more than write books and talk about how things should be done. We put ideas into action. By reaching out to the friends of liberty through lunch meetings, day-long conferences, and one-on-one mentoring, Acton is helping to secure the dream of freedom and dignity for all people.

(Photos from top) U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonin Scalia delivers the speech "On Interpreting the Constitution" at Acton's 1997 annual dinner; Clarence Thomas, also an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, gave the keynote address on "Religion and the Constitution of Liberty" at the 1994 annual dinner; Rev. Robert Sirico in a discussion with Pope John Paul II at Castel Gandolfo, the summer residence of the popes, in 1998; Cardinal Van Thuan and Chuck Colson at the Calvin College and Acton-sponsored Abraham Kuyper and Pope Leo XIII conference in 1998 in Grand Rapids; ABC News' John Stossel in the Acton Lecture Series in 1997 on "Greed and Freedom"; Francis Morkoh, a pastor and educator from Ghana, talks about the Acton Institute's influence on his ministry at the 2004 annual dinner.



The Acton Faith and Freedom Awards

The Faith and Freedom Award

The Faith and Freedom Award was established as part of the Acton Institute's tenth anniversary celebration. The award recognizes an individual who exemplifies commitment to faith and freedom through outstanding leadership in civic, business, or religious life. For this award, the Institute commissioned a sculpture of Lord Acton, the Institute's namesake, who held firmly to the two pillars of faith and freedom.



John Marks Templeton (2000)

The inaugural Faith and Freedom Award was bestowed on John Marks Templeton. Beginning a Wall Street career in 1937, he created some of the world's largest and most successful international investment funds. Templeton, a member of the Presbyterian Church (USA), was known for starting mutual funds' annual meetings with a prayer. Now a naturalized British citizen living in Nassau, the Bahamas, Templeton was knighted Sir John by Queen Elizabeth II in 1987 for his many accomplishments. One of those was creating the world's richest award, the \$1 million-plus Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities presented annually in London since 1972. And through the John Templeton Foundation, he gives away about \$40 million a year – especially to projects, college courses, books and essays on the benefits of cooperation between science and religion.

In 2003, the Templeton Foundation committed to a generous four-year pledge to launch the Templeton Freedom Awards program at the Atlas Economic Research Foundation. Since that time, Atlas has presented 18 Prizes and 30 Award Grants to outstanding think tanks working to improve the public understanding of freedom. The Acton Institute has won two Templeton Freedom Prizes.

Acton recognized Sir John as “a pioneering philanthropist with wisdom to understand the tremendous role of faith in the course of human history.”

Cardinal Van Thuan (2002)

His Eminence Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan, who died in September 2002, served the Catholic Church as President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in Rome. He was formerly Archbishop of Saigon, Vietnam. Cardinal Van Thuan was born in Hue, Vietnam, in 1928 and completed studies in philosophy and theology in Vietnam. He was ordained to the priesthood of the Catholic Church in 1953. He pursued advanced studies in Rome from 1953-1959, and received a doctorate in Canon Law from Gregorian University in Rome.

He was a professor and then rector of the major seminary of Nha Trang, Vietnam. Cardinal Van Thuan was ordained to the episcopacy in April 1967 and led the Diocese of Nha Trang for eight years, until he was named coadjutor and later Archbishop of Saigon on April 23, 1975, by Pope Paul VI. Archbishop Van Thuan was accused by Vietnamese



Communist authorities of being implanted in Saigon as a subversive influence. He was arrested on August 15, 1975, and imprisoned without trial for a total of 13 years, nine of them in solitary confinement. Instead of turning to bitterness or despair at this injustice, he chose to emulate Saint Paul's experience of writing letters while in prison. Archbishop Van Thuan sent a message of love and hope to his people, especially to youth, telling how every day, even in captivity, he lived his devotion to Jesus and Mary.

When he finally was freed, in 1991, he was expelled from his homeland. He went to Rome, where he served the Church in the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, becoming its president in 1998. He was elevated a Cardinal of the Catholic Church on February 21, 2001.

In awarding him the Faith and Freedom Award, Acton honored Cardinal Van Thuan as a leader whose “life stands as a dramatic example for others concerned with the purposes

of faith and freedom. The cardinal remained committed, despite great personal suffering, to the ideals of his faith.”

Rocco Buttiglione (2004)

Rocco Buttiglione, Italy's Minister of Culture, was born on June 6, 1948 in Gallipoli, Italy. He studied law in Turin and Rome, where he took his degree with a thesis in the history of political doctrines. He became an assistant to his academic advisor, Professor Augusto Del Noce and collaborated with Del Noce for many years. He is married and the father of four daughters.



His main intellectual concerns have been philosophy, social ethics, economics, and

politics. He has held professorships at the International Academy of Philosophy in Liechtenstein and Saint Pius V University in Rome and has been a member of the Pontifical Academy of Social Science. He has lectured internationally and is on the editorial boards of many Italian and foreign journals.

In the early 1990s, Buttiglione helped to form an Italian political party, the Christian Democratic Union and since 1994 has served in the Chamber of Deputies in the Italian Parliament. Since 1999 he has been a member of the European Parliament, and in 2001 he was appointed by Italy's President Silvio Berlusconi to be Minister of European Affairs. In 2004, Buttiglione withdrew his nomination to the new European Commission after a controversy arose over his defense of the traditional family and marriage.

Acton recognized Buttiglione for “his steadfast defense of Judeo-Christian values during his contentious confirmation hearings before the European Commission. While weathering a firestorm of criticism Mr. Buttiglione maintained his steadfast support of equality before the law and the equal dignity of every individual and stood fast against the attacks of radical secularism that denies all public manifestation of religion.”

Calihan Fellowships and Novak Award

“I'd like to thank the Acton Institute and its Calihan Fellowship program for awarding to me a travel grant when I needed such a support to present the paper at the International Institute for Christian Studies.”

Tedla Woldeyohannes, Talbot School of Theology, Biola University

“The Calihan Research Fellowship is another example of Acton's extraordinary efforts at equipping leaders with the ability to grow and contribute in the important field of religion and liberty.”

Jeremiah Russell, Baylor University



(left to right) Rev. Robert A. Sirico, Joseph Calihan, Maximilian B. Torres, and Michael Novak

Calihan Fellowships Program and the Novak Award

In a culture with a growing distrust and suspicion for economics, profit and free markets, there is a significant need to redeem these concepts and examine them in relation to faith and religious principles. The Calihan scholarships aim to support future religious and intellectual leaders who wish to study the essential relationship between religion, the free market, and limited government. Since its launch in 2000, Acton has awarded more than 220 Calihan academic fellowships, research scholarships, and travel grants to graduate students and seminarians studying in the United States and abroad. The program has successfully facilitated strong growth in deepening knowledge of the complex relationship between religion and economic liberty, as well as integrating commitment to faith with commitment to the principles of limited government, the rule of law, and the free market economy.

The *Calihan Academic Fellowship Program* provides academic fellowships of up to \$5,000 to students who show outstanding promise in integrating religious ideas with core principles of the classical liberal tradition. Such principles include the recognition of human rights and dignity, the protection of rights through the rule of law, and freedom in economic and political life.

The *Calihan Research Assistance Program* provides research grants of up to \$3,000 to advanced graduate students whose research agenda shows outstanding promise in integrating religious ideas with core principles of the classical liberal tradition.

The *Calihan Travel Grant Program* provides travel grants of up to \$1,000 to students who have been selected to present, at an academic conference, research that is relevant to the integration of religious ideas with the core principles of the classical liberal tradition. Awards are also open to students who need to travel to, and perform research at, archives or libraries.

Not only is Acton reaching world-class students who study at prestigious universities such as the University of Virginia Law School, Columbia School of Law, Yale University, Georgetown University, and Oxford University, but the Institute is creating relationships with many early career scholars who will become leaders in their fields of study. We are confident that they will provide much of the leadership needed to help universities and religious communities overcome the distrust and suspicion with which some regard the world of economics, free enterprise, and free markets.

Several recipients of Calihan support have been appointed to academic positions in the United States and Europe. Dr. Andrea Schneider, for example, received a Calihan fellowship in 2002.

She now holds a senior research position at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Berlin, Germany. She is also a Calihan recipient who is drawing the attention of many of her students to the work of Acton. They are thus in a position to develop their research agenda and shape the minds of people of faith, both within and outside university circles, toward a more favorable and accurate vision of the relationship between faith and the call to freedom, especially economic liberty.

The **Novak Award** is the final, and most influential, component of the Calihan fellowships program. Named after the theologian Michael Novak, this \$10,000 prize rewards new outstanding research by early to mid-career scholars who are looking at the relationship between religion and economic liberty. The recipient of the Novak Award presents his or her research in a public forum known as the Calihan Lecture.

Professor David M. VanDrunen of Westminster Seminary California won the 2004 Novak Award and \$10,000 prize. Professor VanDrunen was chosen based on his body of work on the theology of Thomas Aquinas and the relationship of theology, economics, and law. Other Novak award winners are making impressive gains. For example, 2002 Novak Award winner Jude Chua Soo Meng was recently hired as an assistant professor at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. He will be working in the policy and leadership studies department of the university's National Institute of Education. Other Novak Award winners include Dr. Arnaud Pellissier Tanon (2000); Dr. Michael Casey (2001); and Maximilian B. Torres (2003).



David M. VanDrunen



Maximilian B. Torres

Communications

“It is no exaggeration to say that, once the more active part of the intellectuals has been converted to a set of beliefs, the process by which these become generally accepted is almost automatic and irresistible. These intellectuals are the organs which modern society has developed for spreading knowledge and ideas, and it is their convictions and opinions which operate as the sieve through which all new conceptions must pass before they can reach the masses.”

Friedrich Hayek,
The Intellectuals and Socialism (1949)



The work of the Acton Institute is communicated globally through a vigorous and effective outreach to influential newspapers, magazines, broadcast outlets and online media. And, just as businesses and industries have benefited from the spread of international trade and a global economy, Acton also has also made good use of those enabling technologies – high speed networks, the Internet and World Wide Web – that have knitted nations and peoples closer together.

The media relations and communications efforts at Acton are aimed at the broadest public, and at those who shape public opinion for a living. As F.A. Hayek observed more than 50 years ago, those who sought to advance the ideas of socialism and the welfare state first aimed their efforts at the influencers: journalists, intellectuals and academics. Today, little has changed. Sophisticated, big-dollar media strategies are core to the plans of groups that would restrict trade, impose onerous environmental regulations, expand the welfare state or keep faith from the public square. In many cases, the huge budgets wielded by ecumenical and denominational groups are joined with these largely political movements.

with broad national audiences. The Institute’s television commentary greatly expanded in the spring of 2005 with the death of John Paul II and election of Pope Benedict XVI as Acton staff, led by Rev. Robert Sirico, were called on to provide ongoing analysis on such venues as the BBC, CNN International, Fox News and Channel News Asia. The Institute’s commentators were sought out for insight on the economic and social teachings of John Paul and Benedict – and frequently set the record straight when erroneous views were put forth in the media.

A variety of first-rate institutional publications also reach thousands of subscribers. These include *Acton Notes*, a monthly newsletter, and *Religion & Liberty*, a quarterly journal that looks at economics, faith and cultural issues.



In the modern, always-on, around-the-clock media industry, the War of Ideas is continuously played out.

A broad array of talented Acton staff, and associated scholars and clergy, are published in leading newspapers in the United States, Europe and Asia. Recent commentaries have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Detroit News*, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and the *Rocky Mountain News*, among others. Acton staff is called upon by journalists at papers such as the *New York Times* or *L’Osservatore Romano* for expert commentary. Our reach is international, with timely and incisive analysis published in the Asian and European editions of the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Jakarta Post*, the *Apple Daily* (Hong Kong) and *Katholiek Nieuwsblad* (Netherlands). Latin American and Spanish papers publish Acton commentators widely.

In radio, Acton staff and outside associates appear on shows that are aimed at denominational listeners, and general news and talk shows

A weekly e-mail newsletter, *Acton News & Commentary*, reaches more than 5,000 people weekly with timely commentary, news and announcements.

The Acton Web site, launched in 1995, continues to be a primary source of distributing information to the public, to students, and the clergy. The Institute is also an early adopter of new technologies, such as podcasting, which automatically broadcasts audio content via the Internet. And in early 2005, the launch of the Acton PowerBlog greatly increased Web visitors with a lively mix of news, commentary and links to other online sources.



Stewardship

Unlike some think tanks that are geared toward the political battles of the day, or to advance a particular policy or piece of legislation, the Acton Institute was founded to make a lasting change in economic thinking by religious leaders. We take the long view. The task of ensuring that we have the institutional resources to accomplish our important mission falls to the Advancement Department, which works with Acton supporters, and the Finance Department, which exercises proper stewardship of our resources.

Acton’s steady growth has corresponded with the realization that religious leaders exercise tremendous influence in public policy debates. That influence, too often, has been used to cast the free enterprise system in morally dubious terms. The Institute’s expanding base of supporters understands that educating religious leaders about economics is vitally important.

Since its founding, the Acton Institute has relied solely on donations from supporters for operating funds. We do not seek, nor would we accept, government funding. We have no endowment, which means that our development staff is responsible for raising enough money each year to pay for the programs, salaries, office expenses, publishing costs, and travel expenses that allow us to get our message out to the world. Over the years, we have seen a steady increase in revenue, from \$409,000 in 1991 to a projected \$4.1 million in 2005. This tells us that there is a real need for our work, and that our donors recognize the importance of what we’re doing.

We design our programs to effectively reach out to religious and business leaders all over the world and to teach them the truth about free-market economics. The growing network of students, seminarians, professors, and business people who are influenced by our work go on to influence literally hundreds and thousands of people every week through their sermons and work on the benefits of limited government and free enterprise. We are confident that the fruits of our work will be felt for generations and are proud to have so many friends and supporters join us in our efforts.

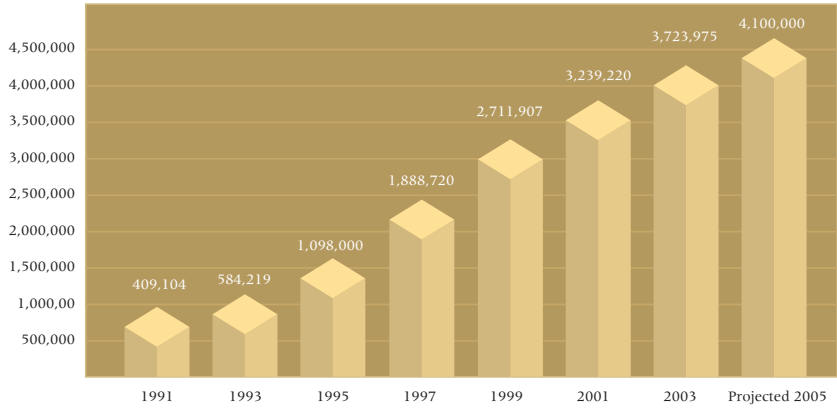
Acton receives support from three kinds of donors: individuals, foundations, and corporations. We are grateful for the financial support we receive, and we consider it our responsibility to use those funds in the most efficient

and effective manner possible. We preach ethical and effective management for the nonprofit sector, and we practice that at Acton to the fullest extent of our abilities. To help us do this, we take evaluation and measurement seriously and integrate it into our day-to-day operations by measuring and evaluating programs and efforts across the Institute. We make this information available for general review and scrutiny by staff, board members, and supporters. That provides us with important feedback, ensuring that our programs remain strategic, efficient, and responsive to all stakeholders. This transparency brings a corresponding level of accountability that is rare in the nonprofit world.

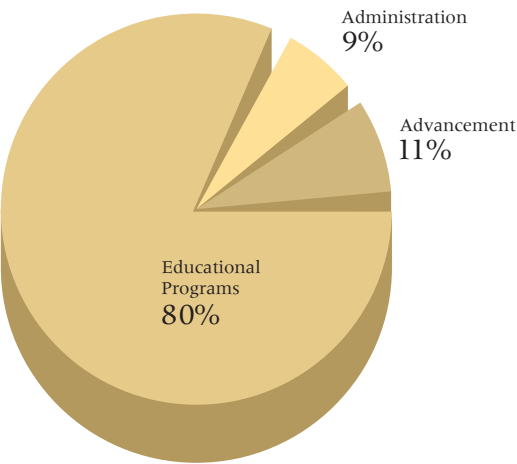
Our evaluation begins by first setting objectives for our programs, and then measuring results to assess our progress against these stated objectives. This information, along with baseline data, target audience, results, and scores, is captured in tabular form in what we call a scorecard. The most illustrative of these numbers is displayed graphically in a program dashboard that we have developed internally. Each month, we provide a management dashboard to our board of directors and leadership team that provides a high level summary of Acton’s advancement, finance, and communication efforts. Collecting and presenting this information keeps us accountable and encourages us to constantly evaluate and adapt our programs. Our evaluation and measurement system connects the good people we work with, both inside and outside of Acton, with good information.

The Acton Institute was founded to change the hearts and minds of religious leaders and to introduce them to the moral benefits of a free-market economic system. We could not exist without the support of the many like-minded people who have donated to us over the years. We want to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to those who give generously of their own resources to advance the cause of “a free and virtuous society.”

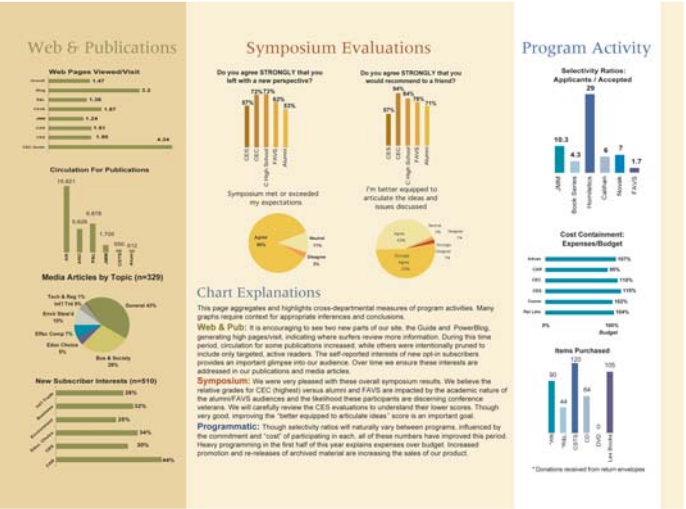
REVENUE



EXPENSES



Accounting firm Ernst & Young conducts an annual audit of the Acton Institute’s financial statements. This audited statement and the Institute’s IRS Form 990 are available for public review.



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Excerpt from Pope John Paul II’s Evangelium Vitae. Cited by Cardinal George Pell in “Is There Only Secular Democracy?” (Journal of Markets & Morality, Fall 2004).

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Religion stands up to Big Brother - Christian Libertarians oppose pornography and drug abuse and government intervention to prevent their pervasiveness; includes analysis of the work of Reverend Robert Sirico and the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty

Richard Miniter

Summary: Although confined for now to intellectual circles, the Christian libertarian movement has the potential to make a political impact equal to that of the religious right. These libertarians abhor drug use and pornography, but believe the government shouldn't regulate such social ills, and their laissez-faire views extend to economics and foreign affairs.

Like most religious leaders, the Rev. Robert Sirico warns his flock about the dangers of illegal drug use. **He formed the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty partly to push for drug policies that would make innercity streets safe again. But Sirico's approach is a little unorthodox: He thinks drugs ought to be legalized.**

"If God made the heavens and the Earth by his mere word, and created man and woman free to either damn themselves or find redemption," asks Sirico, a Roman Catholic priest in Grand Rapids, Mich., "then where does the government get off" regulating nonviolent behavior such as drug use? Though he doesn't condone drug use, Sirico thinks the government shouldn't regulate behavior that harms only consenting adults.

Sirico, a Paulist, is one of a growing number of religious leaders and churchgoers who hope to reverse what they see as America's moral decline -- but they don't want the government to help. They call themselves Christian libertarians, and as a group they are hard to pigeonhole. They believe in God and the free market. In their ranks are ministers who abhor pornography but don't want to enlist the government's help to stop it. They are critical of moral relativism, sexual promiscuity and an active U.S. foreign policy. Christian libertarians, both Catholic and Protestant, want the government to safeguard only life and property and to leave moral instruction to the clergy and volunteer groups such as the Salvation Army and Alcoholics Anonymous. They believe the government should ban abortion, though they worry about how it would enforce such a ban without violating basic civil liberties.

These attitudes put them firmly out of step with the religious right, which is comfortable using government power to legislate morality on issues such as homosexuality and creationism, and with major religious organizations such as the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Council of Churches, which have long called for political action on a range of social issues, from poverty to the environment.

Founded in 1990, Sirico's Acton Institute, with an annual budget of about \$500,000, is winning the support of an increasing number of business leaders, including Amway co-founder Richard DeVos. With a handful of paid staff members, the Acton Institute is challenging the intellectual consensus long held in religious circles that socialism is morally superior to capitalism.

In fact, Sirico contends, his views on capitalism are "much more controversial in religious circles" than his views on drug legalization. This is strange, he says, because the vilification of business by some Catholic leaders is responsible for driving many people away from the church. "I hear it all the time" from lapsed Catholics, he says.

On the morality of capitalism, Sirico argues that "the free market is morally neutral; its morality [rests] upon the morality of the people engaged in the process" of buying and selling. The Bible endorses neither capitalism nor socialism outright, he says, but some political systems are more consistent with biblical teachings than others.

The Acton Institute is named after Lord John Acton, a 19th century English classical liberal and devout Catholic who is best known for the phrase, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Though led by a Paulist priest, the Acton Institute is not a strictly Catholic enterprise, Sirico says. "We are ecumenical and reach out to people of all faiths."

It would seem that Christian libertarians could find common ground with the politically powerful religious right on the issue of government intervention against abortion and on free market economics, to which the religious right is generally friendly. But Christian libertarians extend the idea of laissez-faire to social issues -- an area in which the religious right has an extensive legislative agenda. Churchgoing conservatives usually have no qualms about calling for economic deregulation while at the same time asking the government to ban drugs, sodomy, pornography, funding of indecent art, and a host of other things they regard as social ills. And they do so "without addressing or even recognizing any contradiction between their positions," says Doug Bandow, a member of the nondenominational, evangelical Christian Assembly Center in Vienna, Va., and author of *Beyond Good Intentions: A Biblical View of Politics*.

The argument made by Bandow, who is also a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and a syndicated columnist for Copley News Service, finds some support on the left. "I think [Christian libertarians] are very consistent in a way that liberals and conservatives aren't -- they don't want the government involved," says Arthur McGovern, a philosophy professor at the University of Detroit Mercy and self-described "contemporary liberal."

Some on the religious left admire the unwillingness of Christian libertarians to impose their social views on others, and are pleasantly surprised to learn that Christian libertarians dislike using U.S. military might abroad. "It took me some time to catch on that these [people] weren't just conservatives," says McGovern, adding that "when I criticized U.S. policy in Latin America, they said, 'Right on!'"

Still, clergy on the left find Christian libertarians' support for free markets unrealistic at best, and the left is not about to make a home for Christian libertarians. For one thing, to bolster their views, the libertarians read Scripture "more selectively than liberation theologians," says McGovern, who has written books on liberation theology, the belief that Marxism and Christianity can be married to better the lives of Latin American peasants. What's more,

Christian free marketers ignore the "negative consequences of capitalist systems," such as gross inequities in power and wealth, he says.

Even among the general libertarian movement, the godly may find no room at the inn. That's because many libertarians converted to the laissez-faire creed by reading Ayn Rand, who was an evangelist of capitalism and atheism. She declared that "selfishness is a virtue" and called religious belief "irrational."

University of Nevada at Las Vegas economics Professor Murray Rothbard tells a story that illuminates the cultural divide between Christians and libertarians. In the summer of 1958, when Rothbard was among Rand's inner circle, she learned that his wife is a Christian. Rand gave Rothbard, an atheist, several of her books to give to his wife in the hope of making her an atheist. "I was given some months to convert her to Rand," he says. When his wife persisted in her Christian beliefs, Rothbard felt that Rand ultimately would force him to choose between divorce and being "excommunicated" from her "church." Rothbard decided to leave. Rand's followers, he observes, "were more anti-God than antistate."

Virtually all of the figures that libertarians admire are or were either atheists or opposed to organized religion. And many politically active libertarians fit a stereotype of "hippie capitalists" who view regulation of sex and drugs as an assault on their lifestyle. These libertarians are distrustful of their would-be Christian allies, who may consider their lifestyles to be strange -- and vice versa.

Most Christian libertarians believed in the free market first and found God only as they grew older. Alejandro Chafuen, president of the Atlas Economic Research Foundation in Fairfax, Va., and a Catholic, says he once was a follower of Rand and "openly hostile to religion." But as he matured he discovered Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, ironically through Rand's writings, and eventually he embraced Catholicism. "I see no contradiction between my faith and my libertarian beliefs," he says.

For now, Christian libertarianism is growing only in intellectual circles, though it seems to be "reaching critical mass," says Bandow. It could spread widely, say a number of supporters and critics, if it finds a charismatic political champion. No politician has yet embraced the movement, which is composed mostly of younger clergy and lay people. So it could take a generation before the full effect of libertarianism is felt in the churches.

When that happens, Christian libertarianism could have the same political impact that evangelical Christians first had in the 1970s. At that time, evangelicals questioned church leaders who favored the counterculture, and they organized a grass roots revolt against the proposed Equal Rights Amendment. Ultimately successful in stopping the ERA, which they saw as a threat to the traditional family, the religious right remains a potent political force against legislation that in its eyes promotes promiscuity and homosexuality.

Libertarians could fundamentally change the terms of debate on a range of social issues -- from abortion and drugs to sex and social justice. Looking at the intellectual underpinnings of

Christian capitalism and its public policy implications might reveal where the next front will open in the "culture war."

"We could have an impact on all players," says Bandow, who believes libertarian clerics could make the religious community on both right and left more hesitant to use political force to inculcate virtue. The libertarians are gradually becoming a greater intellectual force in religious debates. Especially in matters relating to economics, says Bandow, the argument for laissez-faire must now be addressed; 10 years ago that wasn't the case. Even nonreligious libertarians may have to adjust and "take a fresh look at religion," he says.

The intellectual foundation of God-fearing laissez-faire is a composite of Bible passages and economic theories. Bandow and other Christian libertarians underscore Sirico's point that the Bible in no way endorses one economic system over another. Religion is concerned with an individual's relationship with God, they argue, whereas politics is concerned with an individual's relationship with the state.

Those who wish to use the government to enforce a moral vision in society, Sirico argues, are victims of two fallacies. The practical fallacy is that the most politically effective people are the most moral. In fact, most of the time they are tempted to discard morality to advance a political agenda. And even if the moral leaders do wind up atop the political pyramid, "the political mechanism is always available for other, less moral" people to exploit, Sirico says. The moral fallacy, he says, is that morality can be achieved through coercion. Government can control behavior, Sirico says, but it cannot alter the architecture of the soul. "Morality is not refraining from doing bad things, it is doing good things."

Some clergymen remind Sirico that government must have a role in regulating the economy because, as the Bible teaches, man is easily tempted into mistreating his fellow man. Without the government, there would be no check on sinful business practices such as making shoddy products or paying unjust wages, they say. Libertarians agree to a certain extent, saying the government must enforce contracts, punish violent criminals and otherwise safeguard individual rights. "I'm no anarchist," says Sirico, adding that obtrusive economic and moral regulation are what he considers misguided.

To give legislation-minded conservatives even more heartburn, some Christian libertarians also turn to the tablets of the old right, loosely defined by Ohio Sen. Robert Taft and other American conservatives of the 1940s and 1950s. The two thinkers perhaps most esteemed by old right traditionalists are Richard Weaver, a conservative philosopher whose *Ideas Have Consequences* was published in 1948, and Frank S. Meyer, who was a contributor to *National Review*.

The writings of each urged believers to keep religion and politics separate. Weaver wrote, "The policy of a state toward the [religious] culture or cultures within it should be laissez-faire, except at those points where collisions may be so severe that they imperil the minimum preservation of order with which the state is charged."

Meyer, who tried to reconcile the traditionalists with the libertarians of the old right, echoes Weaver. "Truly to be able to choose good and truth requires a freedom which, unfortunately, also makes it possible for men to choose evil and error," Meyer wrote in a 1962 essay. "In a word, good and truth cannot be enforced, because by their essential nature they cannot be made real in men unless they are freely chosen." For Meyer, a government that tries to mold the souls of its citizens soon becomes an "unlimited Leviathan state" with no respect for individual rights.

"Christian libertarians are simply calling on contemporary conservatives to reclaim their old right roots," says Jeff Tucker, a traditionalist Catholic who edits the Free Market, the newsletter of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, based in Auburn, Ala.

If the religious right were to answer the Christian libertarians' call, it would have to give up many of its hot button issues. These include the fights against drugs, pornography, taxpayer-funded art regarded as indecent and distribution of condoms in public schools. Of course, Christian classical liberals, as some libertarians describe themselves, do not endorse drug use, pornography or condoms in the schools; they just don't see the political process as the solution.

The problem, as Sirico and others see it, is that political institutions are, by their nature, incapable of making moral distinctions or teaching morality. Even if state-run schools, soup kitchens and prisons tried to teach right from wrong, they would soon be forced to satisfy so many conflicting creeds that the teaching would be either banal truisms or meaningless jargon, Sirico says. As a practical matter, church-operated schools, orphanages, homeless shelters and hospitals are run better than those of the state, he says, and are more likely to provide the moral framework to prepare people for the vicissitudes of life.

Many of the religious right see moral instruction in public schools as a remedy for the decline of cultural standards, but Sirico disagrees. In New York City public schools, he says, "condoms can be distributed without parental consent, while in the Tennessee public schools, [copies of] the New Testament cannot be distributed even with parental consent." For schools and other public institutions, "it is no longer a debate about morality, it is a debate about conformity" with government doctrine. The answer for libertarians is not to change what the government requires, but to work toward a diversity of schools so people of differing moral doctrines can have their own academies.

Perhaps the biggest policy difference between the religious right and Christian libertarians is on the issue of homosexuality. Many Christians consider sodomy -- in fact any sex outside of marriage -- sinful. What sets Christian libertarians apart is that they favor repealing sodomy laws. "Churches have every right, and indeed obligation, to preach that sex properly belongs within the covenant of marriage," Bandow wrote in a letter to the Washington Post. "Of course, this bars nonmarital heterosexual sex as well as homosexual sex. ...Sexually active gay -- and heterosexual -- singles are victimizing themselves, not nonconsenting third parties. Thus, there is no intrinsic reason for government to ban homosexual behavior."

Christian libertarians are also making some thunder on the left. They are challenging an idea dear to theologians such as John Cort, author of Christian Socialism, that capitalism is fundamentally immoral. "A Christian could, not to mention should, be a socialist," writes Cort, who calls upon the "spirit of Christian love" to support redistribution of wealth. Others cite the Gospels' frequent criticism of the wealthy and the particular attention Jesus paid to those at the bottom of Jewish society.

Christian libertarians respond that most of the passages cited by those on the religious left are not core tenets of Christian faith, and they also point to the writings of Saints Peter and Paul. Peter told followers that they had no obligation to sell their property and turn the proceeds over to the church, although many early Christians freely shared their possessions with other believers and some lived communally. Paul advised in 2 Corinthians: "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." The policy prescription, according to Bandow? "A faith that refuses to order its adherents to give not surprisingly provides little support for using the state to make others give."

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Abuse victims share their pain

Ed Golder. The Grand Rapids Press. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Sep 18, 1993. pg. B.01

Copyright Grand Rapids Press Sep 18, 1993

In a softly lit chapel, surrounded by strangers, a woman named Faye stood and confessed her secret.

"I am a survivor of incest" she said. "When I was 6 years old, I was molested by my mother's brother."

That year of abuse from her childhood has resulted in 20 years of flashbacks, denial and anger, she told those gathered at the Catholic Information Center Tuesday night for "An Evening Honoring the Grief of Victims and Survivors of Abuse."

Stepping onto the path of recovery, Faye said, means raising feelings that are sometimes "bad," sometimes "real bad."

"I continue to struggle with the legacy," she told the assembly.

The struggle began for her in putting a name to the darkness.

That is always the beginning of healing, as the Rev. Robert Sirico, a priest at the center, told participants a few minutes later.

"We're not going to pretend that everything is fixed, nor are we saying that abuse is OK," Sirico said. "We're offering our pain to God."

Standing next to Sirico on the altar was the Rev. James Chelich, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church in Grand Rapids.

Although Sirico and the Catholic Information Center have been sponsoring these evenings honoring loss for **four years**, officials at St. Thomas specifically asked to be involved in this one, and specifically asked that the evening focus on sexual abuse victims.

Five months ago, St. Thomas underwent a painful crisis when its parish priest was removed because of sexual abuse allegations dating back 20 years.

Facing that crisis, the parish became sensitive to the plight of victims of sexual abuse, Chelich said. Parish leaders wanted to do something for those victims.

Above all, they wanted to acknowledge the pain, Chelich said, and to say that such abuse "has no place in the church."

In the process of planning a response, they realized the pain went far beyond their own community.

"The principle is an age-old one," Chelich said. "One person's story always hooks another, then another, then another."

And, he added, these stories of degradation in turn "hook God."

"We're suggesting," Chelich said, "that God is pained by what has happened."

After Faye finished telling her story, Dave stood up.

He told of physical and emotional abuse at the hands of his alcoholic parents. He spoke of one occasion when his father beat him unconscious.

And he told of a nun in grade school who slapped him for breaking his Eucharistic fast.

"I was taught that a nun or priest was close to God," he said.

Without his parents or his church, he had nowhere to turn. He, too, lived his adult life wrestling with the consequences.

Whether at the hands of a priest, or a parent invoking the name of God, abuse with religious overtones creates another layer of shame, the acid that eats away at survivors down through the years.

For those who have suffered through this abuse, religious symbols can become dark and threatening. The task of healing is found, at least partially, in separating authentic religious faith from its dark shadow.

"From a religious point of view, doing that separation is extremely important," Chelich said, especially since, as most 12-step groups acknowledge, God is an indispensable ally on the road to recovery.

This week's gathering at the Catholic Information Center used religious symbols as a method of recovery, even for those abused at the hands of the church. It was, as Chelich said, a "gentle step."

During the service participants named their pain on notecards, placed these collective pains in a pile and set them on fire.

The assembly watched silently as the flames shot upward.

Chelich threw some incense, a sign of reverence, on the fire.

The fire was smothered with sand. Participants then took burning candles - hope - and planted them on the ashes.

"Tonight is an acknowledgment that pain has taken place, and taken place in places it is not supposed to," Chelich told the gathering.

But for the people who were there, the important thing was healing that pain.

And that happened in just the right place.

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Father Robert Sirico: Power Broker on the Rise

By Bill Berkowitz, AlterNet

Posted on July 3, 2001, Printed on March 13, 2007

<http://www.alternet.org/story/11114/>

Father Robert Sirico and his Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty are on a roll. Sirico, who has been operating below the radar of the mainstream media for more than a decade, is definitely moving on up. Late last year, more than 400 people gathered at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan to celebrate the Institute's 10th anniversary. Who is Father Robert Sirico and why are so many conservatives saying such nice things about him?

During the last 18 months, Father Sirico advised President George W. Bush on "charitable choice" and the future of welfare reform; responded to a call from the Vatican and edited a book delineating the Catholic Church's teachings on social justice issues; launched a right-wing religious environmental coalition; sponsored a conference on globalization at the Vatican; and published op-ed pieces in numerous U.S. dailies. Topping it off, Acton Institute advisory board member Father Avery Dulles, son of former secretary of state John Foster Dulles and nephew of former CIA head Allen Dulles, was designated a Cardinal by the Vatican.

Moving from left to right

Father Sirico has a colorful though rarely publicized background that includes a 1970s stint as a "roll-em-on-the-floor Pentecostal boy preacher, who was packing 1,500 people into a Seattle theater every week," says Jerry Sloan, executive director of the watchdog group Project Tocsin. Sirico moved to Los Angeles, joining the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, and later served as executive director of what is now the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Center. Sirico later termed this his "soft Marxist" period.

After embracing libertarianism, he turned to the Catholic Church. "I heard homilies preached that inevitably insulted business people," Sirico says, and he was determined to turn that around.

In 1990, Father Sirico founded Grand Rapids, Michigan-based Acton Institute. Named for historian and social philosopher Baron John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, known as Lord Acton. The Institute's mission is to "promote a free and virtuous society, characterized by individual liberty and sustained by religious principles."

In the mid-nineties, the Acton Institute, then little known outside of conservative circles played a significant role during the welfare reform debate by establishing its National Welfare Reform Initiative in 1995. A strong supporter of welfare reform, Father Sirico argued in congressional testimony for greater restrictions on welfare recipients and was an early advocate of moving social welfare programs into the hands of faith-based organizations.

According to The Right Guide, published by the Ann Arbor, Michigan-based Economics America, Inc., in 1997, 94 percent of the Acton Institute's \$1.8 million budget came from contributions and grants from foundations, businesses and individuals. Major donors included the \$100,000 from the Scaife Family Foundation, \$50,000 from the Richard and Helen deVos Foundation, \$50,000 from the John M. Olin Foundation and \$40,000 from the Lynde & Harry Bradley Foundation.

Revising the Church's social agenda

While many criticisms can be justly lodged against the Catholic Church, one thing is clear. It has been invaluable in its provision of services to the poor. Many priests and nuns were on the front lines with Cesar Chavez and the farm workers movement. Even President Bush recognized, in his recent speech at Notre Dame University, the charitable work of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement. Now, along comes Father Sirico with a strategy for subverting the progressive aspects of Catholic teachings on economic issues. He converts the Church's advocacy on behalf of the poor, promoted by John Paul II in his 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, into a paean for the free market.

Since he disagrees with many of the social teachings of the Church, the news of his editing project for the Vatican was particularly chilling. According to the conservative National Catholic Register, Father Sirico was assigned to "sift out the most important passages from the social teachings of the popes from Leo XIII to John Paul II." The finished work, "The Social Agenda: A Collection of Magisterial Texts," a 225-page book containing nearly 370 quotations from some 75 Church documents, was released at the Vatican in April 2000. For Father Sirico, the central theme of the papal social encyclicals is "the principle of subsidiarity." This means that wherever possible responsibilities should be "handled at a lower organizational level" (read less government regulation and intervention). Sirico also emphasizes "the right to private property," aligning the Church's teachings with his own free market philosophy.

Professor Anthony Basile, in the September 1998 issue of *Culture Wars*, accuses Father Sirico of "portray[ing] poverty as the fault of the poor individual, and not due to social injustices," a fundamental departure from Catholicism. Basile sees the creation of the Institute's Center for Economic Personalism as facilitating the melding of ideology and practice to "indoctrinate all [its] seminarians and theology students along these ideological lines."

Religious right targets the environment

In time for Earth Day 2000, the Acton Institute helped launch the Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship (ICES), an organization aiming to inject conservative religious tenets into the environmental debate. Father Sirico believes that "environmental ideology is increasingly being used, not to preserve nature's beauty, but to restrict human enterprise that is essential to a more humane existence for people."

The Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship, the organization's founding document, was the first major pronouncement on environmental issues by a coalition of ultraconservative religious groups. The Declaration prioritizes the needs of humans over nature, advocates the unleashing of free market forces to resolve environmental problems and denounces the environmental movement for embracing faulty science and a gloom-and-doom approach.

Signers of the Declaration include such right-wing ringleaders as Focus on the Family president Dr. James Dobson, Campus Crusade for Christ founder Bill Bright, Prison Fellowship Ministries' head Charles Colson, the Rev. Donald Wildmon, president of the American Family Association, Rabbi Daniel Lapin, head of Toward Tradition and Father Sirico. ICES' advisory committee contains Dr. D. James Kennedy of the Ft. Lauderdale, Florida-based Coral Ridge Ministries, a controversial anti-gay leader and an outspoken denier of separation of church and state. Kennedy said that "if ever an issue needed sound Biblical Doctrine brought to bear upon it, it's the environment, and [ICES] accomplishes this." President Bush's "compassionate conservatism"

guru Dr. Marvin Olasky, professor of journalism and history at the University of Texas, Austin, is also on board.

ICES's website maintains that its "network of religious, academic and community leaders" will provide a "credible alternative to liberal environmental advocacy for people in congregations, schools, government, and the religious and secular media."

In late November 2000, Father Sirico added globalization to his portfolio. Acton, along with the Pontifical Council for the Family, sponsored a Vatican City conference examining "the impact of globalization on the family." The conference was also an important development in the ongoing conversation between evangelical Protestants and conservative Catholics, as major players like Father Richard John Neuhaus, Dr. Dobson, Charles Colson, Rep. Chris Smith, (R-N.J.), and Catholic scholar Michael Novak were in attendance. At his late December meeting with Bush, Father Sirico remarked that "tackling the problem of poverty will require that persons of different religions, races, backgrounds and political persuasions, come together around a common agenda." Father Sirico's agenda mirrors the Heritage Foundation's Robert Rector, who, in the chapter on Welfare in Heritage's "Issues 2000: The Candidates Briefing Book" emphasizes "marriage and responsible fatherhood," "educational choice" including charter schools, vouchers and tuition tax credits, and "empowering faith-based private charities through charitable tax credits and other reforms."

Father Robert Sirico's work at the Acton Institute covers a broad spectrum of hot button issues from reinterpreting Catholic social doctrine and the creation of a right-wing religious-based environmental organization, to advocacy for charitable choice and a reduction in government programs. His star is on the rise.

Bill Berkowitz is an Oakland-based freelance writer covering the Religious Right and related conservative issues and movements.

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Drug policy: kingdoms in conflict; [MORNING Edition]

ALAN W. BOCK: The Orange County Register. Orange County Register. Santa Ana, Calif.: May 9, 1993. pg. j.01

Many observers find it curious that the Crystal Cathedral should be making its facilities available (Monday at 7 p.m.) for a forum on drug policy put on by the Coalition for National Drug Policy Change. The Coalition and the forum are spearheaded by Orange County Superior Court Judge James P. Gray, a leader in the debate about whether society should continue to treat drug abuse as a criminal matter.

For some, the very idea that Christians or other religious people might entertain the possibility that drug prohibition isn't working or isn't wise falls into the "man bites dog" category.

This perception rests on important misconceptions. The first is that those who favor reforming our country's drug policies must be latter-day hippies or whacked-out druggies. The second is that Christians are generally censorious people who want their moral code translated into law and enforced by the government. Both these perceptions are profoundly false.

The resolution the Coalition for National Drug Policy Change is circulating - first signed in February by a number of eminently respectable Americans at the Hoover Institution at Stanford - is actually quite modest in scope. It simply states, in a number of well-crafted "whereas" clauses, that the drug war has failed miserably - hardly a controversial notion. It then calls for viewing drug use and drug abuse as medical and social problems, to be handled with medical and social solutions, and asks for an objective presidential commission to explore all facets of the issue openly.

The resolution was first signed by Nobel laureate economist Milton Friedman, former San Jose police chief Joseph McNamara, Judge Gray, several doctors and psychiatrists, including Dr. S. Clarke Smith of Anaheim, two ministers at the First African-Methodist-Episcopal Church in Los Angeles, and others.

Since then, it has been signed by Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke, former Secretary of State George Shultz, the Rev. Robert Schuller and the Rev. Bruce Larson of the Crystal Cathedral, Rabbi Haim Asa of Temple Beth Tikvah in Fullerton - among other clergymen - and more doctors, judges, businesspeople, and even a few law-enforcement officials.

Having clergy come out for liberalization of drug laws is hardly unprecedented. In 1990, the Religious Coalition for a Moral Drug Policy was formed, and issued a valuable little booklet, Reason, Compassion, and the Drug War, edited by two Catholic priests, Joseph Ganssle and Robert Sirico. In the introduction, Father Ganssle, president of the Coalition, wrote, "as moral leaders, as clergy, as human beings, we will cry out for an end to the violence of the Drug War, and a beginning of a process of healing and liberation that our people so desperately need."

"Much of the grave consequences of the drug war," the booklet notes, "spring from the ideological assumption that we must make everything we disapprove of illegal. We reject this notion, as it forgets the difference between vice and crime. Enforcing positive morality is our responsibility as individuals, as parents, and as clergy. To put government in charge of all morality is to abdicate our individual responsibility, to weaken the moral authority of our religious institutions, and thus to fail in the execution of our duties."

The Rev. W.W. Finlator, a retired pastor of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C., and a member of the Religious Coalition, calls for decriminalization of all drugs, "thus dealing a fatal blow to the powerful kingdoms of drug lords and rug traffic." He urges a strong cooperative effort, along the lines of policies that have reduced the consumption of alcohol and tobacco, among government, religious leaders, and community groups, to reduce drug use through persuasion and education.

It is not yet common for religious leaders to call for an end to the Drug War. But plenty of church leaders are coming to understand, as Father Ganssle puts it, that "the government was not designed to institute virtue; that was always left to the church, that is our sphere of influence."

Mr. Bock is the Register's senior columnist.

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did=145309041&sid=11&Fmt=3&clientId=3587&RQT=309&VName=PQD](http://0-proquest.umi.com.mplwebcat.mplib.org:80/pqdweb?did=145309041&sid=11&Fmt=3&clientId=3587&RQT=309&VName=PQD)

Fr Sirico refused to honour agreement; [3 Edition]

[Evening Post](#). Wellington, New Zealand: [Apr 3, 1998](#). pg. 4

I was taken aback by Karl du Fresne's article (The Post, March 18) on Robert Sirico's visit to Wellington. The words "hostility and heckling" were used with reference to the audience in this misleading report.

Last year the Department of Religious Studies at Victoria was contacted by the professional agency promoting Sirico's New Zealand tour. We asked that he offer an academic paper to our departmental seminar rather than give a "sermon". The title - Is Christianity Compatible With Global Capitalism? - was agreed by telephone and in writing with his agent.

Sirico was asked to talk on his agreed topic for 40 minutes, to be followed by questions. This talk was publicly advertised and a mixed audience of religious studies students and members of the public came to hear this international speaker.

As Sirico was introduced it became clear that he had not prepared a talk on the agreed title and intended to merely offer a few thoughts on "the free market, Catholicism and the ending of all government-funded welfare".

He started by inviting the audience to enter into a dialogue with him and explicitly encouraged students and members of the public to interrupt him as they wished - which they did.

Sirico began by expressing extreme views that appeared to be chosen to shock. His audience did contest his assertions that welfare had no biblical roots; that Catholicism promoted the free market and that the mainstream tradition of Catholic social teaching was not only misguided but wrong. Having encouraged comment, he then seemed unable to participate in an actual dialogue with an audience that wished to pursue the points of interest he had raised. When it became clear that Fr Sirico had no intention of entering himself into the dialogue he had initially encouraged and that people in the audience were becoming perhaps uncertain of the situation, the chair intervened.

Ultimately the seminar proved to be disappointing. The original (and publicly advertised) subject was not addressed; the invited dialogue was subsequently disallowed and the audience ("latter-day Haight-Ashbury hippies", or not, as the case may have been) found itself subjected to a series of assertions following which the exploration of issues of obvious personal significance to us all was denied.

Professor PAUL MORRIS

Chairperson, Department of Religious Studies, Victoria University

* Barrie Saunders, of Saunders Unsworth which arranged Fr Sirico's visit, replies: On the basis of communication with Professor Morris, Fr Sirico was advised he would be addressing a graduate class of about 20 plus a few other people and speak to the topic as indicated. On arrival he concluded the class was not at graduate level and that if he delivered his prepared address few would have understood it. This is not surprising as the address had been advertised widely around the campus which is not what we had discussed or would have agreed to. Fr Sirico found the students as reported in your paper.

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did=28407649&sid=8&Fmt=3&clientId=3587&RQT=309&VName=PQD](http://0-proquest.umi.com.mplwebcat.mplib.org:80/pqdweb?did=28407649&sid=8&Fmt=3&clientId=3587&RQT=309&VName=PQD)

Gay Priest 'Comes Out' After New Ways Symposium

by Charles Honey

The Grand Rapids Press

March 29, 1997

The Rev. Martin Kurylowicz got lots of hugs after Good Friday services at Sparta's Holy Family Catholic Church. But he expects others soon will react less lovingly to news that he is gay.

"I was just filled with tears, there were so many hugs," said Kurylowicz, 47, following Friday's well attended afternoon service. "It means more now, because they know the real me."

But he added there are "a lot of people hurting and confused" and he anticipates some hostile reaction in the days ahead.

There's going to be some hate," Kurylowicz said. "I think the worst is coming."

He told the 550-member church this week--in a newsletter and at Holy Thursday services--that he is a celibate homosexual. He said he met with concerned parishioners following services Thursday night, Friday afternoon and again Friday evening.

He also met Friday with Bishop Robert Rose, head of the 150,000 member Grand Rapids Catholic Diocese. He said Rose was "extremely supportive."

"I didn't do anything wrong," Kurylowicz said. "He understands I'm with the church. I'm just not with hate."

Rose said the meeting satisfied him that the priest's views on homosexuality are in line with church teaching. But Rose added he'll "be watching to see what the reaction of his people is and if there is any other response from people around the diocese."

"He certainly is under a lot of strain," Rose said. "That's going to continue for awhile until we know what the reaction is going to be."

After serving as pastor of Holy Family for 12 years, Kurylowicz already was scheduled to leave his parish June 30, under a diocesan policy that limits tenure at a particular church. He said he plans to take a sabbatical and further study issues related to homosexuality.

Meanwhile, some called Kurylowicz's coming out a courageous move that would encourage other gay clergy and lay people.

"It's a great act of courage for a priest to do that," said the Rev. Paul Colloton, a priest at the Dominican Chapel at Marywood in Grand Rapids. "There are some people I know who would love to do that, (but) I think it would have a negative effect on their ability to work in the parish."

Colloton, spiritual advisor to the local chapter of Dignity, a Catholic founded gay and lesbian support group, said many homosexuals will see Kurylowicz as "someone knowing from the inside what they're going through."

But another priest, while hesitant to speak of Kurylowicz personally, said such a divulgence can "unnecessarily offend" and "scandalize" parishioners.

"I think this kind of thing is irresponsible," said the Rev. Robert Sirico, president of the Grand Rapids-based Acton Institute, a conservative think tank. A priest should discuss his sexual orientation with a counselor or close friend, not with his congregation. Sirico said.

"The priest as a celibate is called to sublimate his sexuality," Sirico said. "Too much talk in that direction indicated a breach of the pastoral boundary."

Kurylowicz said he basically agrees, but felt he had to speak out.

He spoke up after attending a national conference on gay issues and the Catholic Church in early March.

He was disturbed by accounts of homosexual children feeling isolated and parents feeling they did something wrong.

"I just couldn't walk away from it," he said. "I couldn't deny the pain."

He hopes his admission will raise awareness of violence against homosexual and teen suicide, and help teach others that homosexuality is not a choice.

A leader of the conference said many gay priests keep silent because of "fear and homophobia" in the church.

"His actions are part of the process of making the church a more welcoming place," said Francis DeBernardo, executive director of the Maryland-based New Ways Ministry.

Gerald Woltanski, a Holy Family member for 45 years, said he'd known something was deeply troubling Kurylowicz for months. He said he didn't agree with the timing of the revelation, during Holy Week, but he honors the priest's decision.

"I'm praying for him," said Woltanski, 69. "And I'll have to support him, because of love and mercy."

<http://home1.gte.net/~vze43yrc/archives/arch97-3-29.html>

TURNING POINTS Search for new ties to God often ends in denomination switch

Ed Golder, *Press Religion Editor*. **The Grand Rapids Press**. Grand Rapids, Mich.: [May 22, 1993](#). pg. B.01

Copyright Grand Rapids Press May 22, 1993

In the thick of controversies surrounding the rise of charismatics in his own denomination, the Rev. David Doyle was invited to teach Greek at a small Pentecostal college near the California church where he was pastor during the 1970s.

As a Christian Reformed minister opposed to Pentecostal exuberances like healing and speaking in tongues, Doyle figured he would "go there and bring some good Calvinistic stability to those charismatics."

Instead, he ended up on the receiving end of the planned evangelism.

One day the minister asked his class to pray for him, and was overwhelmed when 18 students got out of their seats and surrounded him with tongue-spoken prayers for his healing.

He wasn't healed, but he was changed.

"That was a very emotional experience for me," said Doyle, now 58. "I'd never seen that kind of direct and immediate action by God's people. Ever. And I'd been in the church all my life."

Two weeks ago Doyle was ordained as a minister in the nation's largest Pentecostal denomination, the Assemblies of God. For him it was the culmination of a journey that went from a Baptist upbringing through Calvin College and Seminary, and took a dramatic turn that day in California when he was surrounded by his theological rivals.

It is a journey that is repeated often as brand loyalty in the religious world dwindles and Americans troop off to churches that were considered heretical by their forebears in faith.

According to the Princeton Religious Research Center, one in four people changes their faith or denomination at least once in his or her lifetime.

Clear winners in this switching game have been Pentecostal churches like First Assembly of God, 2100 44th St. SW, and evangelical congregations like Calvary Udenominal, 777 E. Beltline Ave. NE.

The Princeton statistics show that the Assemblies grew 20 percent over the past 10 years, compared to a 6 percent growth in the CRC.

Further, it is clear those converts are coming from other denominations, because only 5 percent hail from "unchurched" background. Those who switch are more likely to be "born-again" Christians, the type found in Pentecostal and evangelical churches.

The reasons people change denominations vary.

About one in five changed churches or faiths either because of the religious stance of their new organization or because they found the perspective of their previous church wanting, according to the Princeton study.

Another one in four switched because they married someone of another faith.

Only 5 percent, like the Doyle, had a life-changing religious experience that eventually led them to a new denomination.

A few years after that day in the classroom, Doyle left the Christian Reformed Church. He still has gratitude for the religious training his former denomination provided, and still has an interest in Calvinist theology. The doctorate he is working on from Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Okla., is about the relationship between Reformed theology and Pentecostalism.

Eventually, Doyle hopes to become a pastor at another church. For the time being, he and his wife attend Southeast Valley Assembly of God, 2060 43rd St. SE in Kentwood, and he serves as dean of the Great Lakes Bible Institute in Grandville.

Sitting in his tiny office at the Bible school, Doyle considers the reasons for his move. What he found in the Pentecostal world, he explains, is a more direct, intense experience of God.

"I've had people say to me, and have expressed it myself, 'We knew there was more,' " he says. "We really didn't know what we were missing until we experienced it at a church like First Assembly."

Though opposed to the Pentecostal theology of the Assemblies of God, churches like Calvary Udenominal have experienced a similar membership benefit as believers from other denominations change allegiance. Because they constitute most of the local population, Catholic and Christian Reformed believers have, statistically, been the most likely to change their loyalties in West Michigan.

Troy Ritsema and his wife, Barbee, represent these two major denominational strains.

Married just over a year, they formally joined Calvary Udenominal Church in February. Both came from strong religious backgrounds - he was CRC and she was Catholic - but when their relationship turned serious after they met at Grand Valley State University, they faced some tough questions. Neither felt comfortable in the other's church.

"If our relationship was going to continue, we needed to find some other church that would work for both of us," says Barbee Ritsema, 30.

A friend of hers at Butterworth Hospital, where Ritsema works in media productions, told her about Calvary Church, a towering structure strategically located near the crossroads of Interstates 196 and 96. The couple tested the waters. What they found, they say, is solid preaching and music that smaller churches couldn't compete with.

"It's a real dynamic church," says Troy Ritsema, 28, who started working in Calvary's media department this month. "The enthusiasm and excitement here are contagious."

For those who are infecting other religions with their excitement, the news is good, if sometimes embarrassing. Churches like Calvary and First Assembly are often accused of sheep stealing, being part of a plot to take other denomination's members.

But the Rev. Jim Carlson, associate pastor at Calvary, said his congregation has made an intentional effort to work with other denominations in town, and tries to reach those who are not already involved with some religious faith.

"I can honestly say that our intentional mentality is not to be competitive," said Carlson, whose church boasts 2,700 members on the books, with about 5,000 in attendance on any given Saturday and Sunday. "We want to be here as a side-by-side ministry to other churches."

Although the church has no hard data on where its members come from, surveys filled out at its hip Saturday Night program - a blue-jeans version of Sunday morning, complete with a rock band and morality plays - show only about a quarter of them come from a non-church background. More than 60 percent are affiliated with some church other than Calvary.

Leaders in the Christian Reformed, Catholic and mainline denominations are trying to find ways to stanch the flow of faithful out their back doors.

CRC membership loss has steadily increased over the past 30 years, losing as many as 7,000 and 8,000 members a year during the 1980s. Even though the Grand Rapids-based denomination continued to show modest gains, primarily through birth, the trend was nevertheless a concern to CRC officials.

The Rev. Dirk Hart, minister of evangelism for the CRC, believes part of the solution to this problem is increased diversity within the denomination, offering people at least some of the options they seek elsewhere.

Christian Reformed Churches today do not fit a single mold. There are megachurches and charismatic churches that offer many of the same options that the burgeoning congregations do, and indeed have drawn back at least some of those who left.

"Within certain doctrinal parameters, I think it's healthy for a denomination to have a range of choices, even though that introduces diversity and pluralism some people may not like," Hart said.

The **Rev. Robert Sirico**, a priest at the Catholic Information Center in downtown Grand Rapids who runs programs to draw lapsed Catholics back to church, thinks abuses that have followed in the wake of the Second Vatican Council are largely responsible for the Catholic exodus.

Gallup statistics show that Catholics have been hit especially hard by denominational switching, as have Baptists. Baptists account for 19 percent and Catholics for 18 percent of those who have switched to other denominations or faiths.

"People come to religion for clarity," Sirico said. "They don't come to religion for pop psychology."

Unfortunately, the priest believes, that's what they've gotten in the wake of Vatican II, the church council of the early 1960s that instituted broad reforms.

"In the name of renewal, we've had revolution," Sirico said. The Catholic Church needs "a clear catechesis (teaching) and a more emotionally appealing liturgy," to help draw ex-Catholics back, he believes.

Sirico hopes that a newly released English translation of a universal Catholic catechism due out in June will help clarify and strengthen Catholic teaching.

For denominations that are struggling against the changing tide of membership, the questions are many and complex.

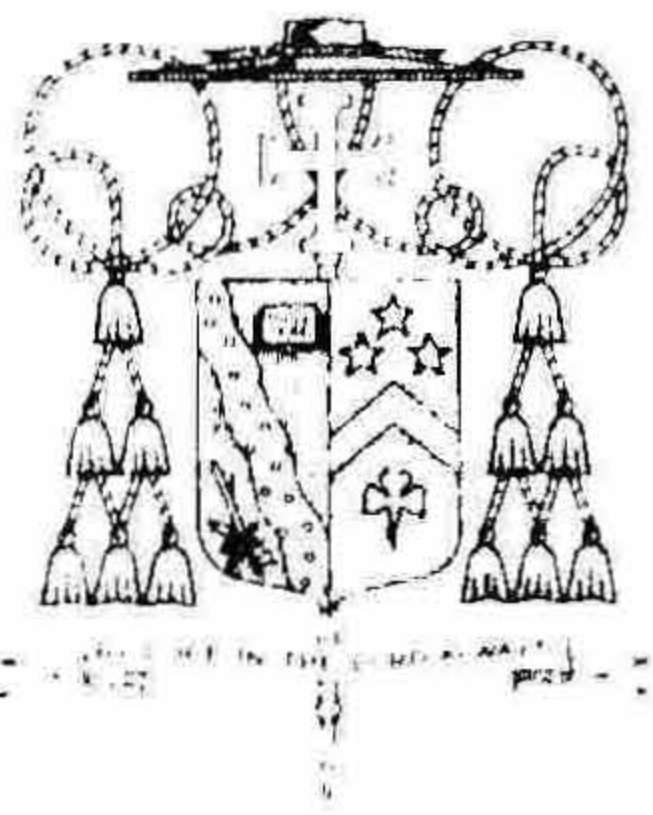
For those who make the switch, the results are sometimes surprising.

Sitting at his desk, David Doyle, the former CRC minister, fingers a flowery yellow tie hanging from his neck.

"I'm a very conservative person," he says, leaning back in his chair.

"This tie I would not have worn three years ago. I was very much in the mold. All I can say is the Holy Spirit just revolutionized my life, and is continuing to do that."

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did=127684881&sid=16&Fmt=3&clientId=3587&RQT=309&VName=PQD](http://0-proquest.umi.com.mplwebcat.mplib.org:80/pqdweb?did=127684881&sid=16&Fmt=3&clientId=3587&RQT=309&VName=PQD)



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Office of the Bishop

The Reverend A. Ralph Johnson
Glen Acres Church of Christ
11401 10th Ave. S
Seattle, Wa. 98168-2113

December 7, 2004

Dear Pastor Johnson:

Thank you for your concern for any embarrassment you think Robert Sirico may cause to the Church and for your expressed desire to protect it from scandal.

Fr. Robert Sirico is a priest of this Diocese and has been since 1999. I first met Robert when he voluntarily, and with the approval of his superiors took a leave of absence from the Paulist Fathers in 1996. At the time, I was chancellor of the Lansing Diocese (near to both Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo). When he initially came to Lansing I directed him to live in the rectory of an older priest who is a long time confident and friend. Robert lived with the priest and under his supervision for two years and by all accounts, performed well and lived a personal life of prayer and service appropriate to a Catholic priest.

Shortly after being made bishop of Kalamazoo in 1998, I asked Robert if he would like to come here and pursue his hope of establishing a religious community of men committed to living the ideals of prayer, service and of course, chaste celibacy.

This explains the observation of your correspondent that Robert was "repeatedly transferred from one Catholic diocese to another." As I was involved at some level in each of those moves, I can assure you and your correspondent that there was in no way any suggestion of personal impropriety on Robert's part, nor has such ever been reported to me from the years he was a Paulist or in the seminary.

This brings us back to the years when you initially knew of Robert in his late teens and early twenties, and in particular his involvement for about 3 1/2 years in various aspects of the gay movement, some 30 years ago.

In fact, most of what you have related to me, Robert voluntarily told me prior to becoming a priest of my diocese. In 1976, about seven years after you initially met him, Robert repudiated the gay life-style and returned to his Catholic roots. He describes

himself as having had a deep and sincere conversion which excludes any sexual activity outside heterosexual marriage and any identification with a 'gay' identity. Robert assures me, and by all the evidence I have I believe him when he says, that he has lived a celibate life for years prior to entering seminary in 1982.

Two points of clarification:

The first is that Robert tells me he never had any involvement with the Children of God cult;

Secondly, Robert tells me that he was never arrested in Los Angeles under the circumstances described by the Seattle Times; their inaccurate report was corrected some days later after the initial article. Robert tells me that he was, however, involved in a political protest related to the event and that this, no doubt, was the root of the initial journalistic confusion. In any case, Robert has also repudiated his involvement in that protest, and as I have already said, has repented of all such activities.

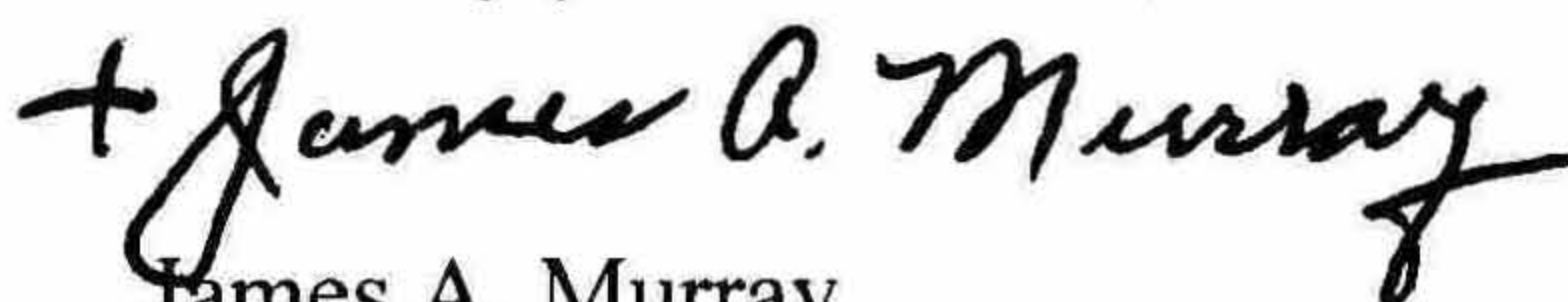
In the sixth chapter of Paul's letter to the Corinthians we see the way the apostle looked at the question of those who, prior to their conversion, have engaged in immoral and illicit activity, including homosexuality. He says, "...but such were some of you, but you are washed..."

I do not take lightly the seriousness of the bad judgments and immorality that Robert engaged in in his 20s. Nor does he. But I am convinced of both the possibility and authenticity of his change, having witnessed it in his pastoral work and the integrity of his personal life. I know of no accusation, at all, of any impropriety since his entrance into the seminary to the present that would cause me to think otherwise.

I have taken the liberty of sharing your concerns with Robert who is grieved that his past sins now pose the potential of creating offense, doubt and scandal. He has asked, and I have agreed for him to be in direct contact with you in regard to these matters.

Permit me to close by thanking you again for your concerns. I trust I have been open and direct in addressing them. If your correspondents would be benefited in direct contact with me or Robert, please indicate our openness to speak with them.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James A. Murray". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and "M".

James A. Murray
Bishop of Kalamazoo

cc. The Reverend Robert A. Sirico

Morality and markets

NATIONAL: Priest-economist makes the case for a moral capitalism

Robert Sirico is a symphony in black: raincoat, briefcase, jacket, clergy shirt, slacks, socks, shoes. Even his black hair is lightened with only sprinkles of white at the temples. But in his memory are other colors. "It was the era of patchouli oil-do you remember?" he says. "Tie-dyed skirts. Idealism."

Back in the early '70s, this Roman Catholic priest and conservative economist was at the barricades, toting protest signs on behalf of many causes. "One of the tricks was to write our cause on one side of the cardboard, and when we got to the next event flip it over and write the new cause on the other side. So you must always look at both sides of picketers' signs, to see if they're professionals," he jokes.

In Hollywood, Mr. Sirico hung out with the professionals, including Jane Fonda; he worked on the campaign to elect Jane's husband Tom Hayden to the U.S. Senate. "I didn't know Jane and Tom well," he says. "We had dinner several times, I had their home phone number and so forth, but we weren't what you'd call close friends. I was with Jane the night Saigon fell, however."

Eventually, a worldview structured around socialism fell, and Mr. Sirico rediscovered the faith of his childhood. Still seeking ways to put his idealism into action, he took what some might consider an unlikely course: He helped found an organization to promote "limited government and a free-market economy."

The Acton Institute, which Mr. Sirico helped found in Grand Rapids, Mich., in 1990, exists to link a libertarian free-market economic approach with the virtues necessary to make such freedom work. Lord Acton, for whom the Institute is named, was a 19th-century historian who believed that "liberty could not long exist without virtue, and that without liberty, no society could be virtuous."

In this work, Mr. Sirico finds himself on a two-way street. Divinity and theology students, already geared to preach virtue, are invited to seminars that expose them to the importance of liberty and the free market. Business leaders, a.k.a. greedy capitalists, attend seminars that affirm their vocation while calling them to implement their faith in the marketplace. The Acton Institute, with a million-dollar budget, fields a growing array of publications, lectures, events, and awards. Mr. Sirico himself is published widely, including a regular column in *Forbes* magazine. *WORLD* asked Mr. Sirico how this ideological journey began.

Sirico: There's a lot of this stuff that is painful to remember and embarrassing-the different sit-ins and so forth. I've had a real conversion and I have confessed it, and so I'd like it to be dumped into the sea of God's forgetfulness.

But one thing I do remember: After a day of picketing we were sitting around someone's house in Hollywood, and we were talking about the kind of world we wanted to construct. I said something like, "When the revolution comes, we'll all be able to shop at Gucci's." Conversation came to a stop. Even the smoke stood still in the room-and I'm not saying what kind of smoke it was.

I turned to a friend and said, "I have the feeling I said something wrong." She said, "Robert, that's a very bourgeois comment." I said, "But the society we're working to bring about is one where quality goods and services are available to everyone"-using Gucci, not as an example of status, but of quality. She said, "I don't really think you're a socialist."

WORLD: You can't be a socialist in Guccis.

Sirico: I was using it as an example of the kind of place people would like to go shop, but can't. So that was my fundamental misunderstanding of what socialism was.

This was early '70s; my conversion took place in 1976. Now, looking behind the picket signs, there were a lot of sad people. I don't remember many balanced, authentically happy people.

WORLD: Yet it was supposedly a time of idealism.

Sirico: A very tragic, misdirected idealism, a testimony to what happens when passion and sentiment are not guided by truth. It says a lot about the advocacy for liberty. It's not enough to advocate freedom; freedom is necessary, but not sufficient. We have to love something even more than our freedom.

Liberty is to be used for something, and I think this is one of the great confusions of the idealism of the '70s and even some of the advocates of liberty today. Liberty must be bordered by something-by the truth.

WORLD: Is there any way to communicate with those who are not serious about objective truth? How do you build bridges with those who agree with you in the libertarian cause, but don't know the truth?

Sirico: One of the things we need to do, and I say this as a believer, is that we need to be non-defensive in sharing the Gospel.

I think that we must be ruthless with ideas and gentle with people. To the woman who has had an abortion, we must act as Jesus did toward the woman caught in adultery. Protect and love her, remind others of her dignity, but never minimize the horrendous act of taking a human life. Jesus's whole focus in that account was in protecting her from those who would judge her. Only at the end does he say, "Go and sin no more." What we often want to do is start with, "Go and sin no more," and then think we can build a relationship of trust and love.

WORLD: It was idealism that pushed you into your left-wing activities, and idealism that pulled you out.

Sirico: I grew up in a very diverse neighborhood, and there was a Jewish lady who lived across the street, who invited me over to get some cookies one day. As she placed the cookies into the napkin, I saw a series of blue tattoo marks up her arm. I was very young; I didn't know about the Holocaust. Later I asked my mother and she told me.

When I think about what started me on this path, I think that has to be one of the seeds, that I was horrified by totalitarianism-that there were people who could treat others as animals and literally brand them. I carry with me something I found in an old Army-Navy store in Prague. It was with a bunch of World War II paraphernalia for sale, medals and so forth.

Mr. Sirico reaches into his briefcase and pulls out his breviary, a small black book with a zippered cover containing the daily offices and readings used by Catholic priests. From the

inside pocket of the book he pulls out a square of yellow cloth, on which is stamped a six-pointed star. In the center is written the word "Jude." He touches it with awe.

Sirico: Isn't that something? It inspired me to prayer when I saw it, and I said, I want to keep that with me.

WORLD: So part of what motivates you is awareness of pain, the suffering in the world.

Sirico: Attraction to socialism can be based on a variety of reasons. For many it's not idealism, but a sheer quest for power. In pop psychology it's all the rage now to talk about control issues. Maybe that's writ large; maybe-to use all the pop lingo-it's a societal dysfunction that creates a codependency on people who are addicted to government handouts. We don't dare wean them from this and allow them to become independent and productive, because we'd lose our *raison d'etre*.

WORLD: The part that seems ironic is that, with your passion for justice and truth and righting wrongs still intact, you'd find yourself in the field of economics.

Sirico: If you buy into the socialist

Keynesian paradigm, that's so, it's abstract and deals with aggregates. But if you take a free market view of this, you're talking, in von Mises's words, about human interaction, a series of human encounters. This humanizes and personalizes it. It doesn't sanctify it; there's a lot of human interaction that's evil and immoral, ill-guided and ill-gotten. But you can see how it's not merely a dry abstraction, but involves human beings.

WORLD: Although you favor the free market, you don't hold it up as the ultimate good.

Sirico: No, in some cases it's not a good at all. You could do a whole analysis on market efficiency with legalized prostitution, and even if you proved that women would be less abused and so forth, it would still be evil. It doesn't change the nature of the act. The market can tell us a lot of things, but it doesn't deal with the deepest human needs, which have to do with spirituality, love, things not predicated on utilitarian concerns.

WORLD: Cultural decay is what many conservatives are concerned about. Do we need the force of legislation in some cases, to control what the market can't? For example, to control pornography on the Internet?

Sirico: I'm very nervous on all of that. We can set up a mechanism that, while X group is in power, they'll control the levers and produce the virtues. These may very well be virtues that I agree with. But once you set in stone these institutions, who's to say that in the next generation they'll share your virtues? Will the new virtue, for example, be safe sex, pushing condoms on kids to teach them responsibility?

WORLD: I suppose even libertarians would agree that there are things we cannot tolerate, and the narrowest circle of what we cannot tolerate is violence. I suppose abortion would fall under that.

Sirico: Absolutely. The most strict libertarian application of the principle of non-initiation of coercion applies first and foremost to abortion. Because the unborn is undeniable, scientifically, biologically human life. And everybody knows that, it's being acknowledged more and more.

WORLD: What about the libertarian position on drugs? Are you arguing in favor of repeal of drug laws?

Sirico: Yes, I think so. I think the argument has come to that now. With the caveat that, if that's going to happen, it must happen concomitantly with enabling civic society to respond by not tolerating drug abuse. Empowering neighborhoods, homeowners, and businesses to exclude people who use drugs from their associations, communities, rental apartments, employment places. People should be able to form associations where they have choices as to with whom they will associate or not associate. A person may be legally free to engage in smoking marijuana, but I should be legally free, if he works for me, to demand a drug test and to exclude him from employment.

I say this reluctantly, because I don't want people to misunderstand. I think drug abuse is evil. But I've never seen a person who was helped by being arrested. The most effective programs are non-coercive: Teen Challenge, Alcoholics Anonymous.

WORLD: It's striking that you confine yourself to the dry realm of economics, when you have so much passion about people, lives, and virtue. Many people look at this field from the outside and think, "Numbers, numbers, numbers."

Sirico: Well, you'll never see any numbers in anything I write. Economics started with moral theology, in 16th-century Spain. I'm trying to bring it back to a language of faith.

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<http://www.worldmag.com/prINTER.cfm?id=910>

April 7, 2007

Dear [Name Withheld],

I see so many people, or talk to them on the phone that I cannot remember all those who sought my advice about entering the priesthood. I am not in New York as I write this letter to you and I will not be there until late Tuesday, 10 of April.

I shall check our files to see whether Fr. Sirico found the Grand Rapids Courage group. I have no memory of Fr. Sirico. Perhaps there is something in my files from the state of Michigan.

I take a stand on entrance to the priesthood which is in accord with the teaching of the Church as found in the Vatican Document of November 2005 and the American Bishops' statement of November 2006. I have not approved of candidates for the priesthood who are "well documented" as openly gay.

Courage is a spiritual support group for men and women with same sex attractions who desire to live a truly chaste life. Most members are unmarried. Many of them live chaste lives. Yes, many members of Courage remain with us until old age, and in old age.

As for your last question, which implies that Courage has a policy for men considering the priesthood, I answer that courage has NO policy. As a priest, I have stated my agreement with Catholic teaching above. I stated my views to the Congregation on Catholic Education about 2003 or 2004.

Thank you for your e-mail.

Cordially,
(Rev.) John F. Harvey, O.S.F.S.

Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty
EIN 38-2926822
Form 990 (2002) Schedule Attachment

6

Statement 12

Part V, List of Officers, Directors, Trustees, and Key Employees

Name and address	Title	Hours	Compensation	Benefits	Expense Acct
Robert A. Sirico 161 Ottawa Ave NW, Suite 301 Grand Rapids, MI 49503	President	40	103,000	6,935	0

SCHEDULE A
(Form 990 or 990-EZ)

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Name of the organization

Organization Exempt Under Section 501(c)(3)

(Except Private Foundation) and Section 501(e), 501(f), 501(k),
501(n), or Section 4947(a)(1) Nonexempt Charitable Trust

Supplementary Information—(See separate instructions.)

► **MUST be completed by the above organizations and attached to their Form 990 or 990-EZ**

OMB No 1545-0047

2002

Acton Institute for the Study of Religion & Liberty

Employer identification number

38-2926822

Part I Compensation of the Five Highest Paid Employees Other Than Officers, Directors, and Trustees
(See page 1 of the instructions. List each one. If there are none, enter "None.")

(a) Name and address of each employee paid more than \$50,000	(b) Title and average hours per week devoted to position	(c) Compensation	(d) Contributions to employee benefit plans & deferred compensation	(e) Expense account and other allowances
Kris Alan Mauren 161 Ottawa NW Suite 301, Grand Rapids, MI 49503	Executive Director 60	102,959	4,000	0

Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty
EIN: 38-2926822
Form 990 (2003) Schedule Attachment

6

Statement 12

Part V, List of Officers, Directors, Trustees, and Key Employees

Name and address	Title	Hours	Compensation	Benefits	Expense Acct
Robert A. Sirico 161 Ottawa Ave NW, Suite 301 Grand Rapids, MI 49503	President	40	107,333	6,935	0

SCHEDULE A
(Form 990 or 990-EZ)

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Name of the organization

Organization Exempt Under Section 501(c)(3)

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501(n), or Section 4947(a)(1) Nonexempt Charitable Trust

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2003

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Employer identification number

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(a) Name and address of each employee paid more than \$50,000	(b) Title and average hours per week devoted to position	(c) Compensation	(d) Contributions to employee benefit plans & deferred compensation	(e) Expense account and other allowances
Kris Alan Mauren 161 Ottawa NW Suite 301, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, US	Executive Director 60	112,000	4,000	0

Statement 12

Part V, List of Officers, Directors, Trustees, and Key Employees

Name and address	Title	Hours	Compensation	Benefits	Expense Acct
Robert A. Sirico 161 Ottawa Ave NW, Suite 301 Grand Rapids, MI 49503	President	40	130,000	6,935	0

SCHEDULE A
(Form 990 or 990-EZ)

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

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2004

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(a) Name and address of each employee paid more than \$50,000	(b) Title and average hours per week devoted to position	(c) Compensation	(d) Contributions to employee benefit plans & deferred compensation	(e) Expense account and other allowances
Kris Alan Mauren 161 Ottawa Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2718, US	Exec Director 60	127,000	4,000	0

Statement 15

Part V, List of Officers, Directors, Trustees, and Key Employees

Name and address	Title	Hours	Compensation	Benefits	Expense Acct
Robert A. Sirico 161 Ottawa Ave NW, Suite 301 Grand Rapids, MI 49503	President	40	140,350	4,000	0

SCHEDULE A
(Form 990 or 990-EZ)

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Organization Exempt Under Section 501(c)(3)

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or 4947(a)(1) Nonexempt Charitable Trust

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OMB No. 1545-0047

2005

Name of the organization

ACTON INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND LIBE

Employer identification number

38 : 2926822

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(See page 1 of the instructions. List each one. If there are none, enter "None.")

(a) Name and address of each employee paid more than \$50,000	(b) Title and average hours per week devoted to position	(c) Compensation	(d) Contributions to employee benefit plans & deferred compensation	(e) Expense account and other allowances
Kris Alan Mauren 161 Ottawa Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2718, US	Exec Director/ 60	137,125	7,000	0