

ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

September 2008, Volume 18, Number 9



“Connecting good intentions with sound economics”

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President's Message

"Though poor, they gave.
Though sick, they still
helped the sick."

Most families are experiencing tight financial times, and looking for ways to cut back. Notice that charitable contributions and other forms of philanthropy are among the first sources of cut-backs. The data backs this up: giving goes down in recessions and up in periods of economic recovery.

There is an important lesson in economic history we can deduce from this little nugget of information. If we look back to the period between 5,000 BC and the Middle Ages, we see precious little in the way of human charity in existence. For the most part, the sweep of human history has been more about staying alive rather than preserving and enhancing the lives of others. This is of necessity, an embedded feature of the world into which we are born. The phenomenal increases in prosperity during the Middle Ages Industrial Revolution meant something entirely new in human history: the advent of disposable income. For the first time ever, people other than kings had extra wealth that was not wholly consumed in the provision of food, clothing, and shelter. But ethics can overcome economic constraints. The Christians were a remarkable exception to the tendency mentioned above. Though poor, they gave. Though sick, they still helped the sick. Human life was precious. They made sacrifices, even of their own lives, for the faith.

And yet, economic considerations are also important here. In order for society to have large and developed educational and charitable institutions, there must be resources left over after basic needs have been cared for. In this sense, we are right to think of charity and philanthropy as forms of "luxury" goods that we purchase with disposable income.

There are two lessons we can gain from observing these trends. First, there is no substitute for doing what is right regardless of the economic conditions. Second, rising prosperity offers the best hope for the building of permanent structures to help the poor and serve the whole of society. This in turn necessitates freedom, which is what the Acton Institute supports with your generous support.

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



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert Sirico", written over a light background.

Rev. Robert A. Sirico, President

ACTONINSTITUTE

William F. Buckley to be Honored at Annual Dinner

The Acton Institute is honored to pay tribute to one of the greatest and most well known conservative leaders, the late William F. Buckley, Jr., at this year's annual dinner. Kate O'Beirne, *National Review's* Washington editor, will accept the award on Buckley's behalf. Buckley, who passed away in February, was also a valuable supporter and friend of the Acton Institute. Buckley spoke at the first ever Acton Annual Dinner. Rev. Robert Sirico said of Buckley, "He was a man of faith and a man who understood his faith. He was a man who believed in liberty and organized one of the most significant magazines that made the case for human liberty and the conservative cause." Rev. Sirico also noted, "One of the secrets I learned from Bill Buckley in building a movement for human freedom was to be encouraging of other efforts pulling in the same general direction."

The keynote speaker at the annual dinner this

year is Rev. John Nunes. Nunes is the president and CEO of Lutheran World Relief—an organization that acts to end poverty and injustice by empowering the world's most impoverished communities to bring about the transformation needed to live healthy, safe, and secure lives. Combining 63 years of experience, an uncompromising pursuit of excellence, faith, and prayer; LWR works with partners in 35 countries to promote sustainable development and human flourishing. Rev. Nunes has served in many offices of ministry, and has also served with the Acton Institute as a research fellow.

The dinner, which takes place on October 30, will be located at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Please visit the Acton website or call the Grand Rapids office for more information and to make plans to be present for this memorable evening.

*"He was a man of faith
and a man who under-
stood his faith."*



William Buckley & Rev. Robert Sirico

From Our Conference Participants

My time at the conference has helped me better clarify how that time should be spent and how I will better serve the businessmen and the disadvantaged.

—Rev. Jeffrey E. Carroll
Bowie, Maryland

I was inspired by both the lecturers and the people I met at the conference to shift my field of interest from the more mathematical side of economics to the study of ethics and the defense of the marketplace.

—John Robinson
James Madison University

An Evening with Laura Ingraham

Laura Ingraham, the popular talk radio host, will be in Grand Rapids for an event sponsored by the Acton Institute on September 17. The event will take place at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel and feature remarks by Ingraham, a question and answer session, a book signing, and a desert reception. Ingraham's newest book is a New York Times Best Seller titled *Power to the People*.

Ingraham is the most popular female talk show host in the nation, and produces the fifth largest syndicated radio program. Before her career in radio, Ingraham worked as a speech writer for the Reagan administration, and clerked for Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas after graduating from the University of Virginia Law School. Ingraham is well known as the official guest host of *The O'Reilly Factor*, which airs on the Fox News Channel. Tickets for the event are \$25 and \$15 for students. You can purchase tickets online at the Acton Institute website.

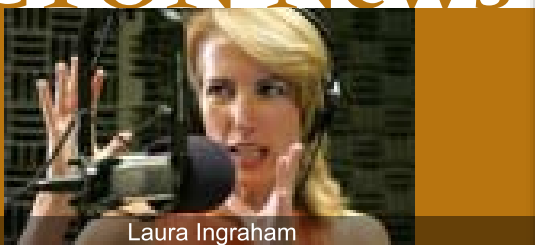
it. It gives us a chance to share what the Acton Institute is all about and serves as an opportunity for staff members to network in a fun and effective way."

The Acton Institute has volunteered with Guiding Light Missions, Ronald McDonald House, Gilda's Club, the Grand Rapids Children's Museum, and the Alzheimer's Association.

Acton Partners with World Magazine

The Acton Institute is partnering with *World Magazine* by offering a free two-month subscription for readers of *Acton Notes*. *World Magazine* publishes feature stories about the Samaritan Award finalists each year. *World* is a full color biweekly news magazine that provides complete coverage of national and international news from a Christian perspective. The editor-in-chief of *World Magazine* is Dr. Marvin Olasky, who is also a senior fellow at the Acton

ACTON News



Laura Ingraham



Acton Staff Volunteers

The staff at the Acton Institute has volunteered by lending their time and talents to those in need in the community of Grand Rapids. Acton has learned a lot from local charities since consistently serving alongside local groups once a month from October 2007. Development Coordinator Mandalyn J. Keeler says, "Volunteering is a great way for Acton to be involved and minister to our local community. We started volunteering almost a year ago and our staff members really enjoy doing

Institute. *World* currently has a circulation of just over 123,000 per month. This inspiring publication is recommended reading because of its relevant, serious, and very entertaining news coverage.

This offer is for interested *Acton Notes* readers who do not currently have a subscription to *World Magazine*. If you are interested in taking advantage of this exclusive offer, visit www.worldmag.com/acton and sign up today.

2008 Samaritan Award Winner Announced

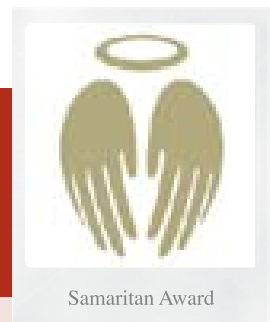
The Acton Institute has named the Samaritan Award winner for the top outstanding privately funded charitable organization. This year's first-prize winner is *Citizens for Community Values, A Way Out Program*, based in Memphis, Tennessee. The winner of the Samaritan Award receives a \$10,000 prize. The winner is considered the best example of Dr. Marvin Olasky's principles of effective compassion.

The article detailing the Samaritan Award winning charity in *World Magazine* says, "Since 1992 A Way Out has been rescuing women from Memphis' prostitution, stripping, and drug culture. The independent outpatient program, added this year, consists of 15 classes (which the women attend four days a week) dealing with problems such as sexual addiction, depression, and boundaries." According to the director of the charity, only seven out of two

"The winning charity has a very strong biblical foundation built into their programs.."

hundred forty eight women have returned to the sex industry after completing the program. The winning charity has a very strong biblical foundation built into its programs. Citizens for Community Values has also been a consistent top ten finisher within the charities the Samaritan Award ranks. Runner-up prizes for 2008 were awarded to Fresno Rescue Mission Academy in Fresno, California, and Restoration Ministries in Harvey, Illinois. Each of these charities received a prize of \$1,000.

For more information on the Samaritan Award visit www.samaritanguide.com. While visiting the Samaritan guide, you can study and read about how charities in your own geographic location rate. All of the Samaritan Award finalists appear in the August 23 issue of *World*.



ACTON in the News

The core religious claims of the West—in Judaism and Christianity—is that our loyalties are to God first and earthly authority only secondarily.

—Excerpted from Rev. Robert Sirico's article in the *The Australian*

Rev. Robert Sirico

Title: Giving Loyalty to God First Aids Freedom
Publisher: *Detroit News*
Date: 7.22.08

Rev. Robert Sirico

Title: Religion a Threat to Authority, Not Liberty
Publisher: *The Australian*
Date: 7.21.08

Jordan Ballor

Title: The Future of the Faith-Based Initiative
Program: *The Jesse Lee Peterson Radio Show*
Air Date: 7.11.08

*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.

Michael Miller speaking on *The Victory of Socialism*

A packed crowd for Miller's Acton Lecture

Acton and You

Dr. Samuel Gregg, Acton's research director, will deliver an address titled "What's Wrong With Our Economy?," on September 18 at the Acton Lecture Series in Grand Rapids. In this lecture, Dr. Gregg will discuss some of the root causes of the economy's present problems, the merits of various attempts to grapple with them, and the fundamental reforms needed for sustained economic growth. Just our current economic problems stem from moral, political, and economic errors, so too, Dr. Gregg argues, are the solutions to be found in

the moral, economic, and political realm.

Mr. Michael Miller, Acton's director of programs, spoke on July 24 for the Acton Lecture Series. His address was titled "The Victory of Socialism." Miller argued that "socialism is becoming more influential in the way we think and in our cultural and religious institutions." Miller also spoke about how defenders of freedom and human dignity can counter the socialist threat. The entire lecture is available at www.acton.org.

Acton Institute's
Eighteenth Annual Dinner

Thursday, October 30

Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids, Michigan

For more information please call 800.345.2236

ACTON Book Shoppe



Tensions in Eighteenth Century Liberal Thought *by Michael Miller*

The Eighteenth Century witnessed a flowering of enlightenment, thought, and reflection on liberty that led in divergent directions. One resulting in the American Revolution; the other in the French Revolution. Why did this happen? What role did Christianity play in this?

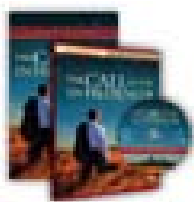
CD 45 mins Original Price \$11.95 Sale \$10.00



And Why Not? Morality and Business *by François Michelin*

This book-length extended interview provides fascinating insights into the mind of François Michelin, the former managing partner of *Group Michelin*. Michelin sat down with two journalists and discussed his management philosophy and his deeply felt Christian faith. Michelin speaks eloquently about the creative dimension of free enterprise and the commercial world.

Paperback 91 pages Original Price \$12.00 Sale \$8.50



The Call of the Entrepreneur DVD and Study Guide *produced by Acton Media*

A merchant banker. A failing dairy farmer. A refugee from Communist China. One risked his savings. One risked his farm. One risked his life. Why do their stories matter? Because how we view entrepreneurs—as greedy or altruistic, as virtuous or vicious—shapes the destinies of men and nations.

Length 60 minutes Original Price \$30.00 Sale \$25.00

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

	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Tensions in 18th Century Liberal Thought	\$10.00		
And Why Not? Morality and Business	\$8.50		
The Call of the Entrepreneur DVD and Study Guide	\$25.00		

Make checks payable to "Acton Institute." For orders in the United States, Canada, and Mexico: for the first item, add US \$5.75 for shipping; plus US \$1.00 for each additional item. Overseas orders: US \$6.75 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
Sept 4	<i>The Blrth of Freedom</i> Premiere	Chicago, Illinois
Sept 17	Presentation by Laura Ingraham	Grand Rapids, Michigan
Sept 18	Acton Lecture Series What's Wrong With Our Economy? Dr. Samuel Gregg to speak	Grand Rapids, Michigan

STAFF ACTIVITIES/DEADLINES

Date	Event	Location
Sept 30	Heritage Foundation <i>First Principles</i> The Centre for Independent Studies Dr. Jay W. Richards to speak on environment	Ann Arbor, Michigan
Oct 9	What's Wrong with Europe? Dr. Samuel Gregg to speak	Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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