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**Featured in this issue:**





# Liturgical reforms were valid, but defective

*by Michael Houser*

"The Roman Rite as we knew it no longer exists. It has been destroyed."
–Fr. Joseph Gelineau, SJ

I wish in this article to bring up an area of liturgical controversy often left untouched at FUS and other places that rightly pride themselves on orthodoxy. I mean the liturgical reform itself, which was mandated in some form by Vatican II's *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, and carried out in the pontificate of Pope Paul VI. I wish to raise the question of whether this reform has truly benefited the Church.

First, let me clearly distance myself from any who would impugn the legitimacy of the recent pontificates, the orthodoxy of Vatican II, or the validity of the *Novus Ordo* as a true rite of the Mass which can be of great benefit to those who partake in it. I am sincerely convinced that Vatican II was a gift to the Church. Who could not rejoice in its beautiful theology of the Church as people of God and Body of Christ; in its vision of the liturgy; in its teaching on Divine Revelation, including doctrinal development; in its appropriation of religious liberty into the Catholic patrimony; in the unprecedented overtures made towards principled ecumenical contact with Orthodox, Protestants and Jews; in the new emphasis on the dignity of the laity and their apostolate; and finally in the Christian humanism and vision of society propounded by *Gaudium et Spes*, which has been the inspiration for the pontificate of our beloved Pope John Paul the Great?

Nonetheless, as the history of the Church can testify, most reforms bring about consequences which are not always salutary. If the pre-Conciliar church had its problems, who could deny that the post-Conciliar church has at least as many? The *Novus Ordo* liturgy has been profoundly formative of my generation of Catholics, and so I propose that, in our appraisal of the Church today, we look at its origin in contrast with what came before. I do this in the firm conviction that we must avoid the idea of an "infallibility of the party line." The Church is protected from teaching error, but there is no guarantee that all of her policies will always be best. The Council itself was made of many different people, with many different agendas, and we should not be surprised if many changes inspired by the Council were not in fact necessary or beneficial. Nor should we despise as disloyal or reactionary any suggestion that the Church has taken some steps in the wrong direction. The Church would never have had a liturgical reform if there hadn't been criticisms made of the old liturgy; why is it guaranteed that the reform got everything right?

**The Church is protected from teaching error, but there is no guarantee that all of her policies will always be best.**

If we look at both East and West, we see that one of the most important qualities of all approaches to the liturgy is continuity and organic development. The liturgy has always been regarded as something to be treated with the utmost respect, and even minor changes are a significant matter. It is interesting that in his brief account of the life of Pope St. Gregory the Great, the Venerable Bede mentions the fact that he added to the Canon of the Mass the phrases we translate as "grant us your peace in this life, save us from final damnation, and count us among those you have chosen." As far as I can tell, this (around 600 AD) is the last modification made to the Eucharistic prayer for *over 1000 years*, until the 1970's, when the choosy pastor was given an option of four Eucharistic prayers, plus the supplement in the back of the Sacramentary which includes more Eucharistic prayers than even most of us would guess

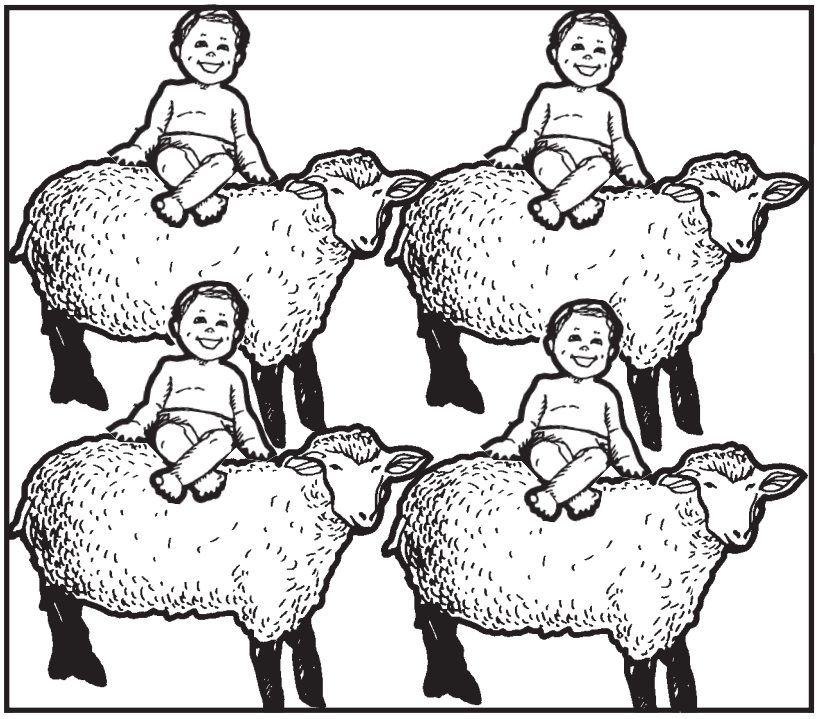
*See* **Liturgy** *on page 10*

# Right and wrong in biotechnology: what we don't know tells us what we can't do

*by John Henry Crosby*

At the heart of the ongoing debates on embryonic stem cell research and human cloning is the question of the ontological and moral status of the human embryo. While the debate has been multifaceted, the central questions have ultimately concentrated on the treatment due the human embryo brought into existence by in vitro fertilization (IVF) or cloning. There are those who have denied that cloning produces an embryo (no one doubts that IVF creates an embryo.) Some, often with ulterior motives, claim that the "product of cloning" is not really an embryo but a "pre-embryo" or an "activated egg." Yet in the scientific establishment as a whole there seems to be little doubt that successful cloning would produce a human embryo, that is, a new living human organism.

In all of this, however, there remains a question which neither those who defend nor those who would exploit the embryo for its stem cells can really answer, namely, whether or not the embryo is a *person*. The personhood of the embryo is ultimately the crucial question. While there are those who grant the personhood of the embryo while arguing for the legitimacy of killing in certain instances (as in abortion), still the starting point for any philosophically adequate defense of the moral inviolability of the human embryo must begin with a defense of the personhood of the embryo, or, at least, a defense of the strong and morally binding likelihood that the embryo is indeed a person.



Defenders of the inviolability of the embryo, however, will often consider the question superfluous, saying that to be a human being is to be a person. In their view, to be a person is nothing other than to be an individual member of the human species, an individual instance of human nature. Yet this approach really only hides the question, since whether or not the human embryo is in fact a person is precisely what is in question. Being human and being a person may very well be inseparable for human beings. Yet they are distinct terms conceptually, and the question of whether or not the embryo is a person can quite meaningfully be asked. Non-human persons are entirely conceivable (there is nothing intrinsically impossible in the idea of a non-human person), which is reflected in most of the world's great religions by the belief in divine and angelic beings who are eminently persons without being human.

The Christian tradition also offers reasons for taking seriously the question of the inception of human personal life. St. Thomas Aquinas, for example, was a proponent of the so-called "delayed animation" theory (also known as delayed "homonization"), which teaches that God infuses the rational or intellectual soul at a point after conception has taken place. If so great a thinker as Aquinas can deny the personhood of the embryo, we cannot just take for granted the opposite position.

Yet what does it mean to be a person? Why does it matter whether or not the embryo is a person?

The meaning of "person" is difficult to come by, and certainly not uncontroversial. A simple way of getting at it, though, is to consider the contrast between being *something* and being *someone*. We all know on a primordial level what it means to be "someone," a "somebody." I suppose that I am someone, just as I suppose that you, the reader, are someone as well. Already my addressing you in this article presumes that you are the kind of being I am calling a someone. No one, except for the purpose of deliberate degradation, would consider someone a something. Imagine being in a room full of books or tools, clearly just different kinds of things. Now imagine that a friend comes to the door and addresses you; the difference between the friend and the book immediately flares up, indicating the great divide between persons and things, between being just something and being someone. Again, the difference between something and someone is also revealed in the fact that we

can be alone, even when surrounded by many things, not because a thing is *nothing* but because it is not someone. Togetherness, even disinterested togetherness, requires at least two "someones."

The question of personhood is crucial because of its ethical implications. Although non-persons, "non-someones," are not without their value, no one considers them morally inviolable. While most do not think that we should torture animals, most also think that we can legitimately use animals for food or transportation—and this without an affront to their dignity. On the other hand, it is almost universally acknowledged (and fundamental to the entire Western ethical tradition) that persons, someones, should not be used or exploited.

Now the difficulty with the embryo is that it does not *reveal* itself as a person, a someone. It reveals itself as a living organism (that is, capable of directing its own growth and integrating nourishment into itself), and yet this is not tantamount to being someone. The world is full of living organisms. As organisms, they behave quite in the same manner as the developing embryo, and yet we would never say that they are persons. We all somehow understand that personhood is a "new" reality, irreducible to being biologically alive. We may *presume* that the embryo is a person, even *love* the embryo as a person, albeit a "slumbering person." Still, deep as these convictions may run, the personhood of the embryo is not manifest in any indubitable way.

Given how often pro-life thinkers disagree with this view, because they fear that it undermines the very pro-life position itself, it cannot be emphasized enough that the embryo, if indeed it is a person, *does not reveal itself as person*. It seems that there is a great tendency to misidentify personhood with simply being an individual of a human genetic type. The pro-life movement is full of scientists and philosophers who insist that personhood is just another term for a "human individual," or worse, for "human life"—a most ambiguous term. As I have tried to emphasize in my distinction between being someone and something, the biology only captures the objective, thing-like side of human life. Yet to be a person is to be a someone, and the embryo simply does not show itself in this way. Consequently, the crucial question of whether or not the embryo is a person, a someone, is not something that can just be answered by pointing to the scientific facts. On the contrary, the question remains undecided by all that science has to say.

**Given how often pro-life thinkers disagree with this view, because they fear that it undermines the very pro-life position itself, it cannot be emphasized enough that the embryo, if indeed it is a person, *does not reveal itself as person*.**

Is the embryo a person, a someone? The question can be concretely put—was I, the someone who exists today, already present from the earliest moments of my being as a living organism, or did I begin at some point after the embryo came to be?

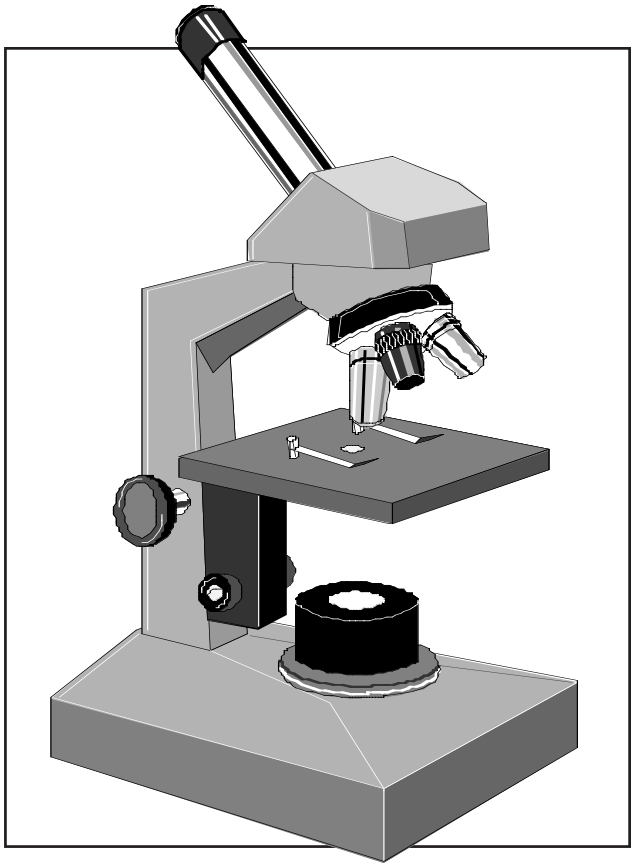
The truth of the matter is that we really cannot know, at least not with any demonstrable certainty. Doubtlessly, we can know when human life begins biologically, that is, when a new living organism has been generated. This, as everyone knows, happens either at fertilization or (as in cloning or parthenogenesis) through asexual reproduction—the moment at which a new living organism is generated. Yet whether or not this organism is a person, a someone, is in the final analysis (and much to the discontent of those who defend the embryo) shrouded in mystery.

Some have taken this ambiguity about the onset of personhood as a reason to go ahead with lethal research. This is the view that one encounters whenever one hears someone saying, "How will we know what embryonic stem cells can do if we don't try using them?"

Such reasoning, however, is entirely indefensible from a moral perspective. Does our ignorance on a matter so fundamental entitle us to a *carte blanche* for whatever research we wish to pursue? Or, on the contrary, does what we don't know tell us what we in fact can't do?

In reply to this moral permissiveness, there are two distinct points to be made, the first is ontological, the other, moral. The ontological proposition holds simply that there is a *real* (as opposed to an *improbable*) possibility that the human embryo is in fact a person. The moral point, which follows upon this ontological proposition, simply draws the conclusion that Western moral discourse has drawn from the beginning, namely, that this real ontological possibility demands that the human embryo must be treated with the same inviolability with regard to deliberate killing as does the human being who is clearly a person.

As for the ontological proposition, there are actually two distinct arguments to be made for it. The first one, which is positive, argues that it makes eminent sense to believe that I existed as a person from the first moment of the existence of the embryo. (I hesitate to call the embryo "my body,",since this would beg the question at hand.) Given the closeness of my embodiment as



a conscious adult human being, it seems highly probable that my being as person coincided with the start of my physical being following upon the completion of the process of reproduction.

Yet even if this positive argument proves inadequate, there is a further negative argument that cannot so easily be overcome. This is the fact that there is no point after the process of reproduction has taken place which seems a more likely point for the onset of personhood than the very completion of reproduction itself, namely, the coming into existence of a new living organism. No one would want to say that I pre-existed the completion of reproduction, since even the embryo does not exist prior to this, and yet no point subsequent to reproduction, be it implantation, the formation of the primitive brain streak, viability, and so on, is by any means as radical and complete a beginning as the point at which the embryo comes into being.

Consider the following "thought experiment." Take any adult human being who is incontestably a person and start to work backwards. Go back to birth; unless you are ready for infanticide, you have to say that at birth he or she was already a person. Go now back to one week before birth; you cannot find any reason why that human being is a person at birth but not one week earlier. Keep going back; no one can point to some one definite step in fetal development that is clearly the dividing line between being a person and not being one, between being a someone and a something. Hence, what is more reasonable than to assume that the human organism, which is the same as embryo and as adult, is also a person throughout its whole career?

The upshot of this "thought experiment" is a rather straightforward confirmation of my ontological proposition, namely, that there is a *real possibility* that the embryo is a person. Together, these two ontological arguments have the merit of being modest: they do not claim to *prove* incontrovertibly that the embryo is a person, only that it has to be *assumed* to be a person, because no other assumption (of some later beginning of personhood) can with any certainty be demonstrated.

Numerous and predictable objections can be raised to this view, the most popular of which, is the frequency of embryo *twinning* (when one embryo apparently divides to form two distinct embryos) and *fusion* (when two embryos either revert or combine to form a single embryo). The objection, in effect, argues from the indeterminacy of early biological individuality to the impossibility of attributing personhood to the early embryo. After all, no one would consider a pile of rocks, or for that matter, a "clump of cells,"to be a person. Consequently, this view can only reasonably attribute personhood to a developing human being after the human organism has attained a certain level of biological individuality.

This objection certainly has its point. Clearly, embryonic life is not as unassailably individual as, say, a human organism is, even at the fetal stage, let alone at any point in the adult stage. The objection is also correct in recognizing that personhood entails a certain level of individuality. The famous Boethian definition of personhood, for example, makes individuality central: "A person is an individual substance of a rational nature." Individuality, then, is a sort of condition for the possibility of personhood, essential but not identical to it. This is as far as the objection has any merit.

For one, the remarkable biological individuality of the early embryo is displayed in the way in which it consumes nourishment and integrates this into its rapidly growing body. Most fundamental, however, is the fact that the organism produced by reproduction, even while undergoing early cell division, from the very beginning acts as a *single organism*. Contrary to the idea of a vaguely united cluster of cells (which may have nothing to do with one another save proximity, as in a petri dish), the rapidly dividing cells of the embryo act in tandem and with remarkable cohesion.

For another, the objection fails to do away with the very real possibility that the embryonic human being from its first moments might very well be a fully human person—albeit, as I have already emphasized above, a "slumbering" person. If anything, the objection only shows that the early and somewhat weaker

individuality of the embryonic human being becomes increasingly more resilient and unlikely to suffer dissolution. In the end, there is no compelling reason not to identify the beginning of personhood with the beginning of the living human organism.

The same line of argumentation can be employed to counter other suggestions for the onset of personhood, whether it be implantation, the development of the primitive streak, or viability. While the various biological markers may increasingly tell of the kind of being one would expect to be a person, there is no moment along the continuum of embryonic and fetal human life that definitively points to the "onset" of personhood. The only clear line is the completion of reproduction, both since it represents the radical coming into being of a new, living organism, and since no one would suggest the existence of a person prior to the coming to be of the embryo.

Yet what does it say about the moral status of early human life?

It says, in effect, that since the embryo *might well* be a person, killing it *might well* be the killing of a person, bringing with it the obligation to treat the embryo as if it *were* a person. At the same time, this argument is of tremendous moral gravity: to contest a total moral ban on the killing of the embryo is to express oneself willing to kill (or at least willing to risk killing) a human person.

Ignorance about the exact details of the origins of personal life may seem a flimsy justification for such a stringent moral ban. Yet who would have any difficulty recognizing the commonsense quality of this line of argument if the ignorance was in regard to adults rather than embryos? No one, for example, would question that ignorance over even the possible presence of people in a mine would entail an obvious moral prohibition on blasting. That this is so is self-evident.

The argument throws the burden onto our opponents, saying to them in effect: Try to find a later and morally safe beginning of the human person; you will see that it cannot be done in a conclusive way. The only morally responsible course is to go back to the point before which no one thinks there can be a person—for no one thinks the new human being exists *before* fertilization—and to assume personhood from that point forward. ■

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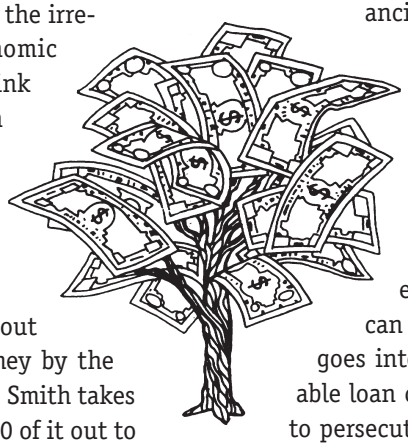
# The unfeasibility of the Social Credit solution

*by Gabriel Martinez*

I thoroughly share Oliver Heydorn's concern for the way in which the debt-finance system oppresses many. Indeed, my research has been on how the irresponsible use of debt created economic chaos in Ecuador. Nevertheless, I think that three main points of criticism can be pointed out from an economist's perspective: on the nature of fractional reserve banking, on the sufficiency of money supply relative to output, and on Social Credit itself.



First, Mr. Heydorn rightly points out that the banking system creates money by the process of lending. This is the process: Smith takes his $100 to a bank. The bank lends $90 of it out to Jones. Jones takes the $90 and with it he opens a new bank account. Result: you have a total of $190. And so on.

Out of this $190, the original $100 in cash is "true" paper money while the $90 is just credit money. Can a bank charge interest on credit money? Mr. Heydorn argues that it can't, because credit money is created *ex nihilo*, without any cost. "The problem with the fractional reserve system is that although it cost the financiers little or nothing to create this new money, they nevertheless insist on interest payments.... [T]he loan is not the product of a cost-generating process."

We can infer that Mr. Heydorn has never worked at a bank. Indeed, we ought to infer that he has never applied for a car loan or a mortgage. Anyone who has experienced the loan process (on either side) can testify that considerable work and effort goes into making a loan (from identifying a suitable loan candidate, to presenting attractive offices, to persecuting delinquent debtors, etc.)

Moreover, loans are not created *ex nihilo*. Consider what would happen if Smith withdrew his $100 from the bank. The bank would be forced to call in Jones's $90 loan. That is, banks need deposits to make loans. Bank employees can testify to the enormous effort that goes

into getting people to trust a bank with their money. If Jones gets $90, it is only because Murphy spent endless hours making the bank attractive to depositors (which, incidentally, includes persecuting delinquent debtors.)

People are often happy to receive loans. For instance, students are very happy not to have to pay college tuition right away; they can cover their tuition with loans. Where does that money come from? It comes from the effort of the bank employee and the trust of the depositor. I believe that that effort (and risk-taking) and that trust deserve compensation.

**Second criticism:**

"Whenever a banker creates a loan and demands to be paid back with interest, he only introduces the principal into the monetary supply; he does not introduce any money to cover the interest payments which may, in the long run, amount to more than the principal itself. The result is that under the current financial set-up there is a chronic lack of money that artificially limits both production and consumption."

If this were true, then countries with extensive financial systems would be chronically poor and financially strangled, while countries with not much banking would be models of stability and prosperity. The evidence proves the opposite.

The reason that Mr. Heydorn's argument seems plausible is that we are used to thinking of an economy in fixed, static terms. But the economy is dynamic. Loans are used to finance productive investment, which in turn increases output. The profits of successful investment pay for the interest and the principal. Central Banks, in turn, are permanently in the business of making sure that they print enough bills (which get multiplied by the fractional reserve system) to match the growth of the economy. (Technically, central banks set money-supply growth on the basis the predicted output growth).

**Third criticism:**

"Instead, a National Credit Office would be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the money supply is always equal to the productive capacity of the economy, in such a way that purchasing power is sufficient to liquidate supply.

[We've already argued that Central Banks regularly do this]

"[This money] would be introduced into the economy debt and interest free. Some of this new money would be used to finance government expenditure on health, education, infrastructure, defense and so on (thus eliminating the need for taxes); some of it would be distributed to each citizen in the form of a social dividend that would guarantee everyone a minimal revenue (thus eliminating destitution and the more severe forms of poverty); and some of it would be used to finance the retail sector while lowering the prices of goods and services for consumers (thus allowing for the recalibration of the whole system and the prevention of inflation.)"

**But to actually plan to sustain the *entire* economy on the basis of freely (and centrally) produced wealth implies *that goods and services can be produced without cost*. Reminder: There ain't no such thing as a free lunch.**

This sounds very nice, but it is based on an equivocation. Money is *not* wealth, at least not how economists define it. When I say, "Sally has a lot of money," I may mean lots of real estate, yachts, stock holdings, or cash. But when an economist says, "Sally has a lot of money," he *only* means cash or deposits.

Now, let's say that Mr. Heydorn (and his source, Scottish engineer C.H. Douglas) are thinking of distributing wealth for free. We have such a system in place already, in the form of unemployment benefits and farm subsidies. But to actually plan to sustain the *entire* economy on the basis of freely (and centrally) produced wealth implies *that goods and services can be produced without cost*. Reminder: There ain't no such thing as a free lunch. It also implies the elimination of personal responsibility and the collectivization of economic initiative. Not very distributist-sounding.

Maybe Messrs. Heydorn and Douglas actually meant distributing *money* for free. Let's think technically for a bit. Prices are proportional to the ratio of the available money (cash and deposits) divided by the amount of goods and services available. This will become clear if we think that money is used to buy goods and services. Then, if there is more money (cash and deposits), that ratio has to rise: i.e., prices will have to rise.

Imagine financing the government, the citizen, and the retail sector (which is not formed by citizens, I assume) by constant *costless, unbacked* money creation: the result is economic chaos.

Indeed, this is the experience of many countries that tried to finance government expenditures by monetary creation: Germany, Hungary, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador… the list goes on. Rapid monetary creation leads to inflation, which (by a familiar economic process, known as the Oliviera-Tanzi effect) leads to reduced government revenues, a higher deficit, and a need for more money cre-

ation… Often "hyperinflation" leads to massive social and economic disruption. Think of Nazi Germany following the German hyperinflation; think of Ecuador having to abolish its national currency and replace it with trustworthy, and scarce, American dollars.

In closing, a quote from well-known economist J.K. Galbraith is appropriate:

"Over all history, money has oppressed people in one of two ways: either it has been abundant and very unreliable, or reliable and very scarce." ■

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# Social credit is no alternative

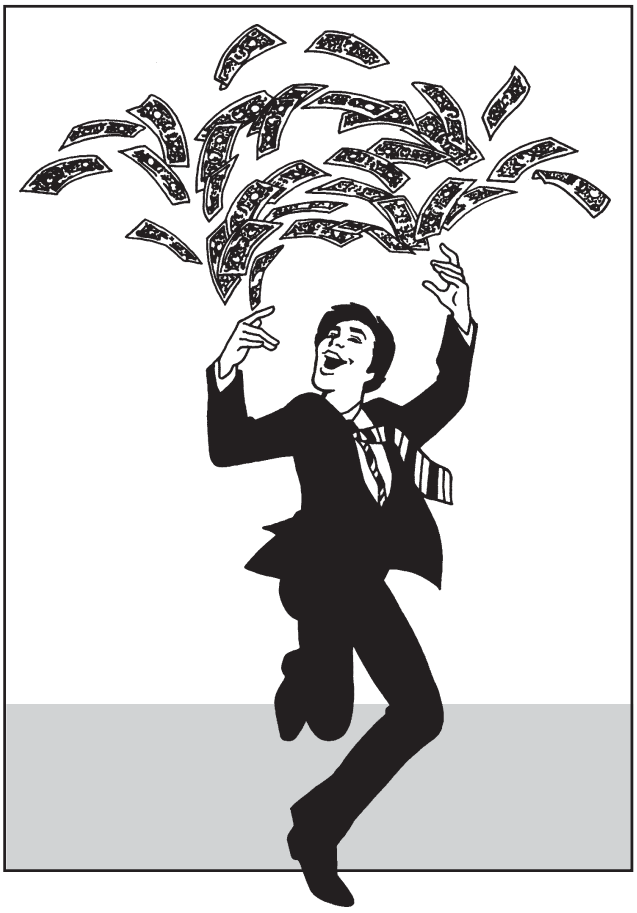
**by Michael Welker and Joseph Zoric**

In his article, "Social credit: a distributist reform of the financial system," (Volume 8, issue 1) Oliver Heydorn draws out the discussion of distributism with a radical critique of financial markets in modern, mixed economies (which he calls capitalist.) He then goes on to propose "social credit" as an alternative. Both the critique and the proposal display a serious lack of basic economic knowledge.

Following the lead of other proponents of distributism in the *Concourse*, Heydorn distinguishes that system from socialism by explaining that "the bodies that would be largely responsible for ensuring this more adequate distribution [of productive property] would be non-governmental occupational groups or guilds." We reply that such "non-governmental" groups or guilds would require precisely the same kind of coercive powers required by a government body to achieve the desired redistribution. Further, what is implied by this idealistic mechanism for ensuring a "more adequate" distribution is a value judgment that the present state of affairs is not desirable. We reply that if the present distribution really is not desirable (and, presumably, this has been the case through the history of capitalist social organization), then the distributist world ought to have spontaneously arisen through the free actions of persons. Finally, every scheme of property limitation or expansion, either via explicit or implicit taxes and subsidies (or regulations, or social conventions, or whatever these guilds will use), would involve usurpation of individual volition.

In essence, occupational groups and guilds given powers to restructure economic organization would be governmental bodies, whatever they are called. The problems inherent to public choice would arise as in any explicitly named governmental body. The essential reason for this is that the distributist plan replaces private enterprise with an indirect provider (the guilds.) There would be no personal decision concerning property, but instead there would be a third-party decision. By their nature, the guilds would be governmental given their effects. The net result would be confiscation of private property by one group (the guilds) and redistribution to another group with the most influence over the guilds.

Heydorn next tells us a loan may be non-productive in two ways, either it finances non-productive activity or it is not the product of a cost-generating process. From this non-productive financing, the interest on the loan, he claims, is usury. We question the premise that any loan would be non-productive in the ways mentioned. What financier, if he is sane, writes a promissory note for non-productive activity? True, he may make a mistake,



but he will be once bitten and twice shy. Try it out. See if any banker will give you a loan for something that will be non-productive. Tell the loan officer you will gamble in Vegas with the funds. Or, tell him you want to stash all the money in a mattress somewhere. You will be laughed out of the bank.

A loan is always the product of a cost-generating activity. Banks, investment houses, brokers and all financial intermediaries use resources that have alternative uses. Resources are scarce and therefore costly. Loanable funds are scarce and costly, just as are all goods on the shelf at your local Wal-Mart. The loanable funds arise from individuals and institutions that save. Their saving requires them to forgo present consumption, a cost to the savers. Those who save are compensated for this by being paid interest—a payment for funds that includes the cost of capital services that could be generated by the funds by the individual. In essence, interest is a price signal used to coordinate the actions of savers and borrowers, relying on individual preferences for settling risks of waiting for future repayments.

The financial system serves as an intermediary, connecting the savers to the borrowers. The interest paid to savers is thus a cost inherent to the loan process. In addition, a financier has alternative projects he could finance. Writing a loan for one project implies the returns from alternative projects are forgone. In reality, neither condition of non-productivity exists, so interest on loans is not usury. It should be noted that usury remains condemned in the Catholic tradition, but as the moral theologian Germain Grisez points out: "The Church never taught that all charging of interest is wrong, but only that it is wrong to charge interest on a loan in virtue of the very making of the loan, rather than in virtue of some factor related to the loan which provides a basis for fair compensation."* For example, a loan shark who imposes triple-digit interest on debtors commits the sin of usury.

Again, we quote Heydorn: "Whenever a banker creates a loan and demands to be paid back with interest, he only introduces the principal into the monetary supply; he does not introduce any money to cover the interest payments which may, in the long run, amount to more than the principal itself." We reply that a banker does not pay the interest; he receives the interest. The interest is an expense payable by the borrower from the cash flow associated with the productive activity financed by the loan.

Heydorn then leaps to his greatest myth: "The result is that under the current financial set-up there is a chronic lack of money that artificially limits both production and consumption." Let us reply. Production does not come from money but from real resources such as human effort and knowledge and technological know-how. Money itself produces nothing. Thus, the quantity of money has nothing to do with the level of production and consumption. We reply further that the limited money supply is necessary, because money is not a productive resource; it is merely a means of reducing transaction costs expended by a society to allocate real resources to their best uses. The "chronic lack of money" is actually a good thing. Why? because the long-run effect of "more" money is higher prices. Ask anyone who has lived in half the nations of the world in the past thirty years: "What happens when the government increases the money supply?" Anyone who did not have his head in the sand will tell you: "We had inflation."

**Ask anyone who has lived in half the nations of the world in the past thirty years: "What happens when the government increases the money supply?" Anyone who did not have his head in the sand will tell you: "We had inflation."**

Mr. Heydorn's policy proposal would produce a hyperinflation that would destroy our economic system.

According to Heydorn, the fractional reserve system of banking "leads to escalating personal, corporate, and government debts, wasteful economic growth, environmental degradation" We reply:

(a) The notion of "escalating debt" needs a reference point. Heydorn fails to put the facts into perspective. For example, the present U.S. national debt is approximately 60% of GDP. This is significantly lower than the debt to GDP ratio experienced, say, during World War II (when national debt ran about 200% of GDP.) Thus, government debt is hardly "escalating." As for personal debt, the main culprit is mortgage debt, a financing instrument that enables millions of people to enjoy housing services while building an equity nest egg. Corporate debt is not escalating either. Even if it were, then more and more Americans would be providing the corporations with their saved funds, and this would happen only if the reward for saving were high enough to

induce forgoing current consumption. Interest rates are at their lowest in forty years. No, we say to the hen, the sky is not falling.

(b) "Wasteful economic growth"?! What does Heydorn mean by this? How is economic growth wasteful? We hold that economic growth arises from increases in worker productivity, which arises from financing human and physical capital formulation. Economic growth over the last century has helped American society pay for enhanced health care, technology, and rising life expectancy. Economic growth leads to enhanced standards of living; it means people become better off materially (such that a 21st Century American adult has seven times the purchasing power of someone living in the year 1931.)

(c) "Environmental degradation" arises from inadequate definition and protection of property rights. It has nothing to do with fractional reserve banking, as Heydorn claims. (And, by the way, by all indications the environment in the U.S. is improving dramatically and is expected to continue to do so). Further, moving to a 100% reserve system would cut the money supply and remove any dynamics that could potentially enable entrepreneurs to finance projects that actually clean the environment.

In essence, Heydorn's critique of financial intermediation contains numerous errors. His alternative proposal of a system of "social credit" is no better.

Heydorn proposes that fractional reserve banking "be replaced by full reserve banking, so that the banks could no longer produce most of a country's money supply for personal gain." In effect, the banks would no longer be financial intermediaries specializing in matching savers with borrowers. Their greatest contribution to the economy, decreasing the costs associated with matching borrowers with savers, would no longer exist. The result would be total collapse of an otherwise (and presently) stable financial system, a permanent decrease in economic activity, a long term contraction of output, massive layoffs of workers, panic spreading to all other intermediaries, and massive misallocation of productive property—all the exact reverse of the distributist ideal. In other words, we could say that to implement such a system would be immoral exactly on distributist grounds.

What we have in Heydorn's article is a collection of the worst myths and legends of the last fifty years concerning money and banking, with which readers of crank anti-capitalist web pages are very familiar. Fortunately, there are other websites to be found (see for instance, http://www.floodlight.org/theory/contents.html, or http://www.home.earthlink.net/~flahertyhsd), which do a more complete and eloquent job of debunking such myths than we've been able to attempt here. Here we've can only scratch the surface, and express our hope that future contributors to the *Concourse* on these topics will be more informed about economics. ■

*Professors Welker and Zoric teach Economics at FUS.*

* German Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus: vol. II Living a Christian Life* (Quincy, Illinois:Franciscan Press, 1993) 834.


## Kudos to Heydorn

In the Sept. issue of the Concourse Oliver Heydorn responded to some earlier articles of mine by introducing the subject of our financial system and suggesting C. H. Douglas's Social Credit as a remedy for its ills. As for his diagnosis of the problem, I entirely agree with him. In chapter three of my book, Foundations of a Catholic Political Order, I there point out the strange character of bank-created money and the injustice involved in having private banks make considerable profits from what is essentially a public function, and which they undertake with very little expense to themselves.

As to the remedy Mr. Heydorn suggests, Social Credit, I believe that we need further study, but I endorse fully his statement that we need to move toward 100% reserve banking. This idea, by the way, has been championed by a number of noted economists, including Rupert Ederer, Milton Friedman and Irving Fisher. I welcome Mr. Heydorn's contribution and the concern that he and I share toward achieving a just and humane economy.

*Thomas Storck*

Take a break and write a response to the Concourse

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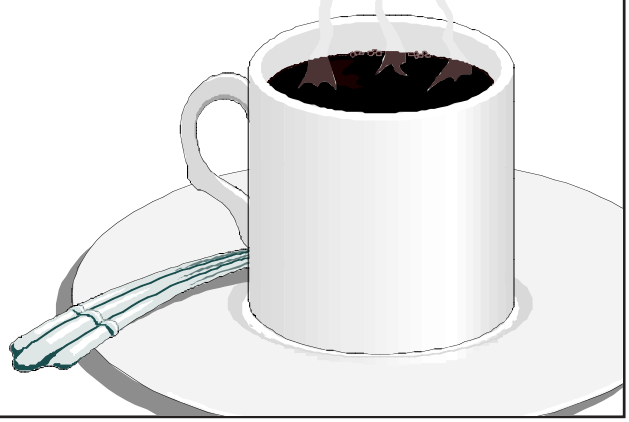


## Liturgy

*Continued from page 1*

existed: all of them composed by a small commission of liturgists, entrusted with a power to remake what had remained in the Church untouched throughout the age of the great Scholastics and the Council of Trent. Suddenly, this important feature of the liturgy was at the mercy of a handful of scholars.

I am far from suggesting that change is in itself a bad word in the liturgy. The Roman Rite itself received new features through its contact, for instance, with the Gallican Rite in the early middle ages. New devotions and styles of artistic expression arose over time. The Romanesque gave way to the Gothic, which gave way to the Baroque, and the Church was the richer for it. Yet never was a liturgical revolution a la 1960's ever considered. In 1570, Pope St. Pius V met the challenge of the Protestant heresy by making the rite of the Church of Rome mandatory all over the West, and publishing an authoritative version of the Missal. This Missal, however, was emphatically not a new rite, devised by a committee. It was simply the old rite put in a definitive book form.

While Pius's action brought unity to a Church attacked by Protestantism, it also put an end to any developments within the rite. The liturgy came to be looked on in an increasingly legalistic and often minimalistic way. We all have heard the stories of how in the years before the council, Catholics would pray the rosary or other private devotions during Mass. It is safe to say that the true spirit of the Liturgy was obscured. But in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Liturgical Movement began in an effort to recover much of the beauty of the Liturgy, and its centrality for Catholic life. This movement, characterized by people such as Dom Gueranger and Pius Parsch, aimed primarily not at adapting the ancient rite to modernity, but at recovering a sometimes obscured tradition. It was this movement which we have to thank for the revival of Gregorian chant. And it was some of the leaders of this movement, such as the late Msgr. Klaus Gamber, who were most appalled by what happened after the Council.

The Council itself clearly mandated some liturgical reform. It spoke much about the active participation of the faithful in the liturgy (a goal of the liturgical movement), and said that "the rite of Mass is to be revised in such a way that the intrinsic nature and purpose of its several parts…may be more clearly manifested, and that devout and active participation of the faithful may be more easily achieved."

This is rather ambiguous in itself, but it seems clear to me that what the Fathers thought they were voting for was a revision of the *existing* Roman Rite. Few would have dreamed that in fact, the Roman Rite everyone had known would be altered beyond recognition.

A rite that had stood unchanged since 1570, and virtually unchanged since sometime in the first millennium, was suddenly entrusted to a commission led by Archbishop Annibale Bugnini to reform it. But anyone who has seen both the old and the new rites will agree that what we got was in fact basically a new rite, devised by the Archbishop Bugnini's commission in accord with their conjectures of what ancient liturgy had been like, and their ideas of what was necessary for "modern man." Most obvious to everyone, of course, is that the Latin language, which the Council document clearly did not envision disappearing, did in fact disappear for all practical purposes. But it's not just the language. Look at other things. The Canon of the Mass, no longer silent, but spoken aloud; the priest's lovely prayers at the foot of the altar eliminated, the offertory prayers almost completely re-written. Most significant of all, to my mind, the orientation of the altar is changed such that Mass is now celebrated facing the congregation.

Here, the reader will probably accuse me of the very rigidity which I earlier tried to disclaim. But I deny this. I am not saying that nothing should change. But I would

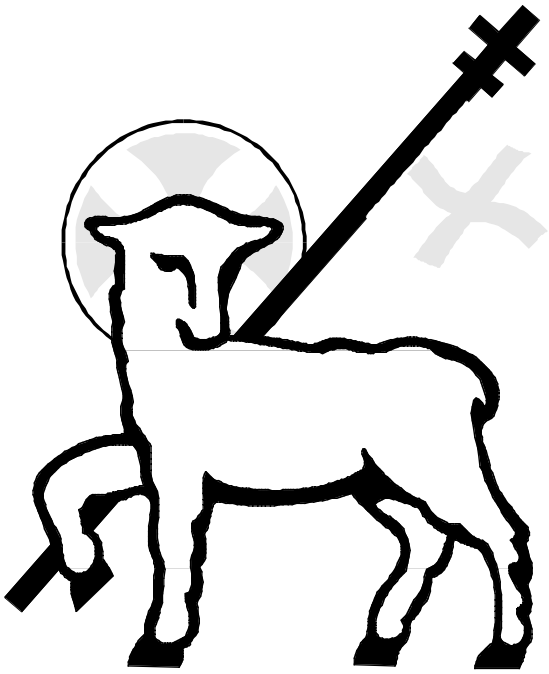
point out that in fact, everything that an observer first notices has practically changed. And I don't think it was generally for the better. Take some little things, like the prayers at the foot of the altar. These are a clear indication that something wondrous and awesome is about to take place, something which urgently requires purification of heart before even entering the sanctuary. The silent Eucharistic Prayer: there is no better way to show honor to the holiness of the mystery taking place than by deep interior and exterior silence,the pregnant silence that speaks louder than the greatest music, if one is attentive (and if one isn't, then even a spoken Eucharistic prayer is easily daydreamed through.) Above all, the fact that before, as is still done in the eastern rites, the priest faced the same direction as the worshippers, "toward the East," toward the Lord who is coming, who alone is worthy of our attention in this act of worship, while now he faces the congregation throughout. Don't get me wrong; plenty of priests can say Mass very reverently this way. Yet it is undeniable that this shift in direction has allowed the Mass in many places to become spontaneous, casual, and conversational.

This is further a problem because of the many options and opportunities for "improv" the new rite offers. And may I protest at the absurdity of having the priest follow the solemn postcommunion prayer with a series of banal announcements about bulletin items before giving the final blessing? There is no better example of how the modern Mass loses the character of a sacred service and takes on that of an informal prayer meeting.

These are some of the specific problems I see in the changes that were made. But beyond all the particulars, I am disturbed by the fact that the reformers had such a high opinion of their competence. The silent Roman canon had developed over centuries and remained unchanged for centuries. Now a few bureaucrats decided to totally change the way this central part of the Mass would look. The priest "with his back to the people" had been there from time immemorial, now all of a sudden this custom is dismissed as some remnant of the Dark Ages. Fifteen hundred years of saints and sinners had attended Mass in Latin, even in Germanic countries where Latin was never spoken: suddenly this mark of Catholic culture becomes almost suspect in most of the Church. We may make arguments in favor of what the reformers did. But I think the fact that many of these changes can seem so unproblematic to us should suggest that we have a highly inadequate appreciation of the role of liturgical tradition in forming our consciousness. "*Lex orandi, lex credendi*," and it is no coincidence that the reforms occurred at a time when the authority of the Church began to be disregarded by many Catholics, when the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist began to be widely disbelieved, when the very nature of the priesthood became obscured by the claims of radical feminists (not to mention the proliferation of "extra-ordinary" ministers of the Eucharist). As Fr. John Parsons puts it, "While it may be possible logically to believe in a Church which is an infallible guidein doctrines of faith and morals but which, for most of the time since its foundation, has promoted, in Archbishop Bugnini's striking phrase, 'lack of understanding, ignorance and dark night' in the worship of God, it is not possible psychologically to carry out a mental juggling act of this sort for very long, or on a scale that involves any great number of people." [1] The Eastern Churches, which would almost as soon adopt a different creed as a different liturgy, can be a good model to us in appreciating the importance of our traditions—even when our "Enlightened" modern rationalism can't fully understand them. The beauty of the organic development of the liturgy was largely the fact that it was pregnant with symbolism, and the way in which Bugnini's commission single-handedly rewrote the Mass does much to make it closer to a desymbolized Protestant service. Fr. Joseph Gelineau, who collaborated in the making of the new mass, put it best: "The Roman Rite as we knew it no longer exists. It has been destroyed."[2]

**These are some of the specific problems I see in the changes that were made. But beyond all the particulars, I am disturbed by the fact that the reformers had such a high opinion of their competence.**

So what am I proposing that we do? First, we should cease to view those who love and preserve the Tridentine Mass as reactionaries who can't stop living in the past. To be a Catholic *is* to live mainly in the past. We'd be pretty impoverished if our theological tradition had to begin again in 1965. Why can't we admit that those who use the 1500 year old liturgy may have an advantage over us with our 30 year old rite? This means, I would suggest, a serious effort by the Church to reach out to those who followed Archbishop Lefebvre in his tragic schism. The fact that Lefebvre died outside the Church, like Luther and Savonarola centuries ago, doesn't mean that he did not, like them, make some valid criticisms of what the Church was doing at the time. And for an example of a perfectly faithful 20th century Catholic who espoused many of the views I have been arguing, we need look no further than *The Devastated Vineyard*, by Dietrich von Hildebrand, whose philosophical works have influenced many of us at FUS and AMC.



Further, John Paul II's 1988 indult by which bishops can make the Tridentine Mass available to the faithful who desire it should be much more fully applied. It is simply a tragedy that one of the few things which some dioceses will not permit is the ability of some of their most faithful people to attend the rite which was the sustenance of Gregory, Anselm, Francis, Dominic, Aquinas, Ignatius of Loyola, John of the Cross, Alphonsus Liguori, John Vianney, the Little Flower, and Padre Pio. And I believe that those of us who may not have any appreciation for the Old Rite should make the effort to acquire it. It is our heritage, and we should not let it pass into oblivion. The Council Fathers didn't want it to, and if the Pope is to be believed in his 1988 letter *Ecclesia Dei*, he doesn't want it to either.

I am not suggesting that the Novus Ordo be abolished. Such a thing is impossible, short of a miracle, and would probably lead to worse problems. I agree more with Aidan Nichols, OP, who suggests letting the old and new rites coexist. Surely our much-vaunted liturgical pluralism can accommodate this? And I further believe that if we stop treating the Old Rite as if it is some kind of taboo, it will exercise a beneficent influence on many of the less desirable elements of the new rite which I have mentioned. To quote Fr. Parsons again, "It seems appropriate to record here what an Australian bishop said to me when I told him I thought it was reasonable to create a new rite of Mass, if desired, but unreasonable to forbid the celebration of the traditional form. His words were: 'Oh, but if they hadn't banned the old rite, nobody would have gone to the new!'" [3]

I must close. Let me once again beg not to be understood as in any way advocating disobedience to the Church's hierarchy. Whatever their faults, whatever their questionable decisions at times throughout history, they are our God-given shepherds. We must obey them, even if we disagree on matters of liturgical policy. More than that, we must love them, and above all, love our Holy Father, seeing our first duty not as one of rebellious critique, but of willing collaboration with the new evangelization. If at times this love requires us to speak out on behalf of a forgotten tradition, let us not let any rancor enter our hearts. And above all, I would proclaim that I rejoice to receive my Lord and God in the Eucharist, even when I feel the rite is less than ideal. However strongly felt, the paragraphs above are but my opinions, and a hope that a truly fruitful discussion may begin at our institutions on these issues. ■

*Michael Houser is a senior theology major at FUS, and Contributing Editor of the* Concourse.

[1] Fr. John Parsons, "Reform of the Reform?", in Sacred Music, vol.129, no.2, Summer 2002, p. 10

[2] Cf.Michael Davies, "Liturgical Shipwreck", TAN Books, 1995. (I don't agree with Davies on everything, but he has many good points, especially about the role Protestant sensibilities played in the Reform.)

[3] Parsons, p.16 Readers who want to find more good traditionalist titles might look for Klaus Gamber's "The Reform of the Roman Liturgy" and Aidan Nichols'"Looking at the Liturgy." The latter may be found in the liturgy section of the FUS bookstore. "The Spirit of the Liturgy" by Cardinal Ratzinger is also well worth anyone's time, and can likewise be bought in the FUS bookstore.

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