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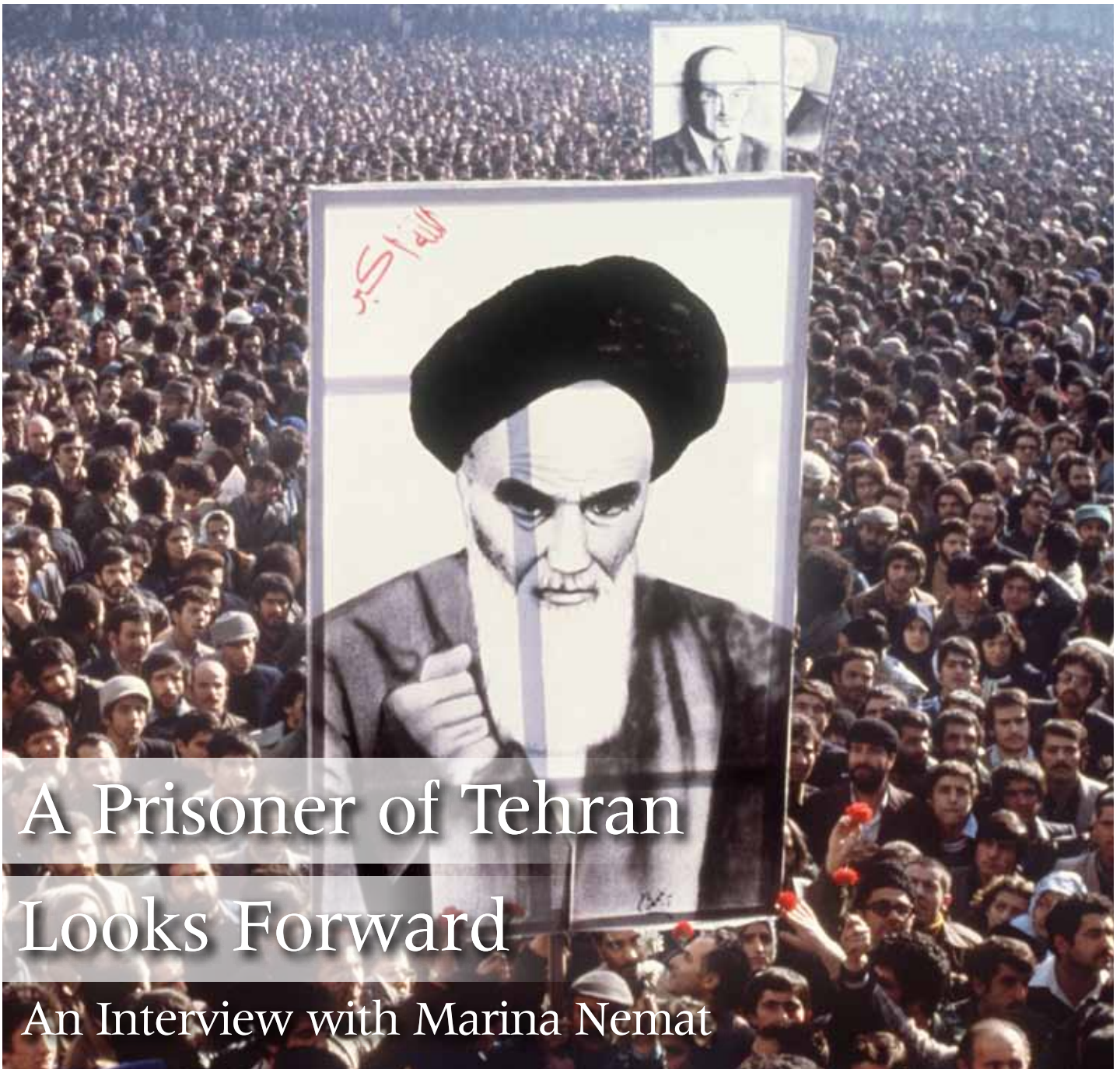
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Religion & Liberty

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Looks Forward

An Interview with Marina Nemat

A Journal of Religion, Economics, and Culture

Editor's Note



For many Americans, the iconic images of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 are forever etched in the mind. The hostage crisis where 52 Americans were held in captivity for 444 days in Iran dominated American media and politics. Less known is the imprisonment and suffering of thousands of Iranians. Marina Nemat was arrested at age 16 and spent two years as a political prisoner in Tehran. Nemat was tortured and came very close to being executed by the regime. Her memoir of her life in Iran, *Prisoner of Tehran*, was published in 2007 and is an international bestseller. She was a keynote speaker at Acton University in 2013. In her interview, she provides insight and clarity regarding the

turmoil and change we are seeing in the Middle East.

Andrew Yuengert offers the feature piece "But What if They're All Republicans?" He argues that a politicized Catholic episcopacy damages the Catholic Church's social witness. "The question at issue here is not whether I agree with the political stands of the Bishops (I sometimes agree with, and sometimes reject, their specific policy proposals), but whether they should be acting on behalf of the Church in these specific ways," says Yuengert.

David Paul Deavel reviews a new book by James Otteson on Adam Smith. Otteson's work is part of the Bloomsbury series "Major Conservative and Libertarian Thinkers." Deavel points out that this book strikes a blow against many of the ideological misconceptions surrounding Smith.

This issue offers an excerpt from Samuel Gregg's *Tea Party Catholic*, which is deservedly receiving a lot of attention. The article focuses on Charles Carroll of Carrollton and his commitment to liberty. Carroll was the only Catholic signer of

the Declaration of Independence.

The "In the Liberal Tradition" figure is Margaret Thatcher (1925 – 2013). Thatcher is one of the leading conservative political figures of the 20th century. Acton awarded Thatcher the Faith & Freedom Award in 2011. She was interviewed by *R&L* in 1992.

I don't normally mention "Double-Edged Sword" in the editor's notes, but at a time where many would agree that there is a level of spiritual erosion in the West, I felt it appropriate. The Scripture selected from Ephesians (3:7-11) might be one of the most beautiful passages ever written by the Apostle Paul. His missionary work was responsible for carrying the Christian faith to the Western world. The message transformed societies, culture, and kingdoms, changing the heart of men and the trajectory of the West. It is always good to return to our roots and the foundation of our work to understand who we are as God's people.

Editorial Board

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Cover Photo: IRAN-DEMO-KHOMEINY. Demonstrators hold a poster of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, in January 1979, in Teheran, during a demonstration against the shah; Jan 1, 1979. Photographer: AFP/Stringer. Credit: AFP/Getty Images. © 2013 AFP

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A Prisoner of Tehran Looks Forward

An Interview with Marina Nemat

Marina Nemat was born in 1965 in Tehran, Iran. After the Islamic Revolution of 1979, she was arrested at the age of 16 and spent more than two years in Evin, a political prison in Tehran, where she was tortured and came very close to execution. She came to Canada in 1991 and has called it home ever since. Prisoner of Tehran is a memoir of her imprisonment and life in Iran and is an international bestseller.

*In 2007, Nemat received the inaugural Human Dignity Award from the European Parliament, and in 2008, she received the prestigious Grinzane Prize in Italy. In 2008/2009, she was an Aurea Fellow at University of Toronto's Massey College, where she wrote her second book, *After Tehran: A Life Reclaimed*. Nemat regularly speaks at high schools, universities, and conferences around the world and sits on the Board of Directors at CCVT (Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture) as well as on advisory boards at ACAT (Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture). She delivered the keynote address at Acton University in 2013. Nemat also teaches memoir writing, in Farsi and in English, at the School of Continuing Studies at University of Toronto. She was recently interviewed by managing editor Ray Nothstine.*

R&L: *Marina, why did you write Prisoner of Tehran, what really inspired you to write this account?*

Marina Nemat: I find when people ask me what inspired me, it doesn't speak to my experience. J.K. Rowling was inspired to write *Harry Potter* or Jane Austen was inspired to write *Pride and Prejudice*. If you

ask Elie Wiesel if he was inspired, he might get upset.

I wish I could be inspired to write a book, but when some people write memoirs, they write because there has been some serious trauma in their life. Serious trauma causes something that nowadays is called "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder." PTSD, unlike what some may think, is not limited to soldiers who come home from war zones. When I was released from prison after two years, two months, and 12 days of imprisonment between the ages of 16 and 18, I was suffering from PTSD.

Post Traumatic Stress is basically a silent killer and it is often worse when the society is not ready to recognize it, which is often the case for non-soldiers. When you are put in prison because you were a danger to national security, it's a different story. So when I came out and my family sat at the dinner table with me and talked about the weather and the community and avoided what happened at any cost, that had a deep impact. If you're walking down the street and these people don't make eye contact with you, you're not allowed to go to school, it has an impact. You're not even

allowed to get a job. You become quite isolated and in the meantime your community, your family, they expect you to be normal and you expect yourself to be normal because life goes on.

And that is the scenario you fit yourself into, you pretend to be normal, you act



Marina Nemat giving her keynote address titled, "Finding Christ in an Iranian Prison," at this years Acton University.

normal, you behave normally for as long as you can maintain that charade. I maintained it for many years until we finally left Iran, went to Canada, landed in Toronto with \$200 in our pockets and when we got there, I had a child who was ill. We had to get jobs. We had to start making money. We had to take care of our family. My family was too busy surviving and then in 2000, I brought my parents to Canada with me and they had avoided talking about the past. I avoided talking about the past.

In 2000, my mother became ill with cancer and I sat by her bedside and looked at her and I realized I didn't know this

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But What if They're All Republicans?

By Andrew Yuengert

"But what if they're all Republicans?" my Catholic friend exclaimed at the conclusion of a brief exchange over the American Bishops' recent initiatives in defense of religious freedom. The Bishops' campaign was provoked by recent HHS regulations which force Catholic institutions to violate Catholic moral teaching by offering contraceptive and abortifacient coverage in employee health plans. My friend was not denying the importance of the issue, but was instead questioning the (perhaps unconscious) political motivations of the Bishops. Perhaps the Bishops were more interested in torpedoing Obamacare than in standing up for rights of religious conscience and practice.

My friend's response to the Bishops' campaign is dismaying, because it treats the Bishops as if they are simply one more player in the political arena. It is also dismaying because it captures something of my own concerns on other issues: the question "but what if they're all *Democrats*?" encapsulates my suspicions of some of the Bishops' present and past official positions. Because the political conflicts of our age are so sharp, many evaluate the policies and positions of Bishops primarily by whether they benefit progressive or conservative agendas, not by whether they are faithful to the tradition of Catholic Social Doctrine (CSD). These days the evaluation of *everything* hinges on its effect on the disposition of forces in the political contest; if as you read this article you are trying to figure out whether it hurts or

helps your side in some policy argument, then you know exactly what I mean.

Matters are not helped by the fact that the U.S. Bishops actively advance a specific political agenda in Washington. On the day I am writing this (May 10) the Bishops' website urges us to support House Bill 4128 ("The Conflict Minerals Trade Act"), House Resolution 278 ("Global Security Priorities Resolution"), and House Bill 4213 ("Tax Extenders Act of 2009"). In Washington, D.C. and the states, the Bishops are organized like a lobbying group – there are even "Catholic lobby" days in New York and California. Because these political actors are Catholic shepherds, it appears that the Church is simply another political player. This gives rise to disheartening exchanges between lay Catholics of different political stripes over who is dissenting from, and who is in obedience to, CSD.

What are the Bishops to do when their pronouncements on politics are sure to be greeted with disdain by Catholic Republicans or Democrats, and are treated primarily as fodder for the continuing political conflict? Since Bishops are citizens, they have a duty to be informed about public policy, and of course they will have opinions on the important political issues of the day. They might be Republicans or Democrats but must they have *official* political opinions, and institutional structures to lobby for action?

I argue here that Bishops should be more

discrete in their political advocacy – that their campaigns for specific policies erode their authority to teach the principles of CSD, and reduce their effectiveness in inspiring the faithful to change society for the better in line with that teaching. I cannot reject outright the obligation of Bishops to take specific positions on political issues – to support or oppose bills – when the stakes are high. But the hysterical political rhetoric of the age makes it seem that the political stakes are *always* high; according to the preferred rhetoric, one's political opponents are never sim-

" Perhaps in the current environment it would be prudent for Bishops to be less involved in the political fray."

ply wrong; they are unfeeling or ignorant about the poor and the needy, are lawless tyrants, are bigots, are intolerant. Perhaps in the current environment it would be prudent for Bishops to be less involved in the political fray. This does not mean that *the Church* should be less involved; it is the job of the laity (of all political stripes) to sanctify the social order. To help the laity to carry out their mission, the Bishops need to shepherd, sanctify, and teach them, and to resist the

temptation to act on their behalf. They must support and trust the laity to act to sanctify the social order.

The question at issue here is not whether I agree with the political stands of the Bishops (I sometimes agree with, and sometimes reject, their specific policy proposals), but whether they should be acting on behalf of the Church in these specific ways.

To make this argument, we must first discuss prudence (or practical wisdom), the virtue by which we (Bishops and laity) look, judge, and act in the world. From the perspective of prudence, the respective roles of Bishops and laity in the political order become clearer.

Prudence, Bishops, and the Laity

Since the Catholic Church puts a heavy emphasis on prudence in its moral teaching, we should begin with its definition of prudence, found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (para. 1806): “the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it.” Prudence is the virtue by which we act in the world to realize the good: to love God and our neighbors as ourselves in concrete ways. Prudence takes the good-in-general (“our true good”) and makes it concretely real in particular circumstances.

Prudence is a *virtue* because making good decisions about what to do when it comes time to act is very different than deciding what to do in a general sort of way. The prudent person takes the good-in-general seriously enough to want to instantiate that good in the world, but making abstract goods real requires more than a *commitment* to the good-in-general. There are no sure formulas for action in the world; not every good can be realized in every situation, and some goods can only be realized through creative compromise with uncooperative circumstance. Prudence is the ability to discern in this chaotic world the possibilities for achieving

something good. Because we can never be as certain about the results of our actions as we are about our commitment to the good-in-general, prudence brings into play virtues like justice, courage, temperance, faith, hope, and love.

Prudence ought to guide the translation of the principles of CSD into practical institutions, laws, and initiatives. A full understanding of the nature and requirements of prudential action suggests two foundational principles:

Principle #1. One can never be as certain about action to instantiate the human good as one can be about the human good itself.

Certainty about the principles of CSD does not result in certainty about what to do. Moreover, two people can be equally committed to the principles of CSD and yet come to different conclusions about what to do. In recognition of this principle, Bishops distinguish between principles of CSD and application, and assert a greater authority to teach the principles. For an excellent example of this distinction, see the American Bishops pastoral on the economy from 1986, *Economic Justice for All*, paragraphs 134-35. However well this distinction is stated, it can never be made or emphasized often enough. It is all too easy for Bishops and laity to forget that Bishops are not speaking with the same authority about application as about principle.

Principle #2: One cannot exercise prudence for another.

Human beings acquire the virtue of prudence through practice, by making decisions in those things for which they are responsible, and through reflection on their experience. Joseph Pieper, in *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, makes this point forcefully: “By their very nature such [prudent] decisions can be made only by the person confronted with the decision. No one can be deputized to make them. No one else can make them in his stead” (p. 27-28). When bishops go beyond

teaching principles to advocate for specific actions, they rob the laity of the opportunity to exercise and develop prudence. This is not only bad for the laity; it is counterproductive for the Church. A group of prudent Christians, well-instructed in the principles of CSD, is a better leaven for social transformation than a group of passive parishioners faithfully carrying out their Bishops’ political program (or worse, contemptuously ignoring it because they reject the Bishops’ politics).

Prudence for Bishops, and for Laity

I would like to suggest that the *primary* political responsibility of a Bishop is to teach the principles of CSD. By ‘primary’, I mean that, no matter what other role a Bishop takes in the social order (voter, lobbyist, political advocate), no matter what his political persuasion, he will always have a responsibility to teach the principles of CSD effectively. No one else has the charism and authority to teach the faithful, although every other person has the responsibility and authority to act in the public square for the public good. This difference in charism demands a certain discretion from Bishops in public life.

When a Bishop takes a political position or initiates a political program, he does so in addition to his primary responsibility. He should only take on this extra task if it complements his teaching office. It may be that the example of a Bishop’s political involvement does indeed bolster his effectiveness as a teacher: a teacher who joins a picket line or a demonstration puts an exclamation mark on his teaching. In the current political environment, however, I fear that a Bishop exercising his rights as a political actor undermines rather than increases the effectiveness of his message to the faithful. On any controversial issue over which people of good will may disagree, like immigration or welfare reform, a Bishop will alienate roughly half of his flock by taking a firm stand either way. This may be necessary when the stakes are high – when a serious

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violation of human rights must be prevented. Are the stakes always high? It seems so from the perspective of contending political parties, but their standards of urgency should not be the Bishops' standards.

Bishops have an alternative to direct political action: they can teach the principles of CSD to the laity, inspire them to reform society in light of those principles, and then set them loose on the social order. This can be done in such a way that Catholics from left to right are challenged to act in light of CSD, with the prayer and blessing of their pastors.

This sort of teaching, which discretely declines to teach the definitive applications while teaching the principles, is not without precedent in other fields. Any good teacher whose discipline consists of concepts plus politically contested applications will exert his authority more strongly when teaching the concepts than when teaching the applications, because he wants his students, whatever their political persuasions, to master the principles. For example, when I teach the principles of economics, I urge the students to concentrate on mastering the principles, whatever their political commitments. Of course I show the class principle-based arguments in favor of this or that political position, but I am reluctant to take too firm a stand, lest a student reject the whole framework as a mere apology for one political position over another. I do this because the principles are *important*, and everyone will benefit from adopting and using them. Students who enter the class as progressives should master and be challenged by the concepts of economics; students who enter the class as conservatives will find a different set of challenges to their political commitments. Both should be more thoughtful and better equipped to think about politics and society as a result.

When I teach the principles of CSD (without the authority, but I hope with the blessing of Bishops), I am similarly dis-

crete about my political commitments, because I want everyone in the room to take the principles seriously. Fr. Rodger Charles, SJ, in the preface to his magisterial two-volume *Christian Social Doctrine*, urges just this sort of discretion:

Since they are citizens of a free society, those who teach Catholic Social Doctrine will, as responsible citizens, have their own political opinions and they will range across the whole right, left, and centre perspectives within the limits of that doctrine, but



I Stand With The Catholic Church © Ron Bailey. Image from www.istockphoto.com

they must avoid the temptation to let their own opinions color the way in which they approach the subject. They must make clear that they respect all the political options a Christian in good conscience can take, not only that which they have espoused.

C.S. Lewis, in *Mere Christianity*, suggests another reason why those who teach CSD

ought to be careful to avoid specific political programs. He begins his treatment of "Christian social morality" with a warning:

Most of us are not really approaching the subject [Christian social morality] in order to find out what Christianity says: we are approaching it in the hope of finding support from Christianity for the views of our own party. We are looking for an ally where we are offered either a Master or – a Judge. I am just the same.

I am just the same. *You* are just the same. *Bishops* are just the same. We should all be suspicious of ourselves when we approach the Tradition of the Catholic Church on these matters (or the Christian tradition more generally). The temptation to recruit the Church to our side in secular conflicts is powerful. If we succumb, we put things in the wrong order: Christianity becomes useful only insofar as it bolsters the case for immigration reform or minimum wages, or the case against Obamacare or the death penalty, not because it is the work of the Holy Spirit, giving form to our love of God and neighbor.

I accept the authority of Bishops when teaching the doctrine of CSD, and trust in the Holy Spirit to guard their ability to teach those principles clearly across time. Nevertheless, I have no reason to think that the Bishops' charisma to teach principles fully extends to their teaching about specific political programs. They are just as subject to political passion and party spirit as the rest of us.

Conclusions

I argue here that a clearer distinction between the principles of CSD and their application in specific political programs, and a measured discretion about the specific applications of CSD, can help Bishops avoid the trap Lewis warns about. This does not mean that Bishops should be silent, but they must place a greater burden on the laity to carry out the work of social reform. The laity are leaven in society;

they must be made aware of how much depends on them in the workplace and in the public square.

This is not an argument for a sort of quietism among Bishops. I am aware that Bishops must often do more than teach the principles of CSD – that they must at times act and advocate for specific actions in the face of serious threats to human dignity. I am not arguing against *any and all* direct action, but in favor of *more discretion*. The current danger is that Bishops are too directly involved, not too little involved, in practical politics. For example, must the Bishops advocate in favor of “an extension of extended unemployment insurance and COBRA subsidies through the end of the year, including reforms to improve COBRA subsidies,” as they currently do on their website (in their call to support the “Tax Extenders Act of 2013”)? What if a legislator happens to be on the other side of this issue? I can understand why the Bishops might take a stand against abortion or the death penalty even in the face of divisions on these issues among their flocks (although both issues allow some freedom of political action), but why take a stand on “unemployment insurance extension and COBRA subsidies” when surely Catholics might disagree on principled or strategic grounds?

I hope that the answer to my colleague’s challenge, “what if they are all Republicans?” will someday be “so what if they are all Republicans (or Democrats)?” At present, I do not think that answer is convincing. For the sake of the Church’s social witness and apostolate, I hope that one day the political commitments of the Bishops are much less relevant in the evaluation and application of CSD.

Andrew Yuengert is the Blanche E. Seaver Chair in Social Science at Pepperdine University.

Double-Edged Sword: *The Power of the Word*

Philippians 3:7-11

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

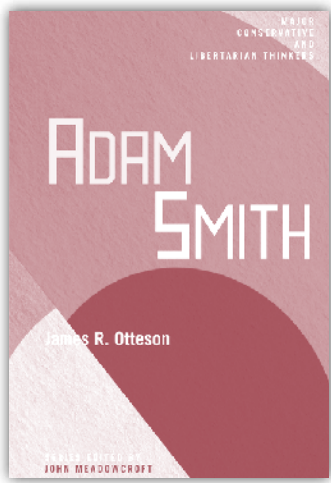
Outside of Christ himself, nobody influenced Christianity more than the Apostle Paul. He wrote almost half of the books in the New Testament. Before his conversion, he was named after King Saul, a notoriously prideful man. Paul was one of the most educated Jewish Pharisees in history and studied under the most learned religious leaders. But the name Paul, a name he took up after his conversion, means “small” or “humble.” Before his conversion, he was a leader in the persecution of the Church and in an instant Paul was confronted by the risen Lord and his pride was crucified.

What does Paul mean when he says he has lost all things? He is simply explaining the power of grace over justification through the law. He realizes he never really did keep and uphold the law despite all his knowledge of God.

Everything in his life up to that point was a waste and loss compared to knowledge of gaining Christ and knowing Him. When Paul talks about knowing the power of His resurrection and participating in His sufferings, he also is committed to backing that statement up with action. Paul was committed to spreading the Gospel through action and sacrifice despite the cost.

Throughout his ministry, Paul is continually trying to conform himself to the image of Christ. Today lots of people in the world and in the Church want to act like a god but they don’t want to act like Christ. Listen to the words of Paul in his letter to the Ephesians: “Although I am less than the least of all the Lord’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ.” (Ephesians 3:8)

Paul understands our fate and our hope rests in Christ and His resurrection from the dead. He is often called “The Apostle of Grace.” For Christians, he is a man to emulate, simply because nobody was closer to the heart of our risen Lord.



Sentimental Hearts and Invisible Hands

Review by David Paul Deavel

Review of James R. Otteson's, *Adam Smith* (Bloomsbury Press, August 2013) 200 pages; \$29.95

In our day, Adam Smith has generally been represented as if he were simply the *Wall Street* movie character Gordon Gekko dressed up in an 18th-century wig and breeches. This has not been simply a left-wing view. In his 2006 book *Crunchy Cons*, the journalist Rod Dreher claimed to be arguing in the name of Russell Kirk that "Adam Smith and Karl Marx are two sides of the same coin"-- gross materialists both. Douglas Jeffrey in the *Claremont Review of Books* chided Dreher for not knowing Kirk very well, observing that Kirk labeled Smith, along with Edmund Burke and Samuel Johnson, one of the West's "three pillars of order."

If Dreher didn't know Kirk well enough, he similarly misunderstood Adam Smith, a writer who is now gestured at, but very seldom read, both by those who claim his patronage and those who instinctively thumb their noses. In James Otteson's short, witty, and well-sourced introduction to Smith, one can see why Kirk and Burke thought so highly of this figure—and why our contemporaries should, too.

Otteson, a favorite speaker at Acton University, is an extremely gifted philosopher (Ph.D., University of Chicago) and expert on Adam Smith who has taught at Georgetown, Alabama, and Yeshiva University. His 2006 book *Actual Ethics*, a defense of the classical liberal political order,

won him a \$50,000 Templeton Enterprise Award given for works exemplifying "the very best that has been written. . . to advance the cause of ordered liberty around the world." This fall, Otteson begins his new position as director of the BB&T Center for the Study of Capitalism and full professor at Wake Forest University.

"Through a complex process, rules are generated not from some figure on high, but from the very interactions of people themselves."

Otteson's first book on Smith, *Adam Smith's Marketplace of Life* (2002), was an attempt at resolving the "Adam Smith Problem." The "Problem" is how to reconcile Smith's 1759 book, *A Theory of Moral Sentiments*, which argued that ethics are based on the natural desire for a "mutual sympathy of sentiments," with his auspiciously dated 1776 *Wealth of Nations*, which argued that social good was derived from humans seeking their own self-interest. That self-interest, Smith argued, was channeled by an "invisible hand" into greater good for others. Otteson's solution is to highlight Smith's "market" understanding of human behavior in the fields

of language, morality, and economics. In all three, human self-interest (to communicate, to have approval of our conduct, and to better our situation) leads people to make certain decisions on the local level in an effort to achieve their wants. Through a complex process, rules are generated not from some figure on high, but from the very interactions of people themselves. In all of these fields, Smith's notion of self-interest has little to do with Gordon Gekko—even our natural desire to better ourselves materially usually involves bettering those we love and to whom we have obligations. In order for us to "get ahead" in life, we are obligated to think about what others want or desire in order to get what we want. We don't use certain words that will confuse others, we don't treat people in certain ways that will injure or anger them, and we must offer something that others need or want in order to get what we want, whether it be money, a job, a service, or a product. Otteson credits Smith with the discovery, later popularized by Friedrich Hayek, of "spontaneous order," created by human interaction itself. This "spontaneous order" is created as if there were an "invisible hand." While it doesn't create a perfect paradise of communication, behavior, or economics, Smith understood such order to be more successful at producing positive results than any conscious human attempts to promulgate in detail the specific kinds of rules needed to navigate the intricacies of everyday life—especially in commercial life.

If the reader sees some similarities between Smith's notion of spontaneous order and Burke's notion of Tradition, this should not be surprising, since Burke was "an admiring reader" and correspondent of Smith as well. Like Burke, Smith warned against the dangers of the "man of system" who believes that he *can* dictate exactly how society or markets should be ordered: Otteson calls this Smith's "Great Mind Fallacy" which imagines that some expert or group of experts can create a utopia out of their own understanding—usually immediately. While Smith's nose-thumpers like to ridicule the invisible hand theory, Otteson shows how it is composed of three arguments about the nature of markets of all kinds.

First, Smith's "local knowledge argument": because people have a better grasp on their own "local" situation, they are the ones in the best position to decide what course of action to take. Otteson notes that this is not an argument of the infallibility of ordinary people, but instead "means that their unique local knowledge provides them a better chance of knowing best how to use their resources and what actions to take to achieve their goals." Second, Smith's "economizer argument" holds that because we seek to better our own condition, we will seek out the most efficient use of our resources in our "peculiar and unique circumstances" to maximize our own output and return on our own investments. Third is the "invisible hand argument" itself, which Otteson calls "trickier than it seems" and requiring "delicacy" in parsing. While people work for the best "return" on their investments of time, resources, and energy principally to benefit themselves and those closest to them, they benefit others as well. Otteson explains that this division

of labor creates a "general plenty" and "universal opulence" (not divided equally, of course) because:

when we specialize or concentrate our efforts on some small range of tasks or talents, we usually produce more than we ourselves can consume or use, which means we create a surplus; which means we create a surplus that we can trade or sell away; that in turn, means that the overall stock of goods and services increases, and their prices thus decrease, for everyone. Additionally, as we seek out exchanges, forms of contract and trade, and so on that serve our local interests, others may learn from us and imitate our successes and avoid our failures, thereby saving ourselves



Adam Smith
Statue in Edinburgh, Scotland, in front of St. Giles Cathedral at Parliament Square.

Adam Smith Statue © Matthias Lechewka. Image from www.iStockphoto.com

time and energy, thereby enabling them to go marginally further than we did in securing their—and thus, indirectly, everyone else's—ends.

Otteson's book is part of the excellent Bloomsbury series "Major Conservative and Libertarian Thinkers," and Otteson takes pains to show that Smith is not just an economic thinker, but an important philosophical mind whose recognition is finally coming in other fields like linguistics and moral philosophy as well. While some have tried to pigeonhole Smith in modern terms as either a proto-progressive or an ideologically minded libertarian, Otteson rejects both of these characterizations.

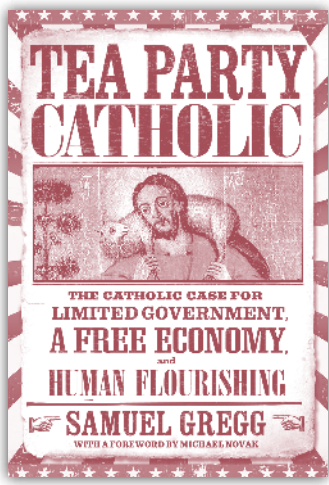
Because Smith was pragmatic, he understood that even his own principles could have exceptions. His basic rule was that government's duty should be limited to the "negative" task of justice--protecting the lives and properties of its citizens, as well as enforcing their free contracts—he also believed that it should use tax money for certain public purposes like infrastructure (roads and canals) and possibly education. Further, he also acknowledged that local public officials might be allowed in certain circumstances to intervene in markets. But, as Otteson notes, "the burden of proof must be high" for those of officials seeking to intervene.

While Otteson is clearly in Smith's camp, he does not cover over Smith's mistakes. He highlights particularly Smith's labor theory

of value and his understanding of happiness as "tranquility." On the latter topic, I think Otteson rightly notes the absence of industriousness in Smith's accounting for most people's ordinary happiness, but Smith's adherence to a more stoic notion of happiness seems to me compatible with this insight and also includes people in society whose ability to work is limited or ended.

Otteson's book is an excellent introduction to Smith and a valuable resource for those who study him. His notes and bibliography are a vademecum for scholars wanting to wade into historical studies and contemporary uses of Smith's thought. It is also a good, short read—perfect to give to those who thumb their nose without knowledge.

David Paul Deavel is associate editor of Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture and the 2013 winner of the Novak Award.



A Catholic Revolutionary

By Samuel Gregg

This article is excerpted from Tea Party Catholic by Samuel Gregg. The new book draws upon Catholic teaching, natural law theory, and the thought of the only Catholic Signer of America's Declaration of Independence, Charles Carroll of Carrollton—the first “Tea Party Catholic”—to develop a Catholic case for the values and institutions associated with the free economy, limited government, and America's experiment in ordered liberty.

On October 15, 1774, the ship *Peggy Stewart* owned by the Annapolis mercantile company of Dick and Stewart sailed into the harbor of Annapolis in the colony of Maryland, carrying with it a cargo of tea. On arriving, the ship's owner paid the tax then applied by Britain to importations of tea to its American colonies in accordance with the Tea Act of May 1773.

This law was intended to avert bankruptcy of the East India Company which had lobbied the British Parliament to exempt it from the tea import duties which its colonial competitors were required to pay. As if this was not enough, the Company was also granted the privilege of being allowed to ship its tea directly to agents in America instead of placing its tea on open auction in Britain. The Company was thus able to undercut American merchants who were required to purchase tea by the regular process of passing through the higher-taxed British controls.

Leaving aside the inherent injustice of using state power to privilege one commercial enterprise over others, the political

point of this exercise was to elicit the American colonists' implicit agreement to the British Parliament's right to tax the American colonies.

Opposition to what many Americans viewed as the British government's latest arbitrary act was fierce in Maryland. Few were more outspoken in their opposition than one of its leading public figures, Charles Carroll of Carrollton. “It will not do,” Carroll insisted, “to export the tea to Europe or the West Indies. Its importation is an offense for which the people will not be so easily satisfied.”

Carroll was no man of violence. Such qualms did not, however, prevent Carroll from proposing that the owner of the *Peggy Stewart*, Anthony Stewart, make amends—and save his own skin—by burning not just the tea but also his ship!

Even some of Carroll's equally angry contemporaries were taken aback by the strength of Carroll's convictions on this matter. They would have been less surprised had they known that after Britain's imposition of the Stamp Act seven years earlier, Carroll had warned his English friends that the Americans “are not yet corrupt enough to undervalue Liberty, they are truly sensible of its blessings, and not only talk of them as they do somewhere else, but really wish their continuance.”

Though most often remembered as the last Signer of the Declaration of Indepen-

dence to depart this world, Charles Carroll was also distinguished by the fact that he was its sole Roman Catholic signatory. But long before most of the other Founders, Carroll had concluded America should be free. “In time,” he said in 1763, “it will and must be independent.”

In signing the Declaration, Carroll arguably put more at risk, at least materially, than any other member of the Revolutionary generation. At the time, he was probably the richest man in America.

Nevertheless the cause of liberty meant so much to Carroll that he was willing to back what must have seemed a forlorn endeavor to many at the time. But Carroll had always embraced the deeper meaning of his family's motto: *Ubicumque cum libertate*: “Anywhere so long as There Be Freedom.” This devotion to freedom was noticed by many of Carroll's fellow revolutionaries. Speaking of Carroll, John Adams remarked: “In the cause of American liberty, his zeal, fortitude and perseverance have been so conspicuous that he is said to be marked out for particular vengeance by the friends of Administration; but he continues to hazard his all, his immense fortune, the largest in America, and his life.”

Unlike the other signers, however, Carroll and his family knew in a particular way what it meant to have one's liberty violated. Until the 1770s, Carroll was formally barred from voting or holding public office in Maryland because of his

Catholic faith. Carroll also knew that, unlike the other revolutionary leaders, his Catholicism made him especially suspect to the British government (and more than a few of his fellow revolutionaries).

Another feature distinguishing Carroll from his fellow patriots was his reasons for making his stand for freedom. All of Carroll's biographers affirm that his political and economic thought was influenced by his Catholicism. Carroll was quite aware that the Catholic Church had always insisted that the state had certain legitimate functions. Yet the same Church also maintained—and continues to do so—that there were bounds beyond which governments cannot go.

The limits of state power vis-à-vis the rights of individuals and communities were central to the events leading to the American Revolution. The sources to which America's Founders turned in explaining their choice to embark upon a new experiment in ordered liberty were diverse. They ranged from classical figures associated with the Roman Republic, to philosophers such as John Locke. The language and ideas employed by many of these figures when discussing questions of liberty, property, and the nature of government was not, however, completely dissimilar from that of the Catholic tradition. All belong, after all, to the Western canon of ideas.

Notwithstanding these similarities, the Catholic position in favor of limited government and the free economy does differ in important ways from pre-Christian and post-Enlightenment thought. These disparities owe much to Catholicism's specific understanding of the nature of human freedom. For Catholics, human freedom is grounded in what man is—an individual, sinful, and social being graced with reason and free will—and directed to what some Catholic thinkers describe as “integral human flourishing.”

Why is Acton Participating in ArtPrize?

Philanthropist Rick DeVos has described ArtPrize, a public art competition within the city of Grand Rapids, as a “celebration of creativity.” DeVos developed ArtPrize five years ago and it's been instrumental in the continued economic and cultural development of downtown Grand Rapids. The ArtPrize competition and exhibits epitomizes the characteristics of human flourishing. That is one of the reasons it makes sense for the Acton Institute to lend its support and get involved as one of the display venues.

ArtPrize, which takes place from September 18 – October 6, is an instrumental event for education and cultivating entrepreneurial skills. The 19 days of public exhibits and art competition is completely free to the public. A total of \$560,000 is available to winners at ArtPrize. The public participation and interaction with the art pieces has proven to be extremely attractive and I've witnessed the popularity of ArtPrize explode in the Grand Rapids community over the years.

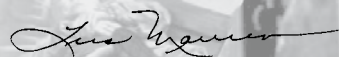
In our new building, we are proud to feature the art work of Mary E. Anderson, Mic Carlson, Daniel Jacob, Phil Jensen, and Jenny Lynn. The art on display will include sculpture, textiles, and oil paintings. Three of our artists hail from Grand Rapids and the others are from California and the state of Washington.

When we made the decision to acquire and renovate an historic building, one of the reasons was to increase our visibility in the Grand Rapids community. Last year, ArtPrize attracted 400,000 visitors to downtown Grand Rapids. Our involvement with ArtPrize, which we hope to continue on an annual basis, will allow us to welcome thousands of new visitors to our building. In fact, the Acton building features a 2011 ArtPrize winning mural on the exterior (East) wall.

I have asked some of our staff to volunteer to be present to talk about the art work on display but also be available to talk about the ideas and mission of the Acton Institute. We hope that a number of visitors will take a deeper look at our work as we are able to showcase a very professional looking and attractive building within the community.

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.

In 2013, apart from ArtPrize, art is featured prominently throughout our new building, including in our new Prince – Broekhuizen gallery adjacent to our 200-seat auditorium. We hope our friends and visitors are inspired by the art and you find the pieces as a reflection of the beauty of our Creator.



Kris Alan Mauren
Executive Director

woman because we had never talked about anything but the weather. She died and after her funeral at my brother's house in Toronto, I had my very first psychotic episode. This was in 2000, 16 years after my release. I went to sit down next to my father and he looked at me and he said, "Marina, your mother forgave you before she died," and I suddenly realized he means my mother forgave me because of my imprisonment.

So I opened my mouth to ask, "What do you mean?" and what came out was a

designed to break the human soul. It is designed to strip your dignity. That is what torture did to me. And then I was given a death sentence and then I was left in this very strange place called death row prison; it is this surreal feeling of limbo between life and death. I had to come up with a way to understand what was happening and why was it happening. I tried to discern what my role in this whole bizarre and indescribable scenario was for my life.

In solitary confinement, I gradually

So all of these thought processes, they each led from one thing to the next and in solitary confinement, people would tell you that it's easy to go insane and I was so bored out of my wits and I had no books. I had nothing. It was a period of picturing a never-ending canvas board with nothing to fill it with except really dark thoughts. I started thinking that I really needed company really badly. That is when I began conversing with God. I started wondering what my family and friends were doing without me and I just had this feeling that I had been erased by the regime.

I had grown up as a Christian so I had taken a lot of catechism, but the next step was questioning God. I go to this point where I could decide to be really angry with God but then I began to think about the crucifix and what Christ suffered. And then there was this surrendering process where I knew only God was going to be able to get me out of this situation.

I think a lot of Americans and Christians in the West feel powerless about the amount of persecution going on in the Middle East and other parts of the world. How can the average person make an impact in fighting against persecution and torture today?

I think feeling powerless is the greatest enemy to us as human beings. I think the moment we feel helpless and we stop engaging, that is the moment that we allow evil to thrive and become empowered. It is the silent majority that allows atrocities to happen. Think about Germany and think about the Holocaust, if millions stood up and intervened to stop Hitler from shipping Jews to concentration camps, the Holocaust would never have happened. The war might have ended sooner. But the average citizen is usually discouraged, usually feels helpless, usually feels insignificant and usually feels afraid, and that is an obstacle too.

First of all, the important thing is to not to forget morality and the dignity of the person. Justifying any evil act, including



Marina Nemat at this year's Acton University signing copies of her memoir about growing up in Iran, serving time in Evin Prison, and speaking out against the Iranian government.

horrific scream and then I collapsed. Eventually there was a doctor there, she came over me and she helped me. I realized I had to take this matter into my own hands so I started writing as a way to tell my story. My experiences gradually came out and I was having more and more psychotic episodes and it was just getting worse. I thought maybe writing will help. It actually made it worse, so then I thought I should publish my experience so that the world will know what happened.

How do you feel like your imprisonment and experience of being tortured strengthened your Christian faith?

It completely broke me at the beginning, as a Christian and as a human being. That is the point of torture. Torture is not designed to get information. Torture is

started to use my writing in a very philosophical way. How much philosophy did I really know at the age of 16? Almost nothing, but I had this practical way of dealing with everyday matters. I found out my sentence was commuted to life in prison. I learned that it doesn't matter what your sentence is; they could kill you tomorrow or in five minutes. People had served their time and instead of being released, they were executed.

When I was on death row, I thought a lot about when they decide to kill me; would my captors give me a choice on how I would die? That was one of the thoughts that actually preoccupied me for quite some time and I would wonder if they were going to shoot me, hang me, or stone me? I even thought they might crucify me. I thought which one would I choose if there was an option?

murder and torture, is wrong. We do evil, we become evil, we allow evil to thrive in us and that is not what is meant for us. So the first step is to understand that when you want to fight evil, you cannot do it by doing evil. We have to get our morality straight first to make sure we know what's right and why it is right. The only way to proceed on these issues is to follow Christ and his example. He told us that it is in meekness that we find strength.

Obviously I wouldn't say sell everything you own and move to the Middle East. I would say look around you, look at the circle around you, look at the talent and gifts that God has given you and considering your own talents, do something to make the world around you a better place.

I think what the world needs more than anything is the change of heart in the person. Goodness doesn't need to just happen in the Middle East. We have a desperate need for moral clarity all around us. Start making an impact where you are and then work your way up and then allow God to take you to where you have not considered going. Start it right where you are and then if you're supposed to go where you have never considered going, it will happen gradually if you remain open to it.

It was just a few years ago that people were protesting the government in Iran and we saw action being taken in the street. Do you feel like maybe America or the West did enough to support them?

No. America has really made some harmful decisions in the Middle East. In 1953 there was a CIA coup staged in Iran. Mohammed Mosaddegh, who led the first democratically elected government in Iran, was overthrown. The CIA staged a coup because Iran wanted to nationalize the oil.

America, like any other country, looks out for its own interests first. I understand that is the way it goes, but at the same time we have to keep morality in mind. We have to ask ourselves if we want oil at any cost? Many Iranians remembered that America was much more concerned about cheap oil than the will

of the people. So at the first opportunity they got in 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini came along and said, "You know what? The U.S. has really damaged us and I'm going to free you from that." They believed it! The people of Iran were very naïve back then and they believed him

"When you look at the world around you, you have to remember that human dignity should be the number one priority."

because he was a man of God.

I mean we had these terrible governments, let's say for example in Egypt with Hosni Mubarak, who was propped up by America. So now is Egypt moving toward democracy? I certainly doubt it. Probably one dictator replaces another one.

When you look at the world around you, you have to remember that human dignity should be the number one priority. If you don't focus on that, the West will reap the whirlwind. Unfortunately, America is making many of the same mistakes again.

With what has happened in Cairo with the Arab Spring and some of these revolutions conducted by the Syrian rebels, what lessons can they learn from Iran? There are some leaders and Americans that feel like it's going to result in democratization.

Iran did what the Arab world is doing today. Mubarak, the Shah, a Western-backed government with a lot of money and weaponry poured into it. The West stood by the Shah the same way that it stood by Mubarak and, of course, it eventually backfired.

If you look at the culture of Iran and the culture of the Arab world, you would see that Iran is really the Persian Empire. It is the cradle of civilization. Iran has always been ahead when it comes to everything, when compared to its Arab

neighbors. Iran is doing everything 30 years ahead, and it did that too by choosing an Islamic government.

Political Islam really began in 1979 Iran. There's a lot to learn from that. Several countries are trying the exact same route. Now we are 30 years ahead, so is the result of these movements going to be the exact same as it was in Iran? Not necessarily, but the possibility is there.

I think it's quite remarkable what has been going on in Turkey. It is the model of stability and yet the people of Turkey are getting worried and thinking some of the dissidents mirror Iran. So they're thinking, do we want to try an Islamic government? Let's look at Iran. No, we don't really want to try the Islamic state, but there are divisions in the country. Turkey still has a certain degree of democracy, but is it strong enough to allow the people to steer it in the right direction? I don't know. We'll have to wait and see.

You talked a lot about your passion for reading in your book and some of the books that you read growing up. What are a couple books that sustained you through hardship and have been meaningful for you?

I read a lot of Jane Austen and C.S. Lewis and it allowed me to escape to a world where things were beautiful and magical and made sense. Then the Iranian Revolution happened and reading anything except Islamic texts became illegal, so I basically stopped or read a whole lot less.

And when I was released from prison, I discovered that my mother had washed my books because she had no other way to destroy them, so she washed them in the washing machine and mixed the pages in with the garbage. That was her way of destroying them. But when I'm in real trouble, when things get cloudy and I'm not quite sure what to do, the only book that relieves that pressure is the Bible. There's no substitute for the Word.

■■■■

Margaret Thatcher [1925 – 2013]

No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he'd only had good intentions; he had money as well.

Margaret Thatcher was the only female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and was leader of the Conservative Party from 1975 to 1990. Thatcher won the general election for Prime Minister three times (1979, 1983, and 1987) before finally stepping down in 1990. Conservatives hail Thatcher as the “Iron Lady” for her unwavering conviction to her political beliefs and commanding leadership style. It’s a moniker she first received from *The Red Star*, a Soviet army newspaper that profiled her harsh denouncements of communism.

Thatcher was born Margaret Hilda Roberts in Lincolnshire County, England. As a young adult, she was a chemistry student of Somerville College, Oxford who was passionate about liberty and free market economics. This love of freedom led to her election as President of the Oxford University Conservative Association in 1946. Thatcher spent the 1950s raising her two children with husband Denis Thatcher, studying to be a barrister of taxation, and running unsuccessfully for parliament (1951, 1955). In 1959, she was elected as a MP for a seat in Finchley; a victory that launched Thatcher into a 31-year-long career in politics.

Thatcher served as a Member of Parliament representing Finchley for 11 years. At the House of Commons she spent much her time condemning labor schemes, education policies, and high taxes in the United Kingdom as dangerous endeavors that pushed the nation further and further down the path of statism. Her ability to answer tough questions and spar with the opposition earned her a spot in Edward Heath’s Cabinet in 1970 as Education Secretary. Heath’s reign as Prime Minister



experienced difficulties, particularly with the oil embargoes and their inability to answer demands from union activists. This led to their ousting in the general election of 1974. Thatcher’s popularity and actions as Education Secretary bettered her reputation among Conservatives. In 1975 she was appointed Leader of the Opposition; a position she held until her election as Prime Minister in 1979.

Her political style was so unique that the public coined her convictions as “Thatcherism,” a philosophy that is often compared with Reaganomics and 19th century liberalism. Thatcher governed her 11-year tenure as Prime Minister under the ideas of economic rationalism; advocating free markets, low inflation, Monetarist economics, tax cuts, privatization, and low public expenditures. These policies allowed Thatcher to guide the United Kingdom out of a recession and win re-election twice.

It was her belief in human dignity and social justice that largely shaped her political convictions which she clung to unyieldingly. Born the daughter of a Methodist pastor, Thatcher was exposed to Biblical principles at an early age. She was raised as a devout Methodist and kept her Christian faith throughout her later life as a member of the Anglican church. During a 1978 Interview with Richard Dowden of the *Catholic Herald*, Dowden stated that, “Mrs. Thatcher’s defense of the individual against the State is in her eyes founded on a Christian concept of man.”

Margaret Thatcher realized that the free market was not the ultimate end of the civil society. A moral culture was needed whose values came from faith. Right before her rise to prime minister, she declared, “The basis of democracy is morality, not majority voting. It is the belief that the majority of people are good and decent and that there are moral standards which come not from the State but from elsewhere.” In her book, *Statecraft: Strategies for a Changing World*, she reminded Americans to “never believe that technology alone will allow America to prevail as a superpower.”



Creative Destruction

It is heart-breaking: a major city in our nation, Detroit, filing for bankruptcy. For anyone having visited Detroit recently, there are prominent images: rows of ruined houses, empty lots given over to weeds and strewn garbage, empty storefronts and graffiti. Just a few decades ago, Detroit was a major hub of industry, vitality and culture.

Many issues are at play here, and I don't mean to discuss them all. Instead, I wish to focus on something I related in *Defending the Free Market: the Moral Case for a Free Economy*. One chapter in that book focused on "creative destruction:"

... the phenomenon whereby old skills, companies, and sometimes entire industries are eclipsed as new methods and businesses take their place. Creative destruction is seen in layoffs, downsizing, the obsolescence of firms, and, sometimes, serious injury to the communities that depend on them. It looks horrible, and, especially when seen through the lives of the people who experience such economic upheaval, it can be heartrending. But think of the alternative—What if the American Founders had constructed a society where no industry was ever allowed to go under because it would mean a lot of innocent people losing their jobs? I mean, have you ever met a livery yard owner or a stable boy? How about a blacksmith or a farrier? Do you have among your acquaintances any makers of bridles, saddles, chaises, coaches, or buggy whips?

Clearly, this is not an easy issue, nor is it particularly pleasant to live through. Yet, it happens all the time, even in nature. Take the idea of a controlled burn in a forest. It's a technique sometimes used in forestry management: a chosen area is carefully burned. Why? There are some seeds, such as sequoia, that require fire to break down the seed coating. They won't grow without it.

Are we not seeing something similar in places like Detroit? The old ways of doing business are gone, and new ones must – and will – grow. Many talented and intelligent people are already at work in Detroit, re-imagining that city.

We humans benefit from "creative destruction" as well, although we don't call it that. From a Christian perspective, we talk about sin, forgiveness and redemption. If we remain in sin, of course, nothing new grows. When we recognize the destruction of sin in our lives, and we desire change, the creative force that God has blessed us with allows us to re-create ourselves. That is – again, in Christian terms – grace.

The psalmist wrote of this destruction and renewal in our relationship with God:

He redeems your life from destruction, he crowns you with kindness and compassion. He fills your lifetime with good; your youth is renewed like the eagle's. Ps. 103:4-5

Each one of us can cite examples in our own lives of how great things came from what seemed to be tragic circumstances. I'll end with a quote from my late friend, Chuck Colson.

...all at once I realized that it was not my success God had used to enable me to help those in this prison, or in hundreds of others just like it. My life of success was not what made this morning so glorious -- all my achievements meant nothing in God's economy. No, the real legacy of my life was my biggest failure -- that I was an ex-convict. My greatest humiliation -- being sent to prison -- was the beginning of God's greatest use of my life; He chose the one thing in which I could not glory for His glory. (Charles Colson, *Born Again*)

Chuck Colson recognized the force of "creative destruction" in his life. What could have been the most harrowing and damaging of events became the seedling of Prison Fellowship, an organization that continues to serve tens of thousands of prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families.

Times of creative destruction are painful, but necessary – in business, in nature, in our lives. We must focus on the psalmist's themes: kindness, compassion, goodness and renewal. Even in the midst of loss, disruption and endings, we see new growth, fresh and green with expectation.

Rev. Sirico is president and co-founder of the Acton Institute.

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