

ACTON notes

The Newsletter
of the
Acton Institute
April 2007
Volume 18 Number 4



WILL A 'LIVING WAGE' KILL JUANITA'S JOB?

If our government mandates a 'living wage' for entry-level workers, what would happen? It's clear that an increase in wages would increase costs for businesses like restaurants, retail stores and health care.



a living wage?" Think of Juanita. Your well-intentioned answer could take away her job, her dignity and her opportunity for success.

If you're interested in finding just solutions to poverty, join our partnership of religious leaders. Visit our

In This Issue

- Judges Respond to Acton's Solutions
- Watch *Call of the Entrepreneur* Trailer on YouTube.com
- Introducing Acton Ambassador
- Honor Roll Update
- Acton in Rome

Connecting good intentions with sound economics

President's Message

Dear Friends,

Few have a stronger interest in promoting economic liberty than the clergy. Our religious institutions in the United States exist and thrive due to voluntary contributions. As nonprofit organizations, they depend on the benevolence of members and believers.

Some suppose that wealth is something woven into the fabric of society.

We believe that people should be generous in good times and bad, but the reality is that people often give from discretionary income. In practice, giving goes up in good economic times; when recessions hit and families have to cut back, giving to houses of worship falls. So, one might suppose that clergy might see this reality and respond to it. This may seem good justification to defend free enterprise, the only path to economic prosperity we know.

And yet it is well known that clergy are not strong supporters of free enterprise. I've reflected for years on why this is so. Many do not think about where wealth comes from. Some suppose that wealth is something woven into the fabric of society, or that the undeserving become wealthy through sheer accident.

This is an easy judgment to pass onto the wealthy without an understanding of economics. Many have never read about the cause and effect between freedom and prosperity. Many haven't tried to come to understand economic logic. Many don't think about the process of wealth creation, or how businesses contribute to the well-being of society.

What our leaders of faith need now more than ever is a deeper understanding of the economic dimension of civic affairs. Those who have acquired this understanding find that they relate better to their congregations and contribute more fully to the cultural life of the nation.

By supporting the Acton Institute you are supporting the enlightenment of our religious leaders, and making a valuable contribution to the future of freedom.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Robert A. Sirico". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Robert A. Sirico, President

The mission of the Acton Institute is to promote a free and virtuous society characterized by individual liberty and sustained by religious principles.

ACTONINSTITUTE

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Judges Praise Acton's Free-Market Solutions

As we wrote in last month's *Acton Notes*, Acton was awarded the prestigious 2007 Templeton Freedom Prize for Excellence in Promoting Liberty in the category of Free-Market Solutions to Poverty. We just received some of the judges' comments on our work, which you can view at www.acton.org/solutions. Here is what they said:

Judge 1: "Extremely innovative idea that meets all the Atlas criteria and then some. This project needs the award so that other foundations/nonprofits around the world can start thinking along the same lines. It met the media test from its first ad and receiving ad awards increased that exposure."

Judge 2: "Concern for others is not the exclusive domain of the left, and Acton must be applauded for bringing sensible economics into the church, building a coalition with businessmen, and using the tools of modern marketing into policy debate."

Judge 3: "Based on the primary criteria (consistent with Atlas and prize missions, innovation, quality

of execution and scholarship, and media coverage/public persuasion), I believe Acton's submission is far and away the best of the bunch. It makes the case for free-market approaches to help the poor on economic, political and moral grounds succinctly, persuasively, and in a remarkably marketable form."

Judge 4: "The Acton Institute's issue advertising campaign is of high quality, creative and makes superb use of business principles to promote a social message. And its focus on economic principles to end poverty was clear. The issue advertising takes a counterintuitive approach to generally accepted ideas about how to help the poor. In catchy ways it demonstrates how the traditional approach is wrong from both a market and social perspective. This is highly educational because it catches your attention with the counterintuitive approach. There has clearly been an impact as the WHO move to using light spraying of DDT for malaria demonstrates."

"There has clearly been an impact as the WHO move to using light spraying of DDT for malaria demonstrates."



Acton University ad



Solutions video screenshot

From Our Conference Participants

The diverse academic interest coupled with ecumenical character of the group was a huge blessing...It was a powerful reminder of our connection in Christ, despite doctrinal differences, and also a testimony to the fact that something blessed is happening at Acton.

—Michael Fogas
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this outstanding event. I come from the Philippines where human freedom has always been hard-fought and the Acton conference certainly has its most timely significance.

—Niccolo Martin C. Florencio
Ateneo de Manila University
Manila, Phillipines

In-service at Brother Rice High

On February 27 Acton staffers Anthony Pienta, who administers the Catholic High School Honor Roll, and Dr. Sam Gregg, director of research, visited Brother Rice High School in Chicago, Illinois, with Dr. Stephen Haessler. Acton conducted an in-service for about seventy teachers and administrators at the school, which has consistently placed among the top fifty schools on the honor roll, one of only three that have done so.

After positive learning experiences at Acton University, Acton's annual summer conference, several teachers from Brother Rice decided to invite Acton to educate teachers in Acton's world renowned synthesis of economic freedom and religious faith.

Dr. Stephen Haessler, who is also a faculty member for Acton University, previewed a number of sections of *Apostles and Markets*, the curriculum he wrote that synthesizes sound economic principles with Catholic social teaching. Acton staff also offered a fifteen minute section of *Call of the*

Promote religion and freedom by sharing the trailer with a friend! Just click the "share video" button and e-mail your contact list an invitation to view this tribute to the men and women who create wealth by providing society the tangible benefits of their ideas, real jobs, and sustainable, vibrant economies.

Acton Ideas Light Fire in Rome

On Wednesday, February 28, Acton's Rome office, Istituto Acton, launched the first in a series of in-house seminars geared toward educating professionals and lay students studying at Rome's pontifical universities. The discussion group, called *Campus Martius* (Field of Mars), is meant to serve as a battlefield of ideas and to facilitate ongoing intellectual and spiritual formation.

All *Campus Martius* topics will focus on social doctrine, ethics, economics, and politics. In the first meeting, the group discussed the furor over Pope Benedict's Regensburg address, the "dictatorship

ACTON News



Dr. Sam Gregg



The Call of the Entrepreneur on YouTube



Rome seminar

Entrepreneur. Teachers were excited to learn that Acton is producing a full-length version that teachers will be able to use in classrooms in conjunction with a curriculum like *Apostles and Markets*.

Call of the Entrepreneur Trailer Goes on YouTube.com

Embracing new technology and viral marketing, Acton has placed the trailer for the upcoming documentary *The Call of the Entrepreneur* on YouTube. To see the video, go to www.youtube.com and search using the terms "Acton" and "entrepreneur."

of relativism," and how to open peaceful inter-religious dialogues between Islam and Christianity.

The first seminar was chaired by Dr. Juan Andrés Mercado, originally from Mexico and a professor of modern philosophy at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. Professor Mercado is a scholar of the epistemological and ethical theories of David Hume and Immanuel Kant.

Groups are scheduled to meet at Istituto Acton the last Wednesday of each month.

Introducing Acton Ambassador Laura Lauer

Since last year, Mrs. Laura Lauer has offered her talent and support to Acton as an ambassador to our supporters in Detroit, Michigan. In the 1990s, after a small test donation, Laura found the relationship Acton has with its supporters warm, genuine, and encouraging.

Soon, she began seeking how to help get the word out about the great work the institute was doing to equip people of faith with the tools to defend economic liberty. In her own words, I like the entrepreneurial spirit at Acton—for example, their willingness to try new ways to get their message out (Acton University, Acton Media, different publications, developing relationships with various organizations like Legatus and other think tanks).

We are all Acton students in a way, every supporter, alumnus, and faculty member. With the diversity of the audience, I have always liked it that, on the one hand, Acton does not fall prey to the least common denominator syndrome by

finding it necessary to “dumb down” their message, but rather they continually challenge us and, frankly, hold great expectations of Acton students.

On the other hand, they do not ‘talk down’ to those who are reaching to grasp the complexity of the issues presented.

After numerous years of being an Acton supporter and introducing Acton to many other potential supporters, an opportunity presented itself for me to begin

working in a more formal capacity with supporters and on special projects as requested.

Laura describes herself as an avid reader and traveler, former resident of China, and a volunteer for many nonprofits including those with religious and political leanings. Laura holds a Michigan residential builder’s license, is a certified paralegal, and has a bachelor of science degree in business from Wayne State University.

“We are all Acton students in a way, every supporter, alumnus, and faculty member.”



Laura Lauer



ACTON in the News

I would rather be ruled by good policies than good intentions, sound laws and governance rather than political manipulation dressed up in religious clichés.

—Excerpted from Rev. Robert A. Sirico’s article in *The Detroit News*

Kishore Jayabalan

Title: Defending Intellectual Property
Program: *Vatican Radio*
Air Date: 2.27.2007

Rev. Robert A. Sirico

Title: Political faith comes from within, not from pollsters and consultants
Program: *The Detroit News*
Publication Date: 2.27.2007

Dr. Samuel Gregg

Title: Morally Taxing
Publisher: *The Wall Street Journal*
Publication Date: 3.12.2007

Reminder

Help Acton Promote Freedom and Virtue!

The Acton Institute depends on the generosity of supporters like you. If you have not donated to Acton, but enjoy *Acton Notes*, please consider helping us meet our goals! Your help makes possible our continuing mission to promote a free and virtuous society. You may choose to donate using the envelope provided, or you may visit <https://secure.lexi.net/acton> to make a secure donation online. We send our heartfelt thanks to those who have been so generous in the past with your strategic support as well as your prayers. You have a broad vision and a generous heart.



Rev. Robert Sirico addresses an audience at ALS



Mr. Michael Miller with Acton board member Mr. Ken Muraski

Acton and You

Rev. Robert Sirico addressed an audience of nearly one hundred Acton guests and staff at the March 7 Acton Lecture Series at the Waters Building in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan. He gave a riveting talk on the ten institutions that make a moral and free society possible. Pictured above are Acton's director of programs Mr. Michael Miller with Acton board member Mr. Ken Muraski.

To your right, Sirico appears with hosts from the January 28 Port Royal Club event in Naples. Shown below are guests from the same evening.



Rev. Robert Sirico with hosts



Guests at the Port Royal Club



ACTON UNIVERSITY

JUNE 12-15 SYMPOSIUM OF FAITH, ECONOMICS, LIBERTY

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Registration for Acton University is already filling up! If you or someone you know would like to learn about the foundations of a society sustained by freedom and virtue, apply today at www.acton.org/ActonU

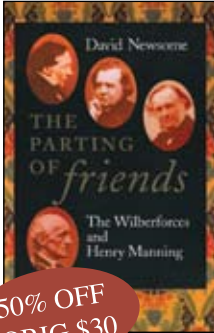
"The seminars and conferences of the Acton Institute provide the world's foremost training in the theology and philosophy of the free-market model."

- Michael Lee, adjunct professor of finance, Johns Hopkins University

Apply today at www.acton.org/ActonU

Travel, lodging, and registration scholarships will be offered to select students.

ACTON Book Shoppe

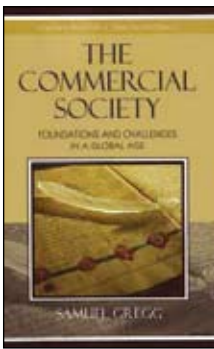


The Parting of Friends: The Wilberforces and Henry Manning

by David Newsome

A compelling work about the sons (Samuel, Robert, and Henry) of the social reformer William Wilberforce, whose story is told in the newly released film *Amazing Grace*. Newsome follows the course of the relationship between the Wilberforces and Henry Manning, the Anglican-to-Catholic convert who became Cardinal Manning. Utilizing correspondence and private papers from the families, Newsome describes the separation of these men over ecclesiastical differences.

Hardcover 486 pages Price \$15.00



The Commercial Society

by Samuel Gregg

Guided by the thoughts of Alexis de Tocqueville, Samuel Gregg's *The Commercial Society* identifies and explores the key foundational elements that must exist within a society for commercial order to take root and flourish. Gregg studies the challenges that have consistently impeded and occasionally undermined commercial order, including the persistence of "corporatist" values and political movements seeking to equalize social conditions. This book offers a historically grounded analysis for modern audiences interested in philosophy or the history of economics.

Paperback 177 pages Price \$14.95

**For our fastest service and a complete list of titles,
visit www.acton.org/bookshoppe.**

	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
The Parting of Friends: The Wilberforces and Henry Manning	\$15.00		
The Commercial Society	\$14.95		

Make checks payable to "Acton Institute." For orders in the United States, Canada, and Mexico: for the first item, add US \$3.75 for shipping; plus US \$1.00 for each additional item. Overseas orders: US \$4.75 for the first item, plus US \$1.75 for each additional item.

Michigan residents add 6% sales tax _____

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Calendar of Events

ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
April 10	Acton Lecture Series "The Crisis of Europe" Dr. Samuel Gregg to speak	Grand Rapids, Michigan
April 26-29	Acton FAVS Dr. Jay Richards and Michael Miller to speak	Seattle, Washington
May 2	Centesimus Annus Conference Novak award to Dr. Andrea Schneider Dr. Samuel Gregg, Rev. Robert Sirico, and Michael Miller to attend	Rome, Italy
May 10	The Call of the Entrepreneur Premiere	Washington, DC
May 17	The Call of the Entrepreneur Premiere	Grand Rapids, Michigan
May 28	The Call of the Entrepreneur Premiere	Hong Kong

STAFF ACTIVITIES

Date	Event	Location
April 13	Lecture on Benedict "Europe, Christianity, and Secularization" Grove City College Dr. Samuel Gregg to speak	Grove City, Pennsylvania
April 24-27	State Policy Network and Atlas Liberty Forum Acton to receive Templeton Freedom Award Kris Mauren to Attend	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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