

# Religion & Liberty

Inside this issue



**Glendon** The Pope's Think Tank • **Lapin & di Segni** Jewish Leaders Assess John Paul II's Pontificate • **Zandstra** An Ally in Defense of Freedom • **Jayabalan** Days of History and Holiness • **Sirico** Papal Economics 101

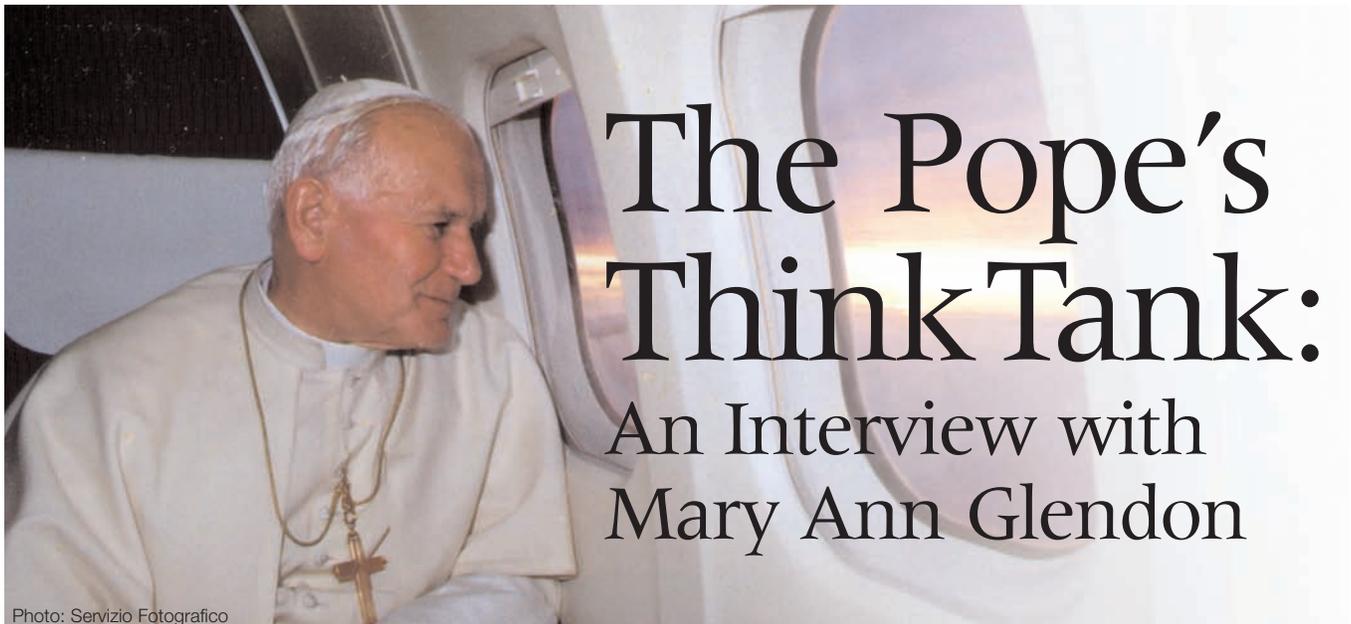


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## The Pope's Think Tank: An Interview with Mary Ann Glendon

Professor Mary Ann Glendon of Harvard Law School is one of the world's leading scholars on the constitutional protection of human rights. Her latest book, *A World Made New*, tells the story of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. *ReL* turned to her for a somewhat different look at Pope John Paul II. She is president of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, which was charged by the late Pope to keep the Catholic Church abreast of the latest scholarship in the social sciences—the field in which much of the Acton Institute's work is done.

*continued on pg 3*

## Jewish Leaders Assess John Paul II's Pontificate

In this edition of *Religion & Liberty*, we look at the life and legacy of John Paul II. In his many travels abroad, some of his most stirring encounters were with leaders of the Jewish faith. In his historic address at the Great Synagogue of Rome in 1986, John Paul said: "In a society which is often lost in agnosticism and individ-

ualism and which is suffering the bitter consequences of selfishness and violence, Jews and Christians are the trustees and witnesses of an ethic marked by the Ten Commandments, in the observance of which man finds his truth and freedom. To promote a common reflection and collaboration on this point is one of

the great duties of the hour."

What follows are two articles that offer Jewish perspectives on John Paul. The first is "A Rabbinic Eulogy for the Pope" by Rabbi Daniel Lapin. That is followed by a 2003 interview conducted by Zenit with Riccardo di Segni, the chief rabbi of Rome.

*continued on pg 4*

# Editor's Note



Welcome to the new *Religion & Liberty*!

We have the same serious content we have always had, but with a fresh, livelier new look. For many of you, *R&L* will arrive electronically, permitting us to reach more people at less cost—good economic stewardship!

*R&L* also has a new editor—me. After years of faithful service, Stephen Wolma has left the editorship to continue his preparations for ministerial service. We thank him for his work and wish him well.

You'll notice some changes, but we trust that you will still find *R&L* an appoint-

ment with Acton that you look forward to four times a year (yes, we're now quarterly instead of bi-monthly).

I've been around Acton from a distance for more than a decade, and I look forward to working closely with my new colleagues, many of whom are already friends. And I hope you, the readers, will take the time to introduce yourselves by dropping a note or an email.

This first issue of the new format is unlike any we have published before. It is devoted entirely to the late Pope John Paul II. He was decisive in my priestly vocation (see *R&L* May 2001 on our Web site) and in the lives of many others. But we devote this issue to him because he was also decisive in the work of the Acton Institute. So much of what we do at the intersection of religion and liberty depends upon a correct understanding of the human person and of human freedom. In the last generation, no person has contributed more to that understanding than Pope John Paul II.

You will have read much about the late pope already. But I think you will find

something new here from Acton's distinct perspective. Professor Mary Ann Glendon speaks about how the pope was genuinely interested in the social sciences—our field of study. Jerry Zandstra and Daniel Lapin illustrate that John Paul's influence—like Acton's work—is not limited to the Catholic faith alone.

I had the great blessing of being in Rome during John Paul's funeral, along with Acton's own Father Robert Sirico. We were both doing media work, helping tell the great story of those historic and holy days. I consider it another blessing that this first issue of the new *R&L* is devoted to the man whose story so enthralled the world—Pope John Paul II.

*Father Raymond*

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# Interview

Mary Ann Glendon

*Why did Pope John Paul II found the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences in 1994?*

**Glendon:** By 1994, Pope John Paul II had already made several major contributions to Catholic social doctrine, and was thus acutely aware both of the need to keep abreast of changing social and economic conditions and of the increasing difficulty of doing so. In 1991, he observed in *Centesimus Annus* that the Church “needs more constant and more extensive contact with the modern social sciences” if she is to make her own contributions effectively. Three years later, he established the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences to serve as a kind of think tank whose research could offer the Church “elements which she can use in the study and development of her social doctrine.” Writing about the mission of the Academy, he noted that the Church had developed her social doctrine “[in] close collaboration, on the one hand, with Catholic social movements, and on the other, with experts in the social sciences.” The Academy gives “new expression” to this long-standing dialogue.

*How did he follow the work of the Academy? Did he take a personal interest?*

**Glendon:** The highpoint of the Academy’s Annual Plenary Session was always our audience with John Paul II. On those occasions, he would comment on the topics we had chosen and the publications we had produced. His suggestions regarding the substance, method, and spirit of our

work were and remain very valuable to us. Social scientists, for example, need to be reminded from time to time to pay attention to the practical implications of their work! Pope John Paul II made clear to us that we were not to regard our secluded meeting place in the Casina Pio IV as an ivory tower where scholars commune only with each other. As you might expect from the philosopher-pope who traveled the world speaking truth to power for twenty-eight years, he frequently reminded us that we were to bring the wisdom of the social sciences to bear on human realities “with a view to finding solutions to people’s concrete problems, solutions based on social justice.” He always exhorted us to stretch our capacities, to be bold and creative in deploying the resources of our disciplines.

*What did John Paul teach you about the response of religious persons to scientific research in the social sciences, including politics, economics, and culture?*

**Glendon:** Perhaps the most important lesson he taught us by word and personal example was to “be not afraid” in the quest for knowledge. That was his message to the original members of the Academy when he welcomed them in January 1994. He urged us on that occasion to search for “all the grains of truth present in the various intellectual and empirical approaches” of the disciplines represented in our midst. As a model, he held up St. Thomas Aquinas whose unrestricted desire to know led him to seek dialogue with the most advanced natural and human science of his time and to fearlessly engage the ideas of the great minds of pagan antiquity.

For us, of course, the contemporary model par excellence was John Paul II himself, in his critical engagement with other modern and postmodern thinkers. His method was always to try to seek out and affirm what is true and conducive to human flourishing while discerning and naming those elements that are false and harmful.

John Paul II’s example also taught us confidence that the relationship between Catholic social thought and the social sci-

ences could be a two-way street, that the social teachings could not only assimilate what these various disciplines have to contribute, but could also help them to open themselves to a broader horizon. In countless ways, the Academy’s work has been influenced by his exhortations to us to help insure that social science and social policies do not ignore the spiritual nature of human beings—their deepest longings that transcend the merely biological and material aspects of life.

*Why would non-Catholic scholars of international renown accept (non-remunerated!) membership in the Academy, especially when they are already too much in demand?*

**Glendon:** Many people are surprised to learn that among the thirty-three members of our academy are several non-Catholics. That group includes two Ameri-

“[Pope John Paul II] observed ... that the Church ‘needs more constant and more extensive contact with the modern social sciences’ if she is to make her own contributions effectively.”

can economists, Nobel-prize-winners Kenneth Arrow and Joseph Stiglitz, who share many of the concerns that animate the social doctrine of the Church. I believe many distinguished scholars were also drawn to the Academy by their admiration for John Paul II, by their sympathy with the advocacy of Holy See in international settings, and by their appreciation of the worldwide humanitarian activities of the Catholic Church.

*The work of the Acton Institute lies at the intersection of faith (religion) and social sciences (economic and political liberty)—are there particular subjects the Academy is working on that would be of interest to R&L readers?*

*continued on pg 12*



Photo: National Photo Collection

The visit of Pope John Paul II to Israel. The Pope meets the chief Rabbis of Israel, Yisrael Lau (L) & Eliyahu Bakshi Doron

# Freedom and Spirit

Rabbi Daniel Lapin and Riccardo di Segni offer their thoughts on John Paul II

## A Rabbinic Eulogy for the Pope

by Rabbi Daniel Lapin

What meaningful eulogy can a rabbi possibly add to the many heartfelt tributes being paid to the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II?

Ancient Jewish wisdom advised that in this world a man is known by his father. Not only a man's last name but much of his identity comes from his father. However, after the process of death transforms us to spirit, we look to our children and grandchildren for clues to our eternity. In the future world of the spirit where all is light and truth, Judaism teaches that each of us will be known by the actions of his or her children.

But children are not the only building blocks people leave behind. In the world to come we will be known by all our lasting accomplishments, including worthy children and powerful ideas.

Pope John Paul II is now being warmly greeted in heaven as the father of a billion worthy children and the progenitor of one powerful idea. We can condense the vast repertoire of courage and compassion, the dazzling virtuosity exhibited over decades by Pope John Paul II into one idea. This idea is so powerful that it welded the many facets of his life into one brilliant beam of clarity.

The pope's singular coherence was the sanctity of life. His beam of clarity was the triumph of life over death. Terri Schiavo, clinging to life, alerted all Americans to the real distinction between the culture of death and that of life. Perhaps her final role was to herald on high the imminent arrival of Karol Wojtyla.

In the political sphere, the pope's role in bringing about the overthrow of communism is well known. Why did he hate communism? Not only because he witnessed its evil but also because it violated his reverence for life. Communism is by definition the doctrine of materialism. If there is any difference at all between matter and spirit, it is that matter is mortal whereas spirit is eternal. Communism's innate mortality springs from its exclusive emphasis on matter. Freedom is a matter of spirit and is eternal. By fighting communism all his life, the pope was making a courageous commitment to freedom's spiritual underpinning—life.

Pope John Paul II aroused controversy. However, his views were never capricious; they were unified by the theme of life. He was utterly consistent in his unwavering defense of the culture of life. Did I personally agree with every single one of his papal positions? Of course not; he was the pope and I am a rabbi. Theologically and practically he did not speak for me. However that is not the issue. The issue is that he made the world a better place for all who love life and for all who revere the

words in Deuteronomy, "...therefore choose life."

Without Pope John Paul II, the culture of death would have made far greater inroads. An airliner remains aloft only because jet engines convert fuel into thrust. In the absence of that energy, gravity alone would doom the airplane. Similarly, in the absence of the spiritual life force such as that which Pope John Paul II injected into the world every day of his life, the gravitational pull of death would surely have spread even more widely. Whatever your faith, that is reason enough for gratitude.

Rabbi Daniel Lapin is president of *Toward Tradition* ([www.towardtradition.org](http://www.towardtradition.org)).

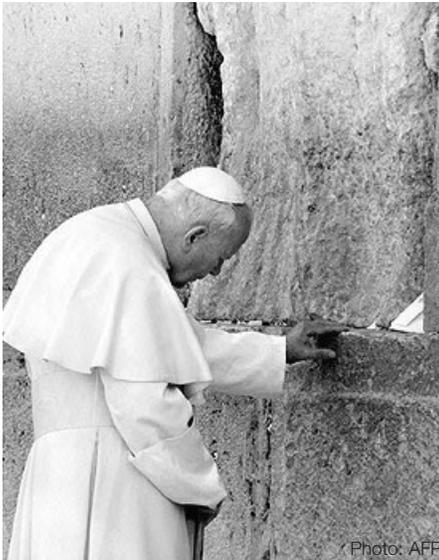
"Throughout his lifetime the Pontiff defended the Jewish people, both as a priest in his native Poland and for all of the years of his Pontificate."

## Pope Sees Progress in Catholic-Jewish Understanding

Excerpted from *Zenit*

Riccardo di Segni, the chief rabbi of Rome, said John Paul II's pontificate opened a new era in relations between Catholics and

## Jewish Leaders Assess John Paul II's Pontificate



Jews. Segni became chief rabbi in 2002, replacing Elio Toaff, who held the office for fifty years. He was interviewed by the Zenit news agency in 2003, the twenty-fifth anniversary of John Paul's pontificate.

"There has been no pope in history who has fostered such good relations between Judaism and the Catholic Church as John Paul II," Rabbi di Segni said. "From our point of view, we are before situations which are uncommon in the history of the Church and of its relations with the Jewish community."

*In what way has John Paul II changed relations with Judaism?*

**Segni:** In history, there have been different problems in the Jewish-Christian dialogue, especially prejudices in regard to Jews. For centuries we have had the perception that it was a distrust nourished by ideologies and old practices. This type of approach to Jewish differences has been dismantled by a series of actions of John Paul II even more than his speeches.

I am referring, in particular, to the pope's visit to the Synagogue of Rome and his

visit to the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

John Paul II has removed the attitudes of contempt and has established a relationship based on respect and reciprocal dignity.

*There are many shared values between Jews and Christians.*

**Segni:** It stems from the fact that these two religions have their origin in the Bible. Biblical tradition underlines the importance of the dignity and of the life of man, the sense that life must have an ideal, the sense of social solidarity. These are fundamental values—biblical values that are intrinsic and shared between Jews and Christians.

"With Judaism therefore we have a relationship which we do not have with any other religion. You are our dearly beloved brothers and ... it could be said that you are our elder brothers."

—John Paul II, Apr. 13, 1986,  
*address at the Synagogue in Rome*

From this point of view, the two worlds have always come together and even imitated one another, often in a virtuous circle.

*What is your assessment of John Paul II's pontificate?*

**Segni:** It is positive, although problematic aspects of a theological order remain. With this pontificate we have certainly arrived at a full respect of human dignity and of

religious traditions, but on many other questions the discussion is still open.

*What value do you attribute to this pontificate?*

**Segni:** John Paul II was able to give a great positive picture of his work and of what the Church does. I do not know to what extent the faithful accept his exhortations with a sufficient sense of responsibility.

*What do you mean?*

**Segni:** The majority of people have a boundless admiration for this pope, who has great personal impact—a media impact, insofar as he has had to endure suffering; the ability he has to attract hundreds of millions of people around his initiatives.

But I don't know how much this can change people's behavior. I don't know, for example, how many people share his opposition to divorce, or his opposition to certain forms of sexual behavior as indicated by Catholic morality.

*Defense of life, opposition to euthanasia, defense of the dignity of the person and of human rights, are issues that are dear to you.*

**Segni:** Regarding opposition to euthanasia, our position is similar to that of the Catholic Church. But we have different positions in regard to what Catholics understand as defense of life. Not because we do not defend unborn life, but because according to Jewish theology, the beginning of life is juridically regulated with criteria that are different from those proclaimed by the Catholic Church, with all due respect for what the Church affirms. Therefore, the doctrinal positions are not always identical.

We have the highest respect as regards human rights and the rights of the person.





# An Ally in Defense of Freedom

by Rev. Gerald Zandstra

I am an ordained minister of the Reformed or Dutch Calvinist persuasion. My experience with Catholics, specifically Polish Catholics, began in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, neighborhood in which I was raised. Most on my block were either Dutch Reformed or Polish Catholic.

The line between us was bright and clear. Each attended their own church and school (non-public) and each kept to their own kind. A marriage between children would be a scandal for both families. Nothing in my childhood challenged this reality. Little in my college or various seminary experiences countered what I learned in my youth.

Interaction with co-workers and friends who are Catholic and reading on my own resulted in a deeper understanding of recent history. These things also led me from an interest in to a profound appreciation for Pope John Paul II. John Paul II was the pope of human liberty and human dignity. His upbringing in Poland under the rule of various forms of totalitarianism taught him a lesson *via negativa* that he would never forget, even at his death.

John Paul's vision of society holds things in tension. He was about neither complete freedom nor enforced virtue. Freedom and virtue are intertwined. They are dependent on one another. Liberty is the context within which people make virtuous choices. Liberty, for Pope John Paul II, was not some ethereal concept. The 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus* was a call to Catholics

and, indeed, to all Christians, to take freedom seriously, especially in the realm of economics. It is not an endorsement of a particular economic structure. His condemnation of communism was matched by his fear that those emerging from totalitarianism would immerse themselves in consumerism.

“Protestants will have an opportunity to meet [John Paul II] and know him through numerous articles and books. I hope that they take the opportunity to do so.”

The pope's vision and perspective were always broader than particular issues in a given political or economic situation. What is remarkable is his vision of liberty and morality. Christians in business are not participating in necessary evil. Rather, they are called to elevate their thinking so that their work becomes their vocation and one of the prime means by which they serve God.

Pope John Paul II knew that pervasive welfare states could never match the salvific power of private charity for both the wealthy and the poor. Liberation theology, with its bizarre mixture of Marxism and Christian thought, could only lead to greater oppression and poverty. Commu-

nism would fall because at its root, it was morally and economically bankrupt, matching bad anthropology with faulty economics. It was only a matter of time.

In many ways, despite theological differences, I found in the life and thought of John Paul II an ally and a well-formed defense of a society that is both free and virtuous. I had two regrets upon hearing of his decline and death. The first is that I did not have an opportunity to meet him. The second is that I did not learn more of him earlier in my academic career. In the future, Protestants will have an opportunity to meet him and know him through numerous articles and books. I hope that they take the opportunity to do so.

*Rev. Gerald Zandstra, an ordained pastor in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.*

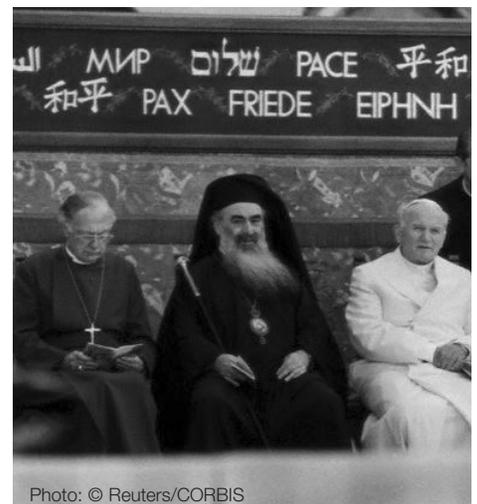
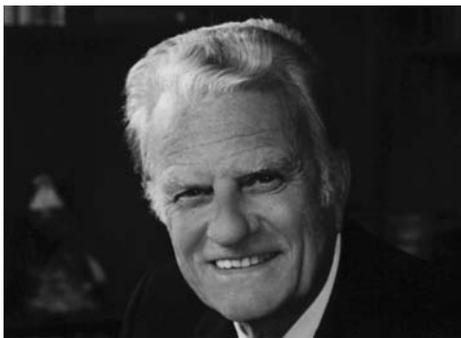


Photo: © Reuters/CORBIS



## Billy Graham and Global Evangelists

During his 1978 trip to Poland, the Reverend Billy Graham was scheduled to have tea with Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, but the cardinal was called suddenly to Rome by the death of Pope John Paul I. As Graham's plane landed in Warsaw, the cardinal's plane sat on the end of the runway, ready for takeoff.

In 1981, Graham traveled to the Vatican to meet Wojtyla, now Pope John Paul II. Graham—at that point director of over 260 Crusades on six continents—presented the pope with a carved wooden statue of a shepherd. I like to think of this moment as the passing of an evangelistic baton: Pope John Paul II, who by that time had already made twenty-one international trips, would eventually make 250 trips outside the Vatican to 130 nations. This is not to say that Graham ceased or even curtailed his ministerial travels. But I must believe there was a providential blessing in this first meeting between the most prolific preacher in history and the most evangelistic pope in history. Graham landed in Rome a seasoned evangelist as John Paul sat on the runway of his pontificate, ready for takeoff.

Together, these two men have evangelized more people than anyone else in history. Like the passing of John Paul II, Graham's latest (and likely his last) Crusade is a chance to reflect on the liberating force of the Gospel proclaimed by even one faithful man. Let alone two.

—David Michael Phelps

## Is the Acton Institute a Catholic Organization?

With this issue dedicated to John Paul II, it is timely to address a common misunderstanding that Acton is affiliated somehow with the Roman Catholic Church. Sometimes we are also asked whether Acton is linked to the Christian Reformed Church in North America because of the strong Dutch Calvinist presence in Grand Rapids, Mich., where the CRC and the Acton Institute are both based. In either case, the answer is no.

Acton has no ties with any particular church or religious community. That's not by accident—it's by design. The Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, ecumenical research and educational institute that conducts its affairs independently of any religious or political organization. In fact, as a nonprofit, Acton is legally barred by tax and election laws from engaging in political advocacy.

That said, Acton does have a strong component of Catholic scholars and leaders who have been associated with the institute's work during its 15-year history. Catholics include co-founders Rev. Robert Sirico and myself; Dr. Samuel Gregg, director of the Center for Academic Research; and Kishore Jayabalan, director of Acton's Rome office and a former Vatican policy analyst. Over the years, many of the writers, speakers, scholars, and advisors who have been involved in Acton's work were among the leading lights in Catholic social teaching: Michael Novak, George Weigel, Rocco Buttiglione, Cardinal Avery Dulles, Cardinal George Pell, Jennifer Roback Morse, and many more.

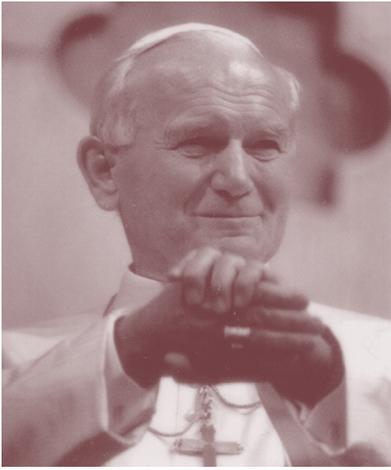
But Protestant scholarship and social teaching also informs much of Acton's work. The institute's *Journal of Markets & Morality* is edited by Stephen Grabill, a leading expert on natural law in the Protestant tradition. Protestant thinkers, speakers, and writers who have worked with Acton include Chuck Colson, Os Guinness, James Dobson, D. James Kennedy, and Carl F. H. Henry.

And as this issue of *Religion & Liberty* makes clear, we take seriously what Jewish thinkers have to say—our work is broader than Christianity alone.

Acton is engaged in what we might call “practical ecumenism” by drawing upon the best of various traditions to unite serious believers in defense of the human person and the building of a free and virtuous society.

Kris Mauren  
Executive Director





# John Paul II Remembers the Twentieth Century

by David Michael Phelps

In 1993, Pope John Paul II met with Polish philosophers Józef Tischner and Krzysztof Michalski to discuss the events of the twentieth century, namely the rise of Nazism and communism. The Holy Father revisited the transcripts from these conversations and added to his earlier thoughts, expounding on democracy, freedom, and the future of Europe. The resulting work is *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium*, published in March by Rizzoli. In what reads more like a father's letter to his children than a profoundly insightful work of philosophy, John Paul offers the church and the world a hopeful portrait of the human person and an astute evaluation of dangers past and present.

Although much time is spent condemning in detail Nazism, communism, and consumerism, John Paul traces the decline of Western civilization to more fundamental errors in human thought. He places a particular emphasis on the error of the Enlightenment philosophy that replaced God with human consciousness as the basis of reality: Descartes's "I think, therefore I am" violently shifted man to center stage, leaving God in the wings of culture. When man forgot God, he "remained alone: alone as creator of his own history and his own civilization; alone as one who decides what is good and what is bad, as one who would exist and operate *est Deus non daretur*, even if there were no God." The results of man's forgetfulness were not fully realized until the twentieth century, the

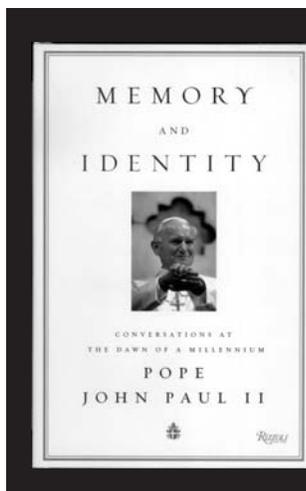
"theater" in which particular historical and ideological processes played out, leading toward that great 'eruption' of evil, but also...the setting for their defeat."

The defeat of Nazism and communism came through the unquenchable freedom in the spirits of those suppressed by these systems. But John Paul is quick to define this freedom as freedom for "a particular mission: to accomplish the truth about ourselves and the world." The attempt to accomplish this truth John Paul names culture, and it is in man's culture that he remembers his own identity. Thus man also remembers God, for man was made in the image and likeness of God.

The ultimate expression of man's identity is Christ, who fully cultured, or rather "cultivated," the truth of man in history. The truth of Christ is the center of culture, particularly in Europe, for "it was evange-

lization which formed Europe, giving birth to the civilization of its peoples and their cultures." Christ is also the center of the church's culture and the hope for Christian unity: at the Last Supper, Christ reminded the church to remember her identity when he commanded, "Do this in memory of me." In short, for church and civilization, to remember God is to remember man: "it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear."

"Without the Gospel," concludes John Paul, "man remains a dramatic question with no adequate answer." It might be said that when man attempted to answer the question of himself without the Gospel, the result was the destruction of the twentieth century. "Toward the end of the century," adds the pope, "those destructive forces were weakened, yet they left a trail



## Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium

by Pope John Paul II  
Rizzoli

192 pp. Hardcover: \$19.95  
ISBN 0-8478-2761-5

# Double-Edged Sword *of the Power and the Word*

“In what reads more like a father’s letter to his children than a profoundly insightful work of philosophy, John Paul offers the church and the world a hopeful portrait of the human person and an astute evaluation of dangers past and present.”

of devastation behind them...a devastation of consciences, with ruinous consequences in the moral sphere, affecting personal and social morality and the mores of family life...Sadly, one could describe Europe at the dawn of the new millennium as a continent of devastation.”

However, Europe knew similar devastation some 1,500 years ago, and there is great hope in the lessons of that history: Europe was renewed by spiritual revival, a revival led by a man not coincidentally named Benedict. The current Benedict, Pope Benedict XVI, identifies himself as “a humble servant in the vineyard of the Lord.” John Paul asks for as much in this last book, appealing for “laborers for this harvest that is ready and waiting to be reaped.” And while John Paul describes this harvest as an “enormous task,” he is hopeful. Liberty, culture, faith—all will be preserved: “In the love that pours forth from the heart of Christ, we find hope for the future of the world.”

*David Michael Phelps is the associate editor of publications at the Acton Institute.*

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## John 21:17–19

*[Jesus] said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go." (This he said to show by what death he was to glorify God.) And after this he said to him, "Follow me."*

On the occasion of his silver jubilee in 2003, Pope John Paul II said of this passage: “Every day that same dialogue between Jesus and Peter takes place in my heart.” For the world, the papacy is an office of authority, but for the pope himself, it is experienced as the blessed burden of discipleship. Pope John Paul II intimated as much just days before his election in 1978, preaching on John 21:

The succession of Peter, the summons to the office of the papacy, always contains within it a call to the highest love, to a very special love. And always, when Christ says to a man, “Come, follow me,” He asks him what He asked of Simon: “Do you love me more than do the others?” Then the heart of man must tremble. The heart of Simon trembled, and the heart of Albino Luciani, before he took the name John Paul I, trembled. A human heart must tremble, because in the question there is also a demand. You must love! You must love more than the others do, if the entire flock of sheep is to be entrusted to you, if the charge, “Feed my lambs, feed my sheep” is to reach the scope which it reaches in the calling and mission of Peter .... And so in this summons, directed to Peter by Christ after His Resurrection, Christ’s command, “Come, follow me,” has a double meaning. It is a summons to service and a summons to die.

“And so in this summons, directed to Peter by Christ after His Resurrection, Christ’s command, ‘Come, follow me,’ has a double meaning. It is a summons to service and a summons to die.”



# Days of History and Holiness: Reflections on April in Rome

by Kishore Jayabalan

The death and election of a pope are naturally global events, of interest far beyond the Catholic Church itself. But the death of Pope John Paul II was a global event also in the sense that the whole world was able to watch it unfold as it happened. Not only was the pope's death historic because of the stature of the man himself, but also because this first "media pope" was the first to die in our new 24/7 media environment of cable news and the Internet.

The sheer demand for news dominated the Roman skyline and streetscape for all of April, as makeshift studios were created to accommodate the thousands of journalists in town. And as one would expect in the marketplace of commentary, an equally vast supply of pundits appeared to offer their take on the unfolding events. Some of what was offered was ill-informed, but much was also knowledgeable and insightful. The Acton Institute was a key contributor—of the latter type, one hopes!

Acton's staff has a deep knowledge of the Vatican in general and the life of Pope John Paul II in particular. Before I joined Acton last January, I worked for five years at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace where I was able to see firsthand many Acton staff engaged in the intellectual life of the Holy See. That background proved essential during those April days when the world's attention was fixed on Rome.

It was a real joy to spend the month with Father Robert Sirico, who was an expert commentator for the BBC, covering both

the funeral of John Paul and the election of Pope Benedict XVI. Fr. Sirico, like other Acton staff, was constantly at work helping viewers understand what was really going on behind the chatter. Indeed, on the very day that Benedict was elected, Fr. Sirico was asked whether the cardinals were deadlocked, as they had failed to produce a new pope on the first three ballots! Always prepared, Fr. Sirico rattled off the comparative lengths of 20th century conclaves, by which standard the conclave of 2005 was normal. In fact, it turned out to be very short—as became clear that very afternoon.

Joining Fr. Sirico was Dr. Samuel Gregg, an author of a book on John Paul's thought, who came to Rome and did commentary for various cable outlets, as well as some work with the media from his native Australia. Back in the United States, Acton's Dr. Kevin Schmiesing and Rev. Jerry Zandstra were also interviewed by major broadcast and print outlets. Here in Rome—having barely settled into my new job—I also did a number of interviews on CNN, the BBC, Fox News, and even a few Asian networks.

Acton staff particularly stressed John Paul's contribution on questions of liberty in the political and economic sphere. Some attempts had been made to cast John Paul as something of a welfare-state advocate, railing against free markets and global trade. The truth is much different, and Acton's media appearances helped to point

out that John Paul was staunch defender of both political and economic liberty.

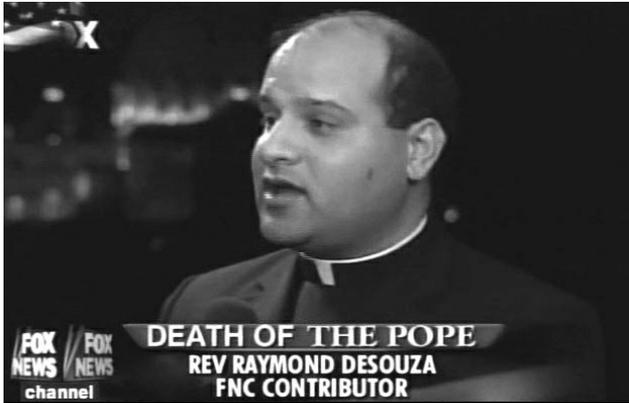
One such interview took place with an especially ignorant British anchor on CNN. I think he first thought the "liberty" the Acton Institute promoted had something to do with abortion or some other type of reproductive matter, which would have added yet another tiresome voice to the chorus complaining about John Paul's "rigid" stance on sexual mores. But once I told him we focused mainly on economic issues, he turned his guns on me from an-

"Acton's media appearances helped to point out that John Paul was staunch defender of both political and economic liberty."

other direction, incredulously asking whether anyone in his right mind could call the pope a capitalist or a free-trader.

I patiently suggested that the interviewer may want to read the 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, which of course he had never heard of. It should go without saying that the pope was no ideologue, but he did promote a certain vision of the market economy, one based on greater human freedom and responsibility and other

## Days of History and Holiness: Reflections on April in Rome



basics concerning our God-given human dignity. While we cannot simply presume the approach Pope Benedict will take on economic questions, it's highly probable he will continue what John Paul began. He was, after all, the long-time prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and would have reviewed encyclicals such as *Centesimus Annus*.

Many of the questions that came my way were of a personal nature, owing to the fact that I was baptized and confirmed by Pope John Paul in 1996, during the Easter Vigil Mass in St. Peter's Basilica. It was a particular honor for me to pay homage to the pope while his body was lying in state, nine years to the very day of that event. Doing so provided me a brief moment to say goodbye and thank you. Given that the pope's deepest legacy will consist of the effect he had on individual souls, it was understandable that people with stories like mine were sought out.

Another of my interviews on CNN took place the day after the pope died. On my way to the CNN stand, I ran into a priest friend who told me that whatever I was going to talk about, remember to mention Our Lady. I was asked to comment extemporaneously on the Regina Caeli prayer at

the end of the Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday. I spoke on the meaning of that prayer as well as the Angelus during which the pope would address the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square. From there the discussion shifted to the importance of Sunday, the role of women and the laity in the Church, and my previous experience

working for the Holy See at the United Nations, where we often battled on behalf of poor countries who were otherwise vulnerable to the more powerful secular ideologies found at that world body. The in-

*"All of us on hand in Rome were well aware that we were peripheral participants in a great historic moment."*

terview was a great opportunity to talk about the faith to a live global audience that happened to include simultaneously my family in Bangalore, India and Flint, Michigan!

"The world is different because of John Paul," wrote *Religion & Liberty's* new editor, Father Raymond de Souza, in his daily column for Canada's National Post. "But the world is only different because he changed people. History is not impersonal. History, because it is the story of God's mysterious love for His creation, is only personal. How

to measure the impact of Pope John Paul II? There are many ways, but it is only in the realm of the spirit that it will be truly known, calculation being the number of souls set afire, of hearts touched, of lives converted."

Fr. de Souza described the period as "days of history and holiness." All of us on hand in Rome were well aware that we were peripheral participants in a great historic moment. All acknowledge that John Paul changed history and left the world more free.

It was great to hear, especially early in the month-long coverage, so many young, enthusiastic, orthodox, and generally appealing voices of the John Paul II generation—we formed a sort of on-the-air "army" in service of the pope and the Church! Unfortunately, the old media finally figured us out as much too positive and hopeful, so they eventually returned to form, relying on their tired, often "Catholic" advocates of homosexuality, abortion, women priests, and the like.

I suppose it was natural for those accustomed to looking at everything through the lens of secular politics and the labels of "conservative" and "liberal." At the same time, what was going on there was a religious event, and in the end it was John Paul's holiness that drew the crowds more than his teachings on this or that issue. It was simply a blessing to be there.

*Kishore Jayabalan is the director of the Acton Institute's Rome office, officially called "Istituto Acton."*

*To view clips of the Acton staff in Rome, please visit our Web site at [www.acton.org/press](http://www.acton.org/press).*





*Interview cont'd from page 3*

**Glendon:** All of them! In its first ten years, the Academy concentrated mainly on three areas where it seemed to us that new developments posed acute challenges for the human family, for policy makers, for the social sciences, and for Catholic social thought: the changing world of work, the risks and opportunities presented by globalization, and the dilemmas of democracy.

Last year, we held our first Plenary Session on a new topic to which we gave the name “intergenerational solidarity.”

Our aim in taking up this subject was to move well beyond standard debates over the “welfare crisis” and to focus on the deeper, underlying crisis of meanings and values. Changes in family behavior are fueling, and being fueled by, changes in ideas about dependency, the human person, and family life that have far-reaching implications for the human prospect—for the world’s experiments in self-government, for the health of economies, for human rights, and for the future of our social and natural environments.

By lifting up the concept of “solidarity,” we sought to challenge solutions based on conflict models that are grounded in flawed concepts of personhood and society. With our reference to “ecology,” we signaled that we would be searching for ways to shift probabilities in favor of keeping the human person at the center of concern. With the help of some remarkable guest experts such as Francis Fukuyama and Jacques Vallin (head of the French Nation-

al Demographic Institute), we emerged with a set of findings that we hope will be helpful to policy makers around the world as they grapple with the problems posed by declining birthrates and greater longevity.

*Continental European religious thinking has often been suspicious of economic liberty. Has that been discussed in the work of the Academy?*

**Glendon:** Our diversity of membership, one of the greatest strengths of the Academy, also poses one of our greatest challenges. Our thirty-three members from five continents mirror the Church’s fascinating universality and the vast breadth of her concerns. Each is a specialist in at least one of the human sciences, and many have held high public office in their own countries. As one may imagine, it has not been easy for this diverse group of men and women to learn to communicate across disciplinary, cultural, and linguistic boundaries! But in ten years we have made great progress, educating and being educated by each other.

Where economic liberty is concerned, I believe we have all benefited from hearing a wide range of perspectives. One principle upon which I believe we all agree is that stated in Pope John Paul II’s address to our first Plenary Session: “The economy, systems of production and exchange, the State, and rights are always at the service of the concrete individual and not the other way round.” I wish I could say we have found the key to the central puzzle he posed—how to provide a “moral and juridical framework” to discipline, without stifling, the creative energies of the market. But to use an expression of Abraham Lincoln, that is a hard nut to crack.

*Many social scientists—at least in North America—are often hostile to religion, considering it something to “overcome” in the building of a more equitable, just society. Has the Academy’s work changed any minds in this regard?*

**Glendon:** It is always difficult to determine

the effects of scholarly work, especially since a change of mind often takes place over a long period of time. But it is encouraging to note that our work has been respectfully received in secular circles. The Academy’s Report on Intergenerational Solidarity, for example, was presented to the U.S. President’s Council on Bioethics and may have been one of the factors that influenced the Council to expand its agenda to include consideration of the ethical dilemmas facing an aging society.

“In its first ten years, the Academy concentrated mainly on three areas where it seemed to us that new developments posed acute challenges ... the changing world of work, the risks and opportunities presented by globalization, and the dilemmas of democracy.”

What can be said with certainty about the influence of the Academy is that it helps to train the spotlight on the human dimensions of social issues—dimensions that are too often ignored by value-free, or purely secular, social scientists. Our work has been aided in this respect by features that set us apart from other learned academies: our international character and the fact that each of our topics is discussed from a variety of perspectives—economics, law, demography, political science, sociology, education, and of course its relation to Catholic social doctrine.

*How did John Paul II, who chose you to head the Holy See delegation to the 1995 Beijing Conference, influence your own work as a social scientist?*

**Glendon:** As a specialist in comparative law, I have concentrated most of my

“One principle upon which I believe we all agree is that stated in Pope John Paul II’s address to our first Plenary Session: ‘The economy, systems of production and exchange, the State, and rights are always at the service of the concrete individual and not the other way round.’”

research on how the legal systems of various North Atlantic countries handle a broad range of problems in the fields of labor law, property, family law, and constitutional law. My methods were heavily influenced by the legal-sociological work of my teacher Max Rheinstein who was a student of Max Weber. The experience of representing the Holy See at the Beijing Conference prompted me to broaden my horizons to include developing nations and to intensify my work in the field of human rights.

In the 1980s, when I began to read the writings of John Paul II, I had the sense of someone giving expression and structure to ideas I had only vaguely formulated. I realized with some amazement how many of the topics I thought I had randomly chosen for comparative analysis were central to Catholic social thought. The pope’s mode of thinking about these topics was so congenial to me that I wanted to be actively engaged in working along the lines he was opening. What had the most galvanizing effect on me, though, were his writ-

ings on the role of the laity. He reminded all of us laypeople that in baptism we received a vocation not only to holiness but to evangelization. Then he told us that we, the laity, were to be in the forefront of the New Evangelization—and that we should carry out that mission in the secular sphere, using all our gifts and talents wherever we find ourselves. No excuses. That was a real wake-up call.



**Further Reading:** Publications of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences listed are available at [www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_academies](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_academies).

The Study of the Tension Between Human Equality and Social Inequalities From the Perspective of the Various Social Sciences. First Plenary Session, 24–26 November 1994, Vatican City, 1996, 229 pp.

The Future of Labor and Labor in the Future. Second Plenary Session, 20–23 March 1996, Vatican City, 1998, 422 pp.

The Right To Work: Towards Full Employment. Third Plenary Session, 23–26 April 1997, Vatican City, 1998, 370 pp.

Democracy. Some Acute Questions. Fourth Plenary Session, 22–25 April 1998, Vatican City, 1999, 452 pp.

nary Session, 3–6 March 1999, Vatican City, 1999, 345 pp.

Democracy—Reality and Responsibility. Sixth Plenary Session, 23–26 February 2000, Vatican City, 2001, 423 pp.

Globalization: Ethical and Institutional Concerns. Seventh Plenary Session, 25–28 April 2001, Vatican City, 2001, 408 pp.

Intergenerational Solidarity. Eighth Plenary Session, 8–13 April 2002, Vatican City, 2002, 251 pp.

The Governance of Globalization. Ninth Plenary Session, 2–6 May 2003, Vatican City, 2004, 408 pp.

Intergenerational Solidarity, Welfare and Human Ecology. Tenth Plenary Session, 29 April–3 May 2004, Vatican City, 2004, 440 pp.

Social Dimensions of Globalization. Workshop, 21–22 February 2000, Vatican City, 2000, 95 pp.

Globalization and Inequalities. Proceedings of the Colloquium, 8–9 April 2002, Vatican City, 2002, 194 pp.

The Meaning of the Priority of Labor. Forum, 5 May 2003, Vatican City, 2004, 112 pp.

Democracy in Debate: Reports, Final Proceedings and Final Document, Vatican City, 2005, 320 pp.



Towards Reducing Unemployment. Fifth Ple-

## Karol Wojtyla [1920–2005]

Long before he became Pope John Paul II, Karol Wojtyla (b. 1920) had identified the center of his life's work: The Christian defense of the human person. His defense of human liberty, properly understood, led to the spread of that same liberty behind the Iron Curtain. And his defense of human dignity was part of the same Christian vision. Papal biographer George Weigel sums up Karol Wojtyla's defense of the person, that lies at the heart of the liberal tradition:

As he had written to Henri de Lubac in 1968, Wojtyla believed that *the crisis of modernity involved a "degradation, indeed ... a pulverization, of the fundamental uniqueness of each human person."* Communism was one obvious, dangerous, and powerful expression of this crisis, as Nazism and fascism had been. But the dehumanization of the human world took place in other ways, and it could happen in free societies. Whenever

another human being was reduced to an object for manipulation—by a manager, a shop foreman, a scientific researcher, a politician, or a lover—"the pulverization of the fundamental uniqueness of each human person" was taking place. What Wojtyla used to de-

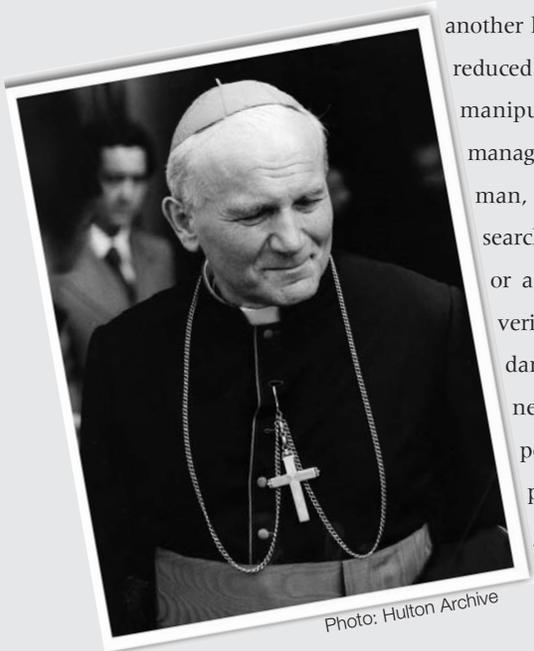


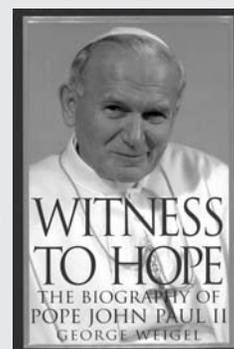
Photo: Hulton Archive

*"Wojtyla believed that the crisis of modernity involved a 'degradation, indeed ... a pulverization, of the fundamental uniqueness of each human person.'"*

scribe to his social ethics classes as "utilitarianism," making "usefulness to me" the sole criterion of human relationships, was another grave threat to the human future. It was not a threat with nuclear weapons, secret police, and a Gulag archipelago, but it was dangerous, and part of the reason was that it was less obvious.

Challenging whatever "pulverizes" the unique dignity of every human person is the leitmotif that runs like a bright thread through the pontificate of John Paul II and gives it singular coherence. His papacy has been a one-act drama, although different adversaries have taken center stage at different moments in the script. The dramatic tension remains the same throughout: the tension between various false humanisms that degrade the humanity they claim to defend and exalt, and the true humanism to which the biblical vision of the human person is a powerful witness.

(From *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*, 1999)





## Papal Economics 101: Freedom and Truth

Where did Pope John Paul II stand on economic issues? The same place he stood on all other issues involving the well-being of the human person.

He favored the rights and dignity of all people, freedom to work and to create, an environment of security that permits the flourishing of faith. He had faith in freedom and no love for the grand secular state. Thus did this pope understand that human dignity implies non-socialist political and economic structures, which are commonly known as the business economy.

He was a fierce critic of socialism and worked to bring about its end in Eastern Europe. He saw the merit of the institutional arrangements commonly called capitalistic: protection of private property, the freedom of trade, the enforcement of contract, the right of economic initiative, and the social merit of a growing economy essential to support a rising population.

Whenever I've made these claims in any kind of public forum, I'm immediately hit with a barrage of objections to the effect that John Paul II also criticized American consumerism, worried about the effects of globalization on the poor, called for the forgiveness of loans to poor countries, backed labor unions—all positions uncharacteristic of an uncritical backer of the American capitalist state. To this, I can only respond: True indeed, and note that none of the claims above contradict his essential conclusion that socialism and socialist institutions are incompatible with freedom and dignity, whereas institutions of the business economy are just so compatible.

To be sure, individuals and institutions must also use their freedom within the marketplace in a manner consistent with virtue and in accord with the common good. The business economy is a necessary but not sufficient condition; what is crucial from the point of view of comparative systems, however, is that the pope taught that it was necessary.

"The modern business economy has positive aspects," he wrote. "Its basis is human freedom exercised in the economic

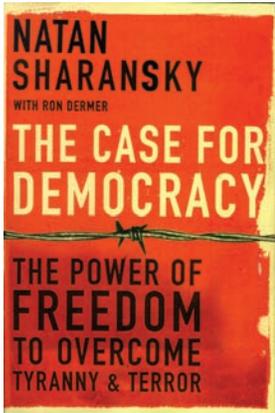
field, just as it is exercised in many other fields. Economic activity is indeed but one sector in a great variety of human activities, and like every other sector, it includes the right to freedom, as well as the duty of making responsible use of freedom." Again, he says, "it would appear that, on the level of individual nations and of international relations, the free market is the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs."

It is a particular contribution of John Paul II to have introduced the "right of economic initiative" into the theological vocabulary. "It should be noted," writes the pope, "that in today's world, among other rights, the right of economic initiative is often suppressed. Yet it is a right which is important not only for the individual but also for the common good. Experience shows us that the denial of this right, or its limitation in the name of an alleged 'equality' of everyone in society, diminishes, or in practice absolutely destroys the spirit of initiative, that is to say the creative subjectivity of the citizen."

"It is a particular contribution of John Paul II to have introduced the 'right of economic initiative' into the theological vocabulary."

For a strong economics education, I cannot recommend too highly John Paul II's 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, which discusses the division of labor, property, prices, profits, debate, development, sound money, trade, the environment, and a host of other issues, all with the desire to teach and encourage more freedom. He said he had no models to present or endorse, but what he did offer was a higher ideal that challenges all nations in the world to reject the failed economics of planned states and embrace total freedom, including an economic freedom, directed towards the truth.

*Rev. Robert A. Sirico is president of the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion & Liberty in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*



## The Case for Democracy: The Power of Freedom to Overcome Tyranny and Terror

by Natan Sharansky • Public Affairs Press, New York • 303 pp. \$26.95

### Review by Rev. Johannes Jacobse

During the height of the Cold War, former President Ronald Reagan caused a firestorm of protest when he branded the Soviet Union as the “evil empire.” Liberals and progressives spared no criticism of Reagan blaming him for increasing tensions between the U.S. and its communist rival.

Years later a different story emerged. Natan Sharansky, a Russian scientist serving a nine-year jail term for organizing critics of the Soviet regime, took Reagan’s statement as the first crack of light exposing the communist darkness. Sharansky writes:

One day my Soviet jailers gave me the privilege of reading “Pravda.” Splashed across the front page was a condemnation of President Reagan for having the temerity to call the Soviet Union an “evil empire.” Tapping on walls and talking through toilets, word of Reagan’s “provocation” quickly spread through the prison. The dissidents were ecstatic. Finally the leader of the free world had spoken the truth—a truth that burned within the hearts of each and every one of us.

Sharansky argues that the critics were wrong because they didn’t understand that oppressed people long for freedom. When totalitarian oppression is named as the evil that it is, particularly by the leaders of free nations, those under the tyrannical boot are infused with a hope that can vanquish oppression.

Sharansky writes that generally there are two types of societies in the world: 1) societies where citizens can “express their views without fear of arrest, imprisonment, or punishment; and 2) societies that prohibit the free expression of ideas altogether.

Fear societies always have a number of true believers, but mostly the fear creates a kind of “doublethink” where a citizen acts and thinks one way in public and another in private. The rulers maintain a constant state of anxiety by manufacturing external threats (North Korea or Cuba to the U.S., for example), in order to advance a climate of legitimacy for the regime.

Western societies can foster freedom and thereby ensure a more peaceful world by linking their diplomatic and economic

initiatives to the internal workings of oppressive regimes, especially regarding human rights, Sharansky argues. He draws on his own experience as a Soviet dissident (“I owe my freedom to Ronald Reagan”) to argue that such linkage empowers the dissidents to start changing the regime from within.

Sharansky writes that because democracy is a morally superior form of government, free nations should encourage democracy around the world. Recognizing this superiority brings “moral clarity” into the relationships with non-democratic regimes.

This moral appeal is perhaps the most notable characteristic of Sharansky’s book and where many critics raise objections. They argue that not all authoritarian regimes have expansionist designs and question whether countries with no democratic tradition can build democratic cultural institutions. They correctly note that Sharansky emphasizes individual rights over the development of democratic institutions in his definition of democracy.

The democratic West needs to recover its lost faith in democracy and recognize that an absence of dissent does not imply acquiescence towards the oppressor by the oppressed, Sharansky warns. It must avoid the sins of such Western luminaries as George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, or *New York Times* correspondent Walter Duranty, who praised the Soviet Union even as the bodies piled around them.

Sharansky will no doubt receive a fair share of criticism for its unabashed support of democracy. More discerning critics will examine how feasible Sharansky’s thesis is in practice.

Nevertheless, the emphasis of *The Case for Democracy* on the moral superiority of democracy affirms the essential truth that freedom and morality work together. Morality cannot be separated from politics. Sharansky challenges the stupefying moral relativism that informs so many discussions about freedom and oppression with a moral clarity difficult to find elsewhere. Anyone who cherishes freedom will gain from reading it.

—Rev. Johannes Jacobse is the editor of *OrthodoxyToday.org* and the pastor at St. Katherine’s Greek Orthodox Church in Naples, Florida.