

ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

July / August 2013, Volume 23, Number 4



“connecting good intentions with sound economics”

On Sunday September 1, 2013, Rev. Sirico met with Pope Francis in Rome and gave him a copy of the PovertyCure DVD Series.

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President's Message

It is road construction season here in Michigan, as I imagine it is in other places across the nation. Orange barrels, long waits in traffic, merging four lanes into two lanes: it is aggravating and time-consuming.

“We know that there is much work to be done in order to help ‘construct’ a culture of dignity and value.”

Scripture tells us about the narrow gate: *“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few.”* (Mt. 7:13-14)

While Jesus’ disciples knew nothing about modern road construction, Jesus clearly knew about traveling a hard road. He wanted his followers to know that the road to salvation was not an easy one. “Constricted” is the word used here, but this isn’t to imply our freedom is lessened. Our freedom to choose remains intact; it is simply that the best way, the narrow way, is most difficult.

It is like the road construction I mentioned: in the end, we know that it will be worth it, but in the midst of the orange barrels and long lines of cars, one rarely ponders the outcome, only the present conditions.

I like to think that the Acton Institute is on the road that leads to the narrow gate. We know that there is much work to be done in order to help “construct” a culture of dignity and value. It can be difficult work, but our staff and supporters are assured that it is a path that leads to life: flourishing with human creativity, enriched by liberty and ultimately, communion with God.

It may seem that our society is being torn apart – orange barrels, if you will, along pathways torn asunder. Yet, I see the work of the Acton Institute as the work of that construction, a construction towards the narrow gate, surely, but building something good and virtuous that leads to life. Thank you for your continued support in our mission for a free and virtuous society.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Robert Sirico". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rev. Robert 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.

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98 E. Fulton Street • Grand Rapids, MI 49503 • USA • www.acton.org

P.J. O'Rourke Headlines Upcoming Acton Annual Dinner

Best-selling author and leading political satirist P.J. O'Rourke will deliver the keynote address during Acton's 23rd Annual Dinner on October 24 at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel.

With more than 1 million words of trenchant journalism under his byline and more citations in *The Penguin Dictionary of Humorous Quotations* than any living writer, O'Rourke has established himself as America's premier political satirist. He is the best-selling author of 15 books and both *TIME* and the *Wall Street Journal* have labeled O'Rourke "the funniest writer in America." His best-selling books include *Parliament of Whores*, *Give War a Chance*, *Eat the Rich*, *The CEO of the Sofa*, *Peace Kills* and *On the Wealth of Nations*.

Covering current events, O'Rourke combines the skill and discipline of an investigative reporter with a comedian's sense of the absurd and the stupid. Known as a hard-bitten, cigar-smoking

conservative, he, in fact, bashes all political persuasions. As he puts it, "money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys."

"Known as a hard-bitten, cigar-smoking conservative, he, in fact, bashes all political persuasions."

In addition to O'Rourke, Rev. Robert Sirico and Pastor Christopher Brooks will offer remarks at the Annual Dinner. Brooks is senior pastor of Evangel Ministries and Campus Dean at Moody Theological Seminary, Michigan. Brooks hosts the Equipped for Life radio broadcast

which airs daily on Salem Communications-Detroit Affiliate. In 2013, Brooks taught a course at Acton University titled "Church, City, and Urban Renewal."

Last year over 700 people attended Acton's Annual Dinner to hear Eric Metaxas's remarks that defended and championed religious liberty.

For more information about the dinner, please contact Teresa Bailey at 616.454.3080 or tbailey@acton.org.



P.J. O'Rourke will deliver the keynote at Acton's 23rd Annual Dinner.



Attendees enjoying last years Acton Annual Dinner.

From Our Conference Participants

I can't thank you enough for all your insight and your Effective Compassion panel guests' sharing and caring. I came away knowing that I couldn't look at my ministry or others' in the same way.

—Kathy Pape
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Without your generosity, I would not have been able to attend. You have my promise that I will do my best to be a good steward of your gift.

—Timothy J.A. O'Donnell
Fishers, Indiana

Profile of Acton University Attendees: James and Julie White

James White and his wife Julie live in Hope Mills, North Carolina. The two have differing backgrounds motivating their Acton University attendance; James is senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Hope Mills, and Julie works for Liberty University Online.

Regarding his pastoral role, Pastor White looks to increase his effectiveness in order “to educate, equip, and motivate his church.” He hopes that in turn he and his congregation can better engage the local community. His church in Hope Mills prides itself on being a church “that produces assets for the kingdom and glory of God... rather than merely another congregation consuming its fruit.”

Julie has a degree in International Business and hopes to incorporate Acton University's wisdom into her work at Liberty University Online. Furthermore, she has long-term plans to help humans flourish, especially in developing

Christian ministry. AU's intersection of economics with religion, presented in ecumenical form, gave Mr. Keene a solid base of understanding for the importance of his ministry. For the future, he has an interest in politics, international communication, and civil service. Through these areas, Mr. Keene says he will “preserve liberty, while ministering to brothers and sisters in the Lord.” Wisdom he gained at AU has informed him of the true significance of this mission. Furthermore, he has a better grasp of what obstacles are currently obstructing liberty in our nation, and how to go about removing them.

Acton Connects with Free Enterprise Leadership Challenge

Ray Nothstine, Acton's managing editor of *Religion & Liberty*, spoke to over 50 high school students who participated in the Free Enterprise Leadership Challenge on the campus of Hillsdale College on July 15. FELC is a program of the Jesse Helms Institute in Wingate, North Carolina.

The mission of the program is “to create the

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Samuel Gregg speaking to the AU attendees.

countries. She does not wish to limit herself to a particular country in this effort. As she says, “God is calling me to the international level to invest in human beings for the glory of God.” Both adamantly agree with AU's major theme; that our faith is the foundation for our whole way of life and freedom requires virtue to thrive.

Profile of an Acton University Attendee: Jeremy Keene

Jeremy Keene hails from Dallas, Texas. Jeremy was attracted to Acton University partly on account of his involvement with part-time

principled leaders and entrepreneurs of tomorrow.” FELC is steeped in free-market principles and promotes entrepreneurial skills through engaging and interactive business practices.

Nothstine spoke to the students about the principles of the American Founding and introduced the students to the Acton Institute, its ideas, and programs. “The students asked tough questions and were very engaged. They were sharper than many adult groups I have spoken to and they had a strong sense of what is not just going on in this country but events around the world too,” said Nothstine.



Acton Embraces ArtPrize

The Acton Building will be a display venue for the highly popular ArtPrize competition located in downtown Grand Rapids, Mich. The 19-day public competition and celebration of art from all over the world takes place from September 18 – October 6. With \$560,000 in prizes for winning entries, ArtPrize is the largest art competition in the world. A \$200,000 prize is given to the artist who receives the most votes. Last year ArtPrize attracted 400,000 visitors to Grand Rapids. In 2011, it's estimated that ArtPrize brought over \$15 million to the greater Grand Rapids area.

ArtPrize promotes entrepreneurial skills and reflects human flourishing, making it an excellent opportunity for Acton to be involved and showcase its new building to the thousands of visitors in Grand Rapids. The Acton Building features a 2011 winning mural by Tracy Van Duinen on the exterior (East) wall. Acton's executive director Kris Mauren declared, "As an organization,

we've wanted to be a participant in ArtPrize for a number of years. Thanks to the generous support from our donors, we are now able to take advantage of this opportunity and show that we are fully invested in this community in every sense of the word."

Acton will feature the art work of Mary E. Anderson, Mic Carlson, Daniel Jacob, Phil Jensen, and Jenny Lynn. The art on display will include sculpture, textiles, and oil paintings.

ArtPrize has come to be a much-anticipated event for the Grand Rapids community. It highlights the God-given creativity of the artists, the search for beauty and truth in that creativity, the joy of a community coming together, and an economic boost for businesses of every size in the area. "I've witnessed the popularity of ArtPrize explode in the Grand Rapids community over the years," says Mauren.



ACTON in the News

"The rich get richer, and the poor get TVs and smartphones."

—Excerpted from Jonathan Witt's article in *The American Spectator*.

Jordan Ballor

Title: The Moral Complexities of the Minimum Wage
Publication: *Think Christian*
Date: 8.08.13

Kishore Jayabalan

Title: Detroit Bankruptcy
Program: *Vatican Radio*
Air Date: 7.19.13

Jonathan Witt

Title: Memo to Tinseltown
Publication: *The American Spectator*
Date: 7.16.13

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 mission to promote a free and virtuous society. You may choose to donate using the envelope provided, or you may visit the Acton website 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.

INTRODUCE ACTON TO A FRIEND

KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE WORK OF THE ACTON INSTITUTE? USE OUR WEBSITE TO SEND THEM AN E-MAIL WITH INFORMATION ON OUR PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. THANKS FOR PROMOTING FREEDOM AND VIRTUE!

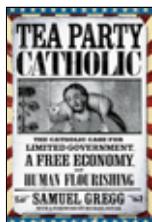
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ACTON UNIVERSITY 2013



ACTON Book Shop



Tea Party Catholic

By Samuel Gregg

Gregg underlines how economic freedom's corrosion in America is undermining the United States' robust commitment to religious liberty—a principle integral not only to the American Founding and the life of Charles Carroll but also the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.

Softcover 272 pages Sale \$24.00

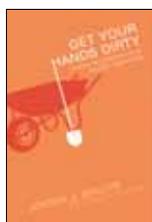


Becoming Europe

By Samuel Gregg

In *Becoming Europe*, Samuel Gregg examines economic culture—the values and institutions that inform our economic priorities—to explain how European economic life has drifted in the direction of what Alexis de Tocqueville called “soft despotism”, and the ways in which similar trends are manifesting themselves in the US.

Hardcover 384 pages Sale \$25.00



Get Your Hands Dirty: Essays on Christian Social Thought (and Action)

By Jordan J. Ballor

This volume brings together a decade of reflection at the intersection of culture, economics, and theology. Addressing topics ranging from the family to work, politics, and the church, Jordan J. Ballor shows how the Christian faith calls us to get involved deeply and meaningfully in the messiness of the world.

Softcover 238 pages Sale \$22.00



PovertyCure DVD Series

Produced by Michael Matheson Miller and James Fitzgerald Jr.

Join host Michael Matheson Miller on a journey around the world to explore the foundations of human flourishing, and learn how people are moving toward partnerships and pursuing entrepreneurial solutions to poverty rooted in the creative capacity of the human person made in the image of God.

DVD Sale \$59.00

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Tea Party Catholic	\$24.00		
Becoming Europe	\$25.00		
Get Your Hands Dirty	\$22.00		
PovertyCure DVD Series	\$59.00		

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Calendar of Events

ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
Oct 3	Houston Luncheon Rev. Robert Sirico Keynote Speaker	Houston, TX
Oct 10-13	Evaluating the Idea of Social Justice	Grand Rapids, MI
Oct 24	Acton Institute's 23rd Annual Dinner P.J. O'Rourke Keynote Speaker	Grand Rapids, MI

STAFF ACTIVITIES/DEADLINES

Date	Event	Location
Oct 10	Seek the Welfare of the City Jordan J. Ballor to Speak Sponsored by the Heritage Foundation	Holland, MI
Oct 6	Students for Liberty Michigan Regional Conference Jordan J. Ballor to Speak at Michigan State University	East Lansing, MI