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JOHN ALLEN – A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

BISHOP TOM GUMBLETON

Most of us who are gathered here this afternoon, I'm sure, have been readers of the National Catholic Reporter over the decades that it's been published; and so many of us, I am sure, are very familiar with John Allen, since he's written for that newspaper over many of those years that it's been in existence. And I'm very happy to be able to welcome him here in the name of all of us this afternoon.

John worked for the Reporter here in the States until 2000; and that year he went to Rome to establish a Rome office. I guess the editors of the Reporter figured there might be an elephant or two in Rome (laughter) that could be surfaced and written about and discussed. And so he was actually very good at doing that; and he covered many items from the Rome office over the past seven or eight years that it was in existence; and among those, he was able to write about the sexual scandal in the Catholic Church from the perspective of Rome, especially as it was being experienced here in the United States, but also in other countries of the world.

John also covered the – and he did this very well, I thought – the efforts of Pope John Paul II to prevent the second Persian Gulf War that our nation has engaged in. The attempts of John Paul to prevent that war, I don't think, were so well known in our country, certainly not through the secular media. But John did a lot of work in making sure that people here knew that the leader of the Catholic Church in Rome was very opposed to what our nation was doing, and tried to prevent it from happening. He also covered, of course, the funeral of John Paul II and the elevation of Cardinal Ratzinger to the papacy, and continued to cover Rome for the people of the United States through the Catholic Reporter until the year 2006. He came to live in the U. S. again, in New York, and established an office there for the Reporter. And from that perspective he covers not only what happens here in the U. S. for the Catholic Reporter, but also what happens in various parts of the world, and does that still from a perspective of Rome.

He keeps us informed about what is happening with the Catholic Church from its main headquarters in the city of Rome, and especially from the papal point of view. John is the author of a number of books: one about Opus Dei, and another about Pope Benedict XVI, and continues from his office in New York to cover what is happening with the Catholic Church in the United States and throughout the world. And so he's very well qualified to speak to us today on global perspectives of the U. S. Catholic Church in a global perspective; and so I thank him for coming, and welcome him, and ask you to join me in that welcome this afternoon. (Applause)

THE U. S. CATHOLIC CHURCH: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

JOHN ALLEN

Ladies and gentlemen, I am here today to talk to you about no less prodigious a subject than the future of the Catholic Church. In order to ease us into that topic, I would like to begin today with a story. As you know, Jesus always began his public teaching with a parable; and what better example is there than that.

So my story concerns a guy who was at roughly my stage of life, that is, his mid forties, and he is going through that absolutely inevitable mid-life crises. And the particular way this guy decides to respond to his crises is that he decides to physically rejuvenate himself. So he seeks out the best plastic surgeon in town, and he has the works: face lift; a tummy tuck, the whole deal. He gets those human growth hormone therapy treatments that are suppose to rejuvenate your skin; he takes those anti-oxidant injections that are suppose to combat the free radicals in your brain; goes to a gym; takes out a membership; pumps iron. So now he is buff and trim, and he is feeling absolutely terrific about the results, and decides he wants to

“Strut his stuff.” So he goes to the local Barnes and Noble, picks up a couple of youth oriented magazines, gets in line, pays his money, and as he is checking out, asks the clerk, “By the way, would you mind telling me how old you think I am?” So the clerk looks at him and says “Mmm! I don’t know; I would say late twenties, early thirties, something like that.” He says, “You know, I’m actually forty seven years old.” The clerk says, “That’s amazing. You look fantastic. How do you do it? What’s your secret?”

The guy is feeling terrific and he wants to do it again. So he leaves the Barnes and Noble and goes to the McDonald’s that’s next door. Now it’s lunch rush, so he waits in line, gets up to the counter, orders his whatever – his Happy Meal (laughter) – and the teenager who was taking his money: he looks at the teen and asks, “By the way, just out of curiosity, would you mind telling me how old do you think I am?” So the teen looks the guy up and down, and says, “I don’t know; I’d put you at around thirty, thirty-five.” The guy says, “You know, I’m actually forty seven.” The teen says, “That’s amazing; my God! I hope I look that good when I’m your age.”

Okay. Now he’s on cloud nine; and he wants one last jolt of affirmation. So he walks out of the McDonalds, walks around for a while, and finally, at the end of that block, he sees a bus stop; and there’s a cluster of people around the bus stop. So he walks up to one elderly woman who is standing there, and says, “Excuse me, mam, sorry to disturb you; but would you just humor me? Would you mind telling me how old you think I am?” She said, “Well, I’ll tell you what; if you take off all of your clothes, run around in a circle, and bark like a dog, I’ll tell you how old you are.” (Laughter) Well, that’s a little weird; but he’s determined enough to know if he can beat the system; and so he does it. He takes off all of his clothes; runs around in a circle; he’s baying at the moon – you know, people are going nuts; they’re calling the cops – and then, just as absolute chaos is about to break out, he stops, and he walks up to the woman, and he says, “Okay, I did it. How old am I?” She says, “Well, I tell you: you’re forty seven years old.” He says, “That is amazing!” He is flabbergasted. He says, “How do you possibly know that? How does it work?” She says, “I’ll tell you how it works. I was behind you in line at the McDonald’s.” (Much laughter)

Morale of the story, ladies and gentlemen, is this: beware of anyone who stands before you claiming to possess esoteric means of revealing the essentially unknown. (Laughter) Because if you take them too seriously, you’re going to end up naked, running around in a circle and barking like a dog. (Laughter)

Now look! I do not cast horoscopes. I don’t read tea leaves. I am not schooled in the study of animal entrails. Honestly, I have no better claim to know the future of Roman Catholicism than anyone else does; but I would nevertheless insist that this effort to try to look down the line at what might be coming is justified, because what it does: that it imposes a certain kind of framework through which we can see the present, that is, what it forces us to do is to try to sort through all the fluxam and jetsam’s that’s out there, that vast ocean of isolated events, headlines and developments that are constantly whooshing across all of our individual radar screens, and to try to get our hands around those forces that seem most elementary, most primary, most, if you like, pregnant with consequence in terms of shaping the future of the Catholic Church. And that’s what I am going to do with you here today through the device of what I call megatrends in Catholicism. This is my own attempt to try to enumerate those forces, to me, that seem the most consequential in terms of shaping the Catholic future.

Megatrends

Now my full list of megatrends actually runs to ten; today, in the interest of time, we are going to only talk about four. So, if you want the skinny on the other six, you’re gonna have to wait until the book comes out later this year; and, by the way, never too early to be thinking about holidays and birthdays and anniversaries and ordinations. (Much laughter) You know, this is the gift that keeps on giving. Just for your information, the six megatrends I am not going to talk about are:

- Islam
- The new demography, change in global demographics
- Globalization
- Ecology
- Multi-polarism, by which I mean, particularly, the rise of China and India in the 21st century
- Pentecostalism.

So just have that in the back of your mind, if you want to ask about any of that in Q & A, I'd be happy to address it.

1. So a bit of prologama today number one is: take any future forecast with a grain of salt; but its real value is what it tells us about the present.
2. A bit of prologama number two is this: what we are engaged in today is a descriptive rather than prescriptive exercise, and this is important, so I want to compact it for you.

I am not standing before you today to argue that these megatrends or those forces that should be shaping the Catholic future, okay? In other words, this is not John Allen's private vision of a utopian Church, okay? Instead, I'm trying to offer on the basis of the best reporting, and observation, and analysis that I can muster, my own sense of those forces that really are shaping the Catholic vision. And I say that, because it is important to frame this properly, because the natural temptation in this kind of conversation is for our first reaction to be, well gee, I really don't like that second megatrend, or gosh I love that fourth one and what can we do to sort of push it along. And that would be a terrific conversation, but it is not today's conversation okay? So what I'm inviting you to do today is to sort of turn off that evaluative side of your brain, to resist that temptation to immediately pass judgment. Instead let's sort of think like analysts and just try to let the reality reveal itself to us first okay before we decide what we think about it. Alright, clear enough? All right with that; let's get into the meat of it.

Emergence of a World Church

Our first megatrend is what I call the emergence of a World Church. The famed Jesuit theologian, Karl Rahner, said that the last significance of the Vatican Council would be that it would be the first time that Catholicism reflected upon itself theologically as a truly global family of faith, and no longer a primarily European phenomenon. And I think what has happened demographically in the Catholic Church during the 20th century lends sort of sociological reality to that statement. And that's what this chart is meant to communicate. This is what happened to the Catholic population worldwide in the 20th century: As you can see we began the century in 1900 with a global Catholic population of 266 million people, of whom 200 million lived in Europe and North America – that's the orange bar – and just 66 million in the entire rest of the world. Okay? This is before the population explosion of the 20th century. Most of that 66 million was in Latin America.

Just 100 years later, here's what's happened: in 2000 there were 1.1 billion Catholics in the world, of whom just 380 million lived in Europe and North America, and 720 million lived in the rest of the world – that's Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Another way of sort of trying to encapsulate what happened is that: in 1900, just 25% of the global Catholic population lived in the global south; by 2000 it was 65.5% - that's 2/3 of every Catholic man, woman and child alive. And most projections are that somewhere around 2025, that will be 75%; in other words, three fourths of all the Catholics in the world will live in the global south. This ladies and gentlemen is the most rapid, most sweeping, most complete demographic transformation of Roman Catholicism in its 2000 years of history.

Now the list here on your left is intended simply to break this out in terms of largest Catholic countries in terms of population. As you can see, as of 2007, five of the ten largest Catholic countries in the world were in the global South, including Brazil and Mexico in the top two places. The list on the bottom projects this forward to 2050. And what we see is that Brazil and Mexico will still occupy the two top spots. Philippines will have moved into the third position. We will remain in the fourth. What is truly significant is: that for the first time, three African nations will take their place on this list: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and Nigeria. And I think in terms of symbolism, in terms of what's happening, it is worth noting that the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda will replace Spain and Poland in terms of top ten Catholic nations; and if you think about the centrality of Spain and Poland to Catholic history, I think that gives you some sense of what is happening. In other words, folks, what August Kampf once said, "Demography is Destiny", and inevitably, imagination, leadership and energy in the Church will follow population; and increasingly, it will be the global South that will set the tone in terms of where Catholicism goes in the 21st century.

Now obviously, the question that begs is: what is that going to mean? And let me say that, anytime, anyone stands before you peddling generalizations about 720 million people, you need to take this with an

enormous grain of salt, because any big picture statement I could make about Catholicism in the South will literally have millions and in some cases tens of millions even hundreds of millions of exceptions. Nevertheless, I would argue that these four points do hold up as generalizations about the kinds of things we hear from our brothers and sisters in the South:

- **Point 1.** By and large, you will find that southern Catholicism, by our northern standards, often comes off as quite morally conservative, and quite politically liberal. Now, let me just say, I don't like this taxonomy of liberal and conservative, in general. I think it is particularly unhealthful when talking about the South, because the truth is: these are not their categories; and yet, I think at a kind of big picture level, I do think it communicates something; and so I am going to use it here. So what I mean by morally conservative is this: on those kind of hot button moral issues that we sometimes call the cultural ones – things like abortion, homosexuality, divorce, gender rules – those kinds of issues, by and large, the preponderance of opinion in the southern Catholic Church, as in southern Christianity generally, tends to come off to us as pretty conservative, fairly traditionalist.

We see this very clearly today, for example, in the crises in the Anglican communion, where you have a progressive Episcopal Church in the States; and in Canada, in the Anglican Church in Canada and elsewhere, that is pressing ahead with the ordination of a gay bishop, and with the blessing of same sex unions, and all of that, is being resisted very strongly by Anglican leaders in the global South, particularly in Latin American and Africa. And by the way, folks, of the 79 million Anglicans in the world today, a majority now live in the South. In fact there are more Anglicans in Africa than there are in Great Britain. There are more practicing Anglicans in the nation of Nigeria alone than there are in Great Britain. So that's one arena in which we see this difference playing itself out.

And yet, once you change the subject from those moral questions to things that we would think of as more political or social or economic questions – things like race relations, global poverty, the ethics of globalization, ecology, war and peace, the efforts against HIVAs, and those kinds of issues – what you will find is that main stream, meat and potatoes, opinion in the global South tends to be considerably to the left by our northern standards; for example: the overwhelming, the overwhelming, consensus in global Catholicism was against the U. S. led war in Iraq. Another way I try to put this is: that my experience of interviewing southern bishops and theologians is that they tend to talk about the World Bank and the IMF the same way our bishops often talk about Planned Parenthood – that is, like the central debt in the war of the Catholic Church.

And so, with those kinds of issues, what you find is the message tends to be considerably progressive again by our northern standards. Okay, so it is an intriguing mix in some ways, a very traditionalist positions on questions of personal morality and very progressive positions on questions of the military, social policy, economics and so forth.

- **Point 2.** The point of departure for the thought world of southern Catholicism is clearly the Bible, as opposed to abstract speculative theology; that it's, the thought world of the New Testament, rather than assume the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas. Among other things, this means that things like miracles, signs and wonders, healing, demonic possession, and exorcism – you know, by our standards – can sometimes seem quaint or exotic or antiquated. **Not so** in most of the global South. These are the things of daily spiritual and pastoral experience. The supernatural is close, it's tangible, it's palpable, and that very much is part of the heart of the southern Catholic, the southern Christian outlook.
- **Third.** The problems the southern Catholic Church faces are very much problems of growth rather than problems of decline. And I know this seems counter intuitive to us; because as we look around and we see declining vocations to the priesthood, and we see clustering of parishes, and we struggle to pass on the faith to the next generation, it's easy for us to assume that's the global Catholic story, but, ladies and gentlemen, it is not.

Take Africa in the 20th century: sub-Saharan Africa went from a Catholic population in 1900 of 1.9 million to a Catholic population in 2000 of a 139 million. Folks, that is a growth rate of 6,708%. Okay? Sit with that figure for a moment: 6,708%. I was in Nigeria last March, in southeastern Nigeria, in Enugue, there is a seminary, the Bignal Memorial Seminary. It is the largest Catholic seminary in the world; its current student population is 1200 – that is roughly a quarter of all the seminarians currently in the United States. And that's not the only major seminary in Nigeria, by the way; there are seven others in the country. I interviewed the rectors of several of these seminaries; and they told me their basic problem is they cannot build facilities fast enough to accommodate all the young men who are coming forward to discern a vocation to the priesthood.

And, by the way, folks – we'll talk about this more in a moment – but this does not mean there is a priest surplus in Africa, or anywhere else; because the reality is, they are baptizing people even more rapidly than they're ordaining them. So this notion that sometimes floats around out there that the solution to our priest shortage is going to be importing priests from other parts of the world is a pipe dream. You know, it's a pipe dream. It's a pipe dream, number one, because it's bad ecclesiology; because we don't want to dislodge responsibility for producing vocations to somebody else. But, number two, practically because most of these priests are needed at home to minister to rapidly expanding flocks. The point is: the basic problems of the day to day reality that they are dealing with are the byproducts of rapid growth, and trying to consolidate that growth.

- **Fourth.** What you'll find about southern Catholicism is that bishops, theologians, lay activists, and so on, tend to play a very strong and very direct political role in these societies; that by our northern standards of church-state separation sometimes seem a little excessive. Give you a case in point: the Lenten Pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops of Zimbabwe. Now this letter did not say that we as bishops want to offer some points to illuminate the consciousness of our citizens, which is the kind of language that our bishops would use; instead, they said directly to President Mugabe, "It is time to pack your bags and get out." Okay? No ifs, ands and buts about it.

Now what explains the difference? I think it's this: in many societies in the global south, where you have, as in Zimbabwe, where you have an actual dictatorship, or where you have functional one-party states, where the whole political class is corrupt, often, churches, religious groups, tend to be the only zones of life where an authentic civil society can take root, where an authentic voice attentive to the common good can be heard. Okay? So the result is that religious leaders tend to get drawn into playing these strong political roles in ways that would seem somewhat odd to us, somewhat counter-intuitive. My point, folks, is that if you thought the 2004 elections in the United States and the whole business about communion for pro-choice politicians, and all that, if you thought that was turbulent, that was a tea party compared to the kinds of church state clashes we are likely to see in the 21st century, as this much more robust ethos of political engagement from Catholic leaders take shape.

The Rise of Evangelical Catholicism

So if that megatrend has to do with the mobile South; our second megatrend has to do more with the global North, particularly Europe and North America. Our second megatrend is what I call the rise of Evangelical Catholicism. And here I am obviously borrowing a term from our Protestant brothers and sisters, and then, sort of, applying it in a Catholic content. I would define evangelical Catholicism in terms of these three characteristics:

- First of all, a strong emphasis on traditional Catholic identity – those traditional markers that have set Catholics apart. So our traditional language, our traditional worship, our traditional devotions – all of those things that have throughout the ages defined what it is to be Catholic. So a strong emphasis on revival of all of that.
- Second, a strong public proclamation of that identity, because that is the essence, after all, of being evangelical. You don't hide your faith under a bushel basket; you shout it from the rooftops.
- And then, third, faith is treated very much as a matter of personal choice rather than something you can buy from families, and neighborhoods, and schools, and so on. And in that sense, evangelical Catholicism is sort of creature of secularization, because precisely what secularization has done,

that it has eroded those traditionally, homogenous, Catholic neighborhoods and schools, and so on. So in that sense, we have to understand Evangelical Catholicism, both as a product of, and a response to secularization. And where we see secularization in its most acute form today, of course, is contemporary Europe. And this slide is intended to make that point. So the slide on the left is the result of the most recent Pugh global attitudes project in 2002. What the Pugh people did was go around to the people in sixteen countries and ask them to what extent religion is a very important force in their life. And these are the results; you can see what people said:

- In Indonesia, the world's largest Moslem country, 95% of the population said "Yes, religion is very important to me."
- In Nigeria, a country that is basically divided 50-50 between Christians and Muslims, 92% said "Yes, religion is very important."
- Guatemala, an overwhelming Christian nation, 80% said "Religion is very important."
- The U. S. clocks in at a still respectable 59%.
- But look what happens when we get into Europe:
 - Poland, Poland ladies and gentlemen: just 36%.
 - Italy, the headquarters of Roman Catholicism Incorporated: 27%.
 - Germany, the birthplace of the Protestant Reformation: 21%.
 - Russia, the cradle of Orthodoxy: 14%.
 - France, the eldest daughter of the church: 11%.
 - And the Czech Republic, the home of the Bohemian Reformation: 11%.

The point is: contemporary Europe is more or less at the opposite end of the spectrum from most of the rest of the world in terms of the vitality of religious faith and practice.

And the data on the other side of the slide sort of tightens the focus to one contemporary European nation, Great Britain and makes the same point. So this is from the most recent general public value survey in Great Britain. What it finds is that in contemporary England:

- If you have two religious parents, that is, if two religious parents that go to religious services at least once a week and profess religious belief, the odds that those two parents will produce a child who is also religious: 47% - basically it's a 50-50 shot.
- The odds of a family in which one parent is religious will raise a religious child drops by another factor of half: down to the 24%.
- And the odds that two secular parents will raise a child who is religious is statistically insignificant: 3%.

So one of Great Britain's best religious sociologists, Nick Velez, from the University of Manchester, draws the obvious conclusion: in Great Britain today, institutional religion has a half life of one generation; and it is decaying at a rate of basically 50%, whatever generation it passes. Now if that is the social reality in contemporary Europe, and bear in mind folks, we dare not forget that for all of its pretense to being global and all, of its alleged cosmopolitanism, the Vatican is still very much a European institution. And so, this is the reality they see outside their window and so on.

It should be no surprise that policy is being driven in the Church, sort of above all, in many ways, by the desire to make sure that Catholicism is not assimilated to and seduced by this secularized, relativized milieu. And so, the response is a ferocious emphasis today on consolidating Catholic identity; again, those traditional ways in which we Catholics have identified and defined ourselves. And we see it in every area of the life of the Church today.

So in liturgy, for example, you know, this is one of the reasons, obviously, why the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, recently granted permission for wider celebration of the Pre-Vatican II Latin Mass. This is why we have been re-translating all of our liturgical texts in English to make them sound more like the Latin originals. This, folks, is why, at your local parish on some Sunday in the not too distant future, when the priest says to you, "The Lord be with you," you will no longer be answering, "And also with you." You will be saying, "And with your Spirit," because that is a more literal translation of the Latin original, "*Et cum Spiritu tuo*".

Now, if you try to see these things in bits and pieces as isolated events, I think you'll miss the point. You have to see this as a small piece of a much bigger picture, which is this evangelical emphasis on Catholic identity. You know, we see it in Catholic education. There is not a Catholic college or university in the world that has not recently had to struggle with questions of Catholic identity. How do we know we are Catholic? How do we reinforce our being Catholic? How do we communicate that to the outside world? We see it in questions around priestly identity, on and on. You don't need me to tell you this, because it is the stuff of our daily experience.

Now it seems to me that in this moment, we face the challenge of trying to steer intelligently between two extremes with respect to this Evangelical Catholic movement. On the one hand there is the real extreme to be avoided of what Jacques Maritain, the famous French Catholic Philosopher called "kneeling before the world," that is, essentially, selling out to this secularized and relativized cultural ethos and being completely indistinct, losing a sense of who we are. The other extreme, of course, is the danger of shading off into a kind of Taliban Catholicism, that knows only how to exporiate and condemn, right? smashing the TV sets of the modern world, and blowing up the statues of Buddha, and so on. Both of these are extremes that have to be avoided. As Thomas Aquinas said, "Virtue stands in the middle." And that is going to be the central challenge facing us for some time to come, because, I'm here to tell you, that this emphasis on Catholic identity is not going away. It is the engine in many ways that is driving the policy setting trend of the Church these days, all right?

Expanding Lay Roles

Megatrend three is expanding lay roles. The picture I chose to set this up is a picture of a Catholic Charismatic Women's group in Brazil; and I chose that to communicate in a flash two points:

1. This is a very much global movement.
2. One that concerns in a particular way women.

It will impact both of those points. First, I would submit to you that what we lived through in the 20th century and what we are going to continue to live through in the 21st is both a quantitative and qualitative expansion in the lay role in the Church; quantitative in the sense that we have seen tremendous numerical increases in lay people, who are playing roles that have sort of always been around: catechists, evangelists and so on. We have also seen the creation of absolutely new lay realities: new groups, new movements, and roles that simply didn't exist in the Church before the 20th century. And in some cases, it did not exist prior to the Second Vatican Council in the mid-sixties. Now I have divided these up odd-extra and odd-intra: odd-extra meaning the Church's engagement with the outside world: odd-intra, the Church's internal life.

So under the odd-extra column we see, for example, the creation of new movements: all of these groups like Santo Gilio, and L'Arch, and Communion Liberation, and Regnum Christi, and Foculare and the New Catechumen, and Lolovin. I think there is a kind of unfortunate perception that has taken route in some circles of American Catholic opinion, which tends to see all these new movements as primarily conservative, whatever that word means. But I don't think that's it. I don't think the unifying characteristic of these groups is ideological, because, quite frankly, nobody would consider Santo Gilio or L'Arch particularly conservative, if you knew them from the inside. I think what unifies them instead is an effort to take the vocational seriousness of religious life and apply it to the lay state in creative fashion. I think that's what the thing that holds them together.

Beyond that, you also have this explosion in lay missionaries; as the number of religious men and women declines, lay people are stepping into those roles. As I note on the slide, the Catholic volunteer network in the states estimates there is something like 10,000 lay men and women, American Catholic lay men and women, who are currently engaged in missionary activity in this country, and in 108 other nations. And those are only the ones they know about. The true number is probably several orders of magnitude higher than that. If you want an emblematic case, the current Governor of Virginia, Tim Cain, is a Catholic layman and a former lay missionary in Honduras. In volunteerism we see an explosion in the number of Catholics, particularly in post college volunteer programs, and, of course, the Jesuit volunteer group is a great example of that. And then there is a bit of taxonomy that I invented myself. I call it guerilla evangelists; and these are lay Catholics, who are not part of any formal movement or network, who didn't wait for anyone's permission to get started, but who simply saw a need and stepped into it – sort of planted the flag of faith someplace.

One of my favorite examples is a Catholic layman, a 30 something guy, by the name of Peter Dobbins in New York. Peter founded a theatre company called the Storm Theatre. It's at 46th and Broadway. It's just off Broadway, very successful. And the explicit purpose of Dobbins' Storm Theatre is to evangelize, that is, to lead people to ask deep questions about the meaning of life, and ultimately to lead them to faith. Sometimes they put on explicitly religious works. Last year they staged a very successful series of the dramatic works of John Paul II; but other times they do stuff that is just kind of generic humanitarian value. In any event, the point is: this is an explicit evangelizing activity. Now believe me when I tell you, the Archdiocese of New York did not call Peter and ask him to do this, okay? And he didn't wait for the Knights of Columbus to write him a check. He simply saw a need, that is, a need to sort of plant the flag for the faith in this ultra secular milieu of the New York theatre scene; and he did it; and he's made it work; and if you multiply that by thousands and tens of thousands times, I think it gives you some sense of the ferment that is out there.

All right, in the odd-intra, we have what we call in the United States the growth of lay ecclesial ministry. These are lay people who work in a part-time or full time capacity for the Church, playing ministerial roles that at one time were occupied by priests or by religious – so things like DRE's, and youth ministers, and directors of liturgy, and directors of music, and pastoral associates, and all of that. This is a new occupational category in Catholicism that didn't exist, or at least wasn't recognized as such prior to the Second Vatican Council. And we also have the growth of financial and pastoral councils at both the diocesan and the parish level, and also review boards in the wake of the sex abuse crises, all of which are intended to bring laity more systematically into decisions of that administration and governments. They work better some places than others, obviously, but the point is: these are all post Vatican II inventions.

Now what is causing all of this ferment? I would suggest there are five basic factors here:

- One of course is the priest shortage. And this chart is intended to bring home the reality of the priest shortage in various parts of the world. I know it is easy for those of us in the States to look around at the rising average age of our clergy, the difficulty of filling parish assignments, and all of that, and to believe that we have it bad. But the reality, ladies and gentlemen, is that in a global context, the United States is actually remarkably priest rich; and this chart makes the point. This chart gives you the ratio of priests to Catholics in various parts of the world. And if you'll look here on the far end of the chart you will see that in:
 - North America, that is, the U.S. and Canada, there is basically 1 priest for every 1300 Catholics.
 - It's basically the same in Europe.
 - But look at the rest of the world:
 - In Africa that number is basically 1 to 5000.
 - In the Caribbean it is 1 to 8000.
 - In Latin American it is 1 to 7000.
 - In Southeast Asia it is basically 1 to 5400.

The point here is that in any foreseeable future, there simply will not be an adequate supply of priests to deliver routine pastoral care to a growing share of our people. So we can debate the theology of lay ministry or lay empowerment all we want to, but the practical sociological reality is the Church is being compelled to move in that direction simply by these realities. But that's not the only factor.

- Second is, if you'll pardon the kind of crassly capitalistic language, competition. Look! the sociology I just described of Europe I described a moment ago about secularism is true of Europe. But secularization is a grass roots phenomenon really that is not characteristic of most of the rest of the world. At the grass roots in most of the world the social reality, the primary social challenge that Catholicism faces, isn't secularization; it is the competition generated by healthy religious pluralism.

Take Latin America as an example. In the 20th century, while the overall Catholic population of Latin America grew because the population grew; the share of the Latin American population that is Catholic actually went down dramatically. Catholicism experienced significant losses to Protestantism in Latin American over the 20th century, particularly aggressively evangelical and

Pentecostal groups. It's just exploded. Here is a factoid for you. Do you know that more people converted from Catholicism to Protestantism in Latin America in the 20th century than did so in Europe during the era of the Protestant Reformation? It is an extraordinarily significant religious realignment.

Now how did it happen? Well let me tell you a story. I was in Honduras in April; and I spent some time with a woman who was from one of the great established families of Honduras. She can trace her lineage back to the era of Columbus. This is a family that has produced bishops, and priests, and sisters, and so on, over the years. She is now the last remaining Catholic in her family; everyone else has become Pentecostal. And I asked her why. Here is what she told me. A number of years ago her mother-in-law went into the hospital with cancer; she was there about six months. Now while she was there, her local pastor didn't get by to see her very much. I mean this guy, like so many priests in Honduras, is responsible for something like eighteen parishes. He teaches in the seminary; he's the moderator of the curia, and on and on; and he just didn't have the time. And even though she was in a Catholic hospital, there's no resident chaplain at this hospital. Meanwhile, the women from the local Pentecostal church were in her hospital room every day. There were holding her hand while she got chemo; they were praying; they were bringing her soup; they were helping her groom herself; they were going to her house to make sure the lawn was mowed, and the bills were paid, and the lights were on, and on and on. And it's no surprise that at the end of this experience she decided she felt more comfortable with them than she did in her Catholic parish. And so she converted, and eventually, most of her family followed.

Now that, I think, in microcosm, tells the story of what is happening in so many pockets of the world – in Latin America, in Africa, in Asia, and so on. And what this means, one of the reasons, by the way, that the Pentecostals and the Evangelicals have done so well over the course of the 21st century is that they are extraordinarily good at mobilizing their rank and file, mobilizing their laity. They are not a clerical led movement. And that has rung the bell of Catholic leaders in various parts of the world. The Latin American bishops at their recent general conference, fifth general conference in Aparecida (Brazil) in May made job number one, the top priority in the Latin American Church – mobilizing lay evangelists – turning over the responsibility for evangelization to the laity. Now you know it remains to be seen how well they do that, or whether the structures of the Church are that well equipped to pull that off; but the point is: they've gotten the message, and they've gotten the message in large measure from the pressures created by competition.

- A third factor obviously is a new theology of the laity that came out of the Second Vatican Council. So we sort of, at least conceptually, set aside the “pay, pray and obey” model and embraced a new model in which clergy and laity are in partnership in terms of advancing the mission of the Church.
- Fourth, of course, has been the impact of sex abuse and financial scandals, which has convinced a significant chunk of opinion in the Church of the need for lay empowerment and greater lay participation in the governance and oversight.
- And fifth, of course, is Evangelical Catholicism itself. I mean, after all, the point of departure for Evangelical Catholicism is this bold public proclamation of the faith, which leads people to want to do something about it. So particularly in those sectors of the Church that are most attractive to this reaffirmation for traditional Catholic identity, there is an enormous push out there to get out in the field and to make it happen. So it, too, is producing an expansion of lay roles in the Church.

Just to make this point that this is a global reality. All of that growth in Catholicism in the south I talked about in the 20th century has been a growth in the Catholic population, that is, the number of faithful, it has been a growth in the number of priests and bishops, but it has not for the most part been a growth in parishes. There have been relatively few new parishes established in Africa, or Latin America, and Asia; and this is because, in light of those numbers I gave you a moment ago, we simply don't have the priests to staff them. So instead of creating parishes, what the Church in the south has done is create pastoral centers. And these are facilities out there where people can come for catechism, for liturgies of the Word, for faith formation, and for counseling, and for

spiritual direction. But these pastoral centers are not staffed by priests. They are staffed, for the most part, by lay people, often volunteers, sometimes part-time or full time employees. What it means is that the reality for a growing share of the Catholic population in the 21st century is that their primary point of contact for pastoral services in the Church is not going to be an ordained person. It is going to be a lay person. And in many parts of the world, people are going to come to think of priests in some ways like we think of bishops today, that is, you know, important points of reference, and their authority figures, and all that; but they are not somebody we expect to see every day. And that is transforming the sociology of pastoral leadership in the church.

Now let's bring the focus a little bit more tightly on the United States and we will talk about those lay ecclesial ministers. I think this line, just at a glance, probably better than anything else, tells us which way the winds are blowing. This compares, trend wise, to the number of priests in the United States and numbers of lay ecclesial ministers. Okay, and the top bar is priests, the bottom bar is lay ecclesial ministers. As you can see, in 1990 there were almost 50,000 priests in the United States, and there were 22,000 lay ecclesial ministers – in other words, more than two times as many priests as lay ministers. Now by 2005, the death of John Paul II, that gap had narrowed significantly.

Over that course of time, those fifteen years, we have lost 6,000 priests; we added 9,000 lay ministers. And projected forward to 2020, and by the way these are very conservative projections, because I am assuming that the attrition through death and retirement for priests and lay ministers will be exactly the same, and given the fact that the average age of priests is considerably higher, that's a very conservative estimate. And simply plugging in the numbers for the number of lay people who are currently in the pipeline, trained to be ministers, and the number of seminarians currently in the pipeline, training to be priests, projected forward, what we find is: that by 2020 there will be about 5,000 more lay ministers out there in the trenches, out in the field delivering pastoral services in the States, 5,000 more lay ministers than there are priests. And if we wanted to project that forward through the rest of the century, we would find that the bars continue to separate.

The point is, bottom line: increasingly speaking in terms of delivering basic pastoral care for our people, this will be an activity carried on to a much greater extent by lay people, as we move forward throughout the century. And it is worth noting, that in a particular way, when I talk about lay people becoming the primary pastoral leaders in this Church, I particularly mean women. Now this slide talks about the United States, but it could easily talk about virtually any place else in the world.

The data here at top come from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), Georgetown. What we find is as of 2005, women in the United States Church held 26.8%, close to a third of all senior diocesan positions, that is: Chancellors, Chief Financial Officers, Directors of Personnel, and so on – that is, the top level senior administrative positions in diocesan bureaucracies – and by the way, if you run those numbers for the percentage of women who occupy senior partner positions in law firms in this country, who hold officer positions at the rank of major, or above, in the armed forces, or who sit on the boards of Fortune 500 companies, what you will find is this is a much higher percentage than in those other areas of life in our culture. We find that women hold 48%, that is, almost half of all administrative positions in dioceses; and in terms of those lay ecclesial ministers out there, as you can see from the slide, 82% of them are currently women.

And although this is just symbolism, I think it's nevertheless worth noting: the new public face of the Catholic Church in the United States, that is, the spokesperson for the American Bishops is a lay woman, a very talented lay woman, by the name of Helen Osmond, who comes from the Diocese of Austin in Texas. And even in the Vatican, and of course I always tell people: "You know, the last place to go looking for change in the Catholic Church is, of course, the Vatican." You know, the working motto of the Vatican tends to be, "*Talk to me on Tuesday, and I'll get back to you in 300 years.*" (Laughter) But even there, even there, we can see change beginning to take root. Before she was appointed the American Ambassador for the Holy Sea, Mary Ann Glendon was the first woman to serve as President of the Pontifical Academy. We now have, under John Paul II, for the first time, a woman was appointed as a superior level of officer in one of the Congregations of the Roman Curia. It's Italian, Sister Enrica Rosanna, from the Congregation for the Religious. And for the first time we

have women sitting on the International Theological Commission, which is the main advisory body for the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, including an American, a missionary order of the Blessed Trinities, Sarah Baltman.

Now all of this is tokenism, all of this is baby steps, but nevertheless, it gives us some sense of which way things are going. So the bottom line is this: under the impact of Evangelical Catholicism and the emphasis on Catholic identity, while I don't think it isn't realistic to expect any movement on the question of ordination of women, either for the priesthood or the diaconate. In the near term, in every other area of the life of the Church that doesn't depend upon sacramental ordination, the trend in the 21st century is going to be increasing empowerment and increasing reliance on women. And not necessarily because a policy decision that has been made in that regard, but simply because of the sociology reality, the practical realities of the Church, are pushing us in that direction.

The Biotech Revolution

Finally, the last megatrend I'll talk about with you today is the biotech revolution – all of those stunning developments out there in the world in terms of genetic engineering, and genetic technology, save your babies, and all of that – I mean all of those new ways in which we now have the technical capacity to manipulate human life in its earliest phases, and in its most primitive stages. Now, I list here simply eight examples of new developments in biotech that are creating new ethical challenges for us in the 21st century. And you don't need me to step through all this with you, because these are all ripped from our headlines. Okay, we all know the ferment that is out there around cloning, and embryonic stem cells, and end of life issues, and all of that, genomes. I also list justice and health care here, because it is important to remember, of course, that some of these biotech arguments can seem awfully exotic to that fairly significant chunk of the human population that still does not have adequate access to even basic levels of health care. I mean we still do live in a world, it's worth remembering, in which 29,000 children die every day from preventable illnesses: the simple illnesses of poverty, typhoid, diphtheria, malaria, cholera. We don't need exotic new technologies to fix those problems. What we need is the political will to give resources to the people who need them.

But never the less, all of this mind-bendingly new genetic technology, I think is going to pose a very basic philosophical question to us in the 21st century, which is: "What does it mean to be human?" How do we define who's in and who's out of the human community, in an era in which membership in a species is basically fungible and in which human personality can be whipped up like so much software in front of a computer screen. Now I could choose any one of those issues to illustrate that to you, but I'm gonna pick the last one on my list, the question of chimeras.

Now those of you who know your classics, will know that this was the chimera of antiquity, a multiple headed monster that was the scourge of Satanists. And those of you who are good at Trivial Pursuit will remember that the chimera was slain by Bellerophon while riding astride Pegasus. Needless to say, this is not what scientists today mean by a chimera. What scientists today mean by it is an entity, an organism that carries more than one set of genes, more than one DNA signature. Now chimeras occur on a very rare basis in nature, but what is more common today is for chimeras to be whipped up in laboratories. For example, any of you who have been to the hospital recently, and had a blood transfusion, you may not know there's a better than average chance that the blood additives you received were synthesized from cattle, because what's happening is, the scientists are injecting embryonic cattle with a human blood protein and then allowing those cattle, as they develop, to manufacture the human blood protein, and then they will extract it later, synthesize it, and use it as a blood additive, because it's a way of dealing with the shortage of blood donors that we have. Now all of that may seem ethically unproblematic to you, even though that means we have cattle out there carrying human DNA.

But let me pose a different case to you. There is a research scientist at Stanford by the name of Irving Weissman, who a number of years ago carried out a research protocol in which he injected embryonic mice with a small amount of human brain material; so these mice grew up with roughly 1% of their brains being composed of human brain cells. The idea of course was eventually to dissect them so he

could study the trajectory of Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, and so on. Now maybe we can get our minds around that.

Try this one on for size. Weissman's new research protocol, which recently got a green light from the Stanford Ethics Committee, is to inject embryonic mice with a sufficient amount of human brain material that they will grow up with 100% of their brains being composed of human brain cells. In other words, these mice are going to grow up with miniature human brains. So if this, ladies and gentlemen, is the chimera of antiquity, behold the chimera of tomorrow. (Laughter) Now I ask you, I ask you on the basis of Roman Catholic anthropology, social doctrine, and moral theology, what is the moral status of a race of Stuart Littles? Now granted these mice are probably not going to be playing chess; they are probably not going to be writing essays on the critique of pure reason; but nevertheless, given how central the brain is as a carrier of human identity and human personality, does the fact that these mice are going to have miniature human brains somehow transform their moral taxonomy? Are they somehow now more than animal, even if less than human, and if so, do they have new rights, and do we have new duties to them?

Now please don't rush to raise your hands to volunteer an answer, because I certainly don't have one. I think we have only the thinnest scintilla of even how to think about such questions. My point is that, this is an example of the kind of mind bogglingly new ethical question we are going to be facing throughout the 21st century, as our technology inevitably races ahead of our ethical capacity to bring wisdom to bear on how we use it properly, and, therefore, increasingly these questions are going to occupy the best efforts of our pastors, of our thinkers, of our ethicists, and so on, as the century unfolds.

So let me conclude with this thought. It seems to me that the primary virtue that we're going to need in the 21st century, as we come to grips with all of this, is what I would call the courage to be globally Catholic. And this of course a play on the title of a book written by the American Catholic writer, George Wiegel, who titled his book, "The Courage to Be Catholic." I want to take that a stage further and say we are going to need the courage to be globally Catholic, because the truth, ladies and gentlemen is this: each one of these megatrends I've described, the other six on my list, and many other forces in the Church beyond, are rich with the potential for exciting new breakthroughs, creative new energy in the Church; but they are also fraught with the potential for new division, new internal warfare, new fault lines, and new heart ache. And that is an extraordinarily dangerous and potentially disastrous bit of potential that each one of these megatrends carries; and it's going to require our best efforts to make sure that that doesn't happen. And if you'll indulge me, I want to drive that point home with one final antidote.

Well, some of you may know that I grew up in rural western Kansas. I don't know if any of you have ever been to rural western Kansas, and to be honest, I can't think of no earthly reason why you should have been. (Laughter) But if you have, you will know that we are not exactly a thriving prosperous tourist industry. About the only time we get significant numbers of out of town visitors in the part of the world where I grew up is fall, because that is pheasant hunting season. And there is a certain out-of-town guy who finds the idea of putting on combat fatigues and blasting shotguns over the course of the weekend a real hoot. Now usually, they do this while drinking copious amounts of beer, which means they're a far greater threat to one another than they are to the pheasants; but nevertheless, they come and do it. And this antidote is set during one weekend in pheasant hunting season.

In the part of the world where my grandparents live, my 93 year old grandmother lives in a little western Kansas hamlet called Hill City. Now this is my candidate for the least aptly named place in America, because there is no hill, and there certainly is no city. (Laughter) Now in this little berg there is one hotel; it's the Western Hills Motel – eleven rooms. Now folks, I have stayed in some pretty funky lodges hither and yon. This is the only motel I have ever stayed in where there is a laminated sign in the bathroom – honest to God, I am not making this up – a laminated sign that reads "Please do not gut your birds in the sink." (Much laughter) Give you a sense of the cultural milieu we're talking about.

This story concerns an out of town guy, let's call him a lawyer from New York, who has come out to Graham County Kansas to bag himself a bird; and he has spent a long and frustrating weekend without success, and now it is midday Sunday. He is facing the prospect of having to get back in his rental car and drive 300 miles back to Kansas City, or to Denver, you know, and get on his plane, and fly back to Manhattan, and so on. And he decides to take one final shot. So he sees a pheasant moving across the sky, he shoulders his weapon, he fires, and miracle of miracles, he brings down the bird.

And so now, flushed with success, he sets across the field to try to pick up his trophy. But just as he gets to the spot where the bird has fallen, he comes across a barbed wire fence that is clearly labeled **Private Property. Keep Out.** But he has invested far too much blood, toils, tears, and sweat to give up at this stage; so he starts to climb the fence. And just as he does so, the rural western Kansas farmer pulls up in his tractor and says to him, "Hey buddy, what're you doing?" And the lawyer says, "Well, that's my pheasant, I'm going to pick it up." And the farmer says, "No, you're not! That bird fell on my property. It belongs to me." Now you gotta understand, the lawyer is hot; he's tired; he's irritated; he's in a hurry; and he just erupts, and he says, "Look, you don't understand. I am a senior partner in a top ten law firm in New York City; and if you don't let me have that bird, I am going to sue you back to the Stone Age." – not understanding, of course, that's pretty much where the farmer already is. (Much laughter) This is my home, I can say that stuff.

And the farmer just looks at him, and smiles, and says, "Well, look! That may be how you do things where you come from, but around here we have a little something called the three kick rule." "The three kick rule? What's that about," he says. The farmer says, "Very simple. I kick you three times, then you kick me three times. We keep going. Whoever gives up loses the bird." And the lawyer thinks, "Well it's probably less expensive than a lawsuit, plus this guy looks like he's 314 years old. I can probably take it." So they line up; the farmer looks at him and says, "Are you ready?" The lawyer says, "Yes, I am". You gotta understand that the farmer is wearing his heavy mud clot western Kansas work boots, right?

So he gives this lawyer one shot in the shins. The guy falls to his knees in agony. He gives him another shot in the solar plexus. This time the lawyer's howls of pain can be heard all the way to the Colorado border. Gives him one third shot under the chin; the lawyer falls back seeing stars. He's barely conscious, but finally staggers to his feet with just grim determination, dusts himself off, fixes this look of absolute focus on the farmer, and says, "All right you old coot, now it's my turn." And the farmer looks at him, and smiles, and says, "That's all right. I give up. You can have the bird." (Much laughter)

Ladies and gentlemen, I would submit that too often our conversation in the Catholic Church resembles and ecclesiastical version of the three kick rule; that is, that too often, what we are doing is not really a patient search for understanding and common ground, but it is attempting to score rhetorical cheap shots against people we perceive to be our ideological enemies. In fact, I would submit, if that mythical sociologist from Mars descended to the United States, they would tell you there is no such thing as a Catholic Church in America. What we have are multiple Catholicisms; that is, we have your peace and justice Catholics, and we your reform Catholics, your neocon Catholics, and your charismatic Catholics, and your traditionalist Catholics, all who are moving in their own hermetically sealed walks of life, very rarely encountering one another; and when they do, it's usually through a hermetic of suspicion, not sure they're all on the same team.

Now that way of doing business is unsatisfactory under the best of circumstances, and certainly cannot be justified by Catholic ecclesiology. Think back to the reading we heard today, Christ's final prayer on earth was that we may all be one. And it also hamstring us in terms of our capacity to live out our mission in the world. But under the set of circumstances I just described to you, this vast and dazzling set of new challenges that face us in the 21st century, which for the first time in our history will play out on a truly global scale. If we allow this kind of internal division and fracture to continue to be the way in which we interact with one another, it will simply be disaster; and therefore, it is going to require the best efforts, the best creative imagination of committed passionate Catholics the world over to lead us out of that blind alley. In other words, ladies and gentlemen, it's going to require the energy and imagination, passion and commitment, of people exactly like yourselves; and as your chronicler and

your scribe, I look forward to watching you rise to that occasion in the 21st century in which I have no doubt, none whatsoever, that you will. Thank you, and God Bless You. (Applause)

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