

Catholic Church. And to this company of literary converts—thoughtful, elegant writers, deep scholars—we may add the name of Joseph Pearce himself.

David W. Fagerberg
Concordia College
Moorhead, Minnesota

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The Catholic Imagination by Andrew Greeley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000) 213 pages, cloth.

Fr. Andrew Greeley is nothing if not a maverick. Although unfortunately one can hardly class him as an orthodox Catholic, in his new book, *The Catholic Imagination*, he says many things that we sometimes need reminding of, although he says them mixed with so much exaggeration and error that many readers are apt to give up the book with disgust. But however ill Greeley may express his thesis, he has hit on something both true and important, something so important that we would do well to make the effort to sift his wheat from his chaff. Let us then take a look at his book and his argument. Greeley states his basic thesis thus: "Catholics live in an enchanted world, a world of statues and holy water, stained glass and votive candles, saints and religious medals, rosary beads and holy pictures. But these Catholic paraphernalia are mere hints of a deeper and more pervasive religious sensibility which inclines Catholics to see the Holy lurking in creation. As Catholics, we find our houses and our world haunted by a sense that the

objects, events and persons of daily life are revelations of grace."

Thus Greeley terms this "Catholic imagination" as "sacramental." And I suppose that no one would deny that he is right, though we might wonder whether this sacramental approach to reality was not being fast done away with by the desecralization of the liturgy and the jettisoning of many traditional devotions. Greeley, however, who is no friend to the post-Vatican II iconoclasts, does not think that there has been much if any decline in this Catholic sacramentalism, and he uses statistics from opinion surveys to attempt to prove this. "Is this special Catholic sensibility gradually declining in the face of long-term trends of demystification and secularization? Certainly, in the years since the Second Vatican Council, some Catholic ideologues have tried to demystify the Catholic heritage in order to make it more palatable to moderns. They have not been successful, however . . . I am not persuaded that there is any evidence that shows a decline in mystery."

In order to demonstrate his thesis, Greeley says that he "will ask whether one can derive from works of high culture . . . permeated by Catholic sensibility hypotheses which predict the way ordinary Catholics behave and then test these hypotheses against empirical data." But he asserts that this Catholic sacramentality, especially when it concerns sexuality, has been held against the official and high cultural

Catholic tradition by a sort of underground Catholicism, more Catholic, apparently, than the Catholicism of the hierarchical Church, more Catholic than the Pope.

In fact, Greeley's attitude toward the teaching Church is problematic, to say the least. "Religion begins in the imagination and in stories, but it cannot remain there. . . . Bethlehem becomes the Incarnation. The empty tomb becomes the Resurrection. The final supper becomes the Eucharist. . . . The doctrine of the Incarnation has less appeal to the whole self than does the picture of the Madonna and Child in a cave. . . . The doctrine of the Real Presence is less powerful than the image of the final meal in the upper room."

Here is one of those passages where Greeley is not just wrong, but confused as well. Modern sentimentalism about Christmas, which at least till recently accepted the story of the Birth in the stable along with all sorts of warm and fuzzy feelings about it, without knowing in the least why one had those feelings, is an utterly shallow sentiment, the stuff of cheap Christmas cards. St. Luke's infancy Gospel is so powerful emotionally only because it chronicles the birth of the God-man. Indeed, this conjunction between Divinity and humanity is at the root of that sacramental attitude toward the world and toward life which Greeley rightly considers as characteristic of Catholics. Without the dogma the story would mean little. And as to the Real Presence "versus" the Last

Supper—I do not see how anyone who values (as Greeley does) Catholic sacramental sensibilities could ever doubt as to which was the more powerful symbol. The Blessed Sacrament, whether carried in procession or hidden in the tabernacle, is surely among the most emotionally powerful of all sacramental signs. Without that, the story of a first-century Rabbi having a last meal with his followers would hardly be remembered today. Greeley has this part of his argument backwards. It is only the dogma that gives meaning and strength—yes, and beauty and mystery—to the story. But Greeley is surely right that in Catholicism the dogmas have been incarnated in more than words, while in Protestantism this has not generally taken place. "These philosophical and theological differences are the bases . . . for the two different ways of approaching the divine reality that arose out of the Reformation. Put more simply, the Catholic imagination loves metaphors; Catholicism stresses the 'like' of any comparison (human passion is like divine passion), while Protestantism, when it is willing to use metaphors . . . stresses the unlike."

And, "Of all the world religions which emerged in the last half of the millennium before the Common Era and the first half of the first millennium of the Common Era, Catholicism is the most at ease with creation." (Although ordinary Catholics may not be losing their sense of the sacred, perhaps Greeley himself is,

for to speak of the "Common Era," is to use a phrase which by itself seems to betray that Birth story Greeley professes to be so caught by.)

At the end of the first chapter Greeley sums up in twelve statements the purpose of his book. They are not exactly the same as the purpose he enunciated at the beginning of the chapter, when he spoke of seeing "whether one can derive from works of high culture . . . hypotheses which predict the way ordinary Catholics behave." For in these twelve statements he suggests that at times the hierarchical Church has been less than friendly to this Catholic sensibility but that somehow ordinary Catholics even especially the less than faithful Catholics, have kept it alive. But if so, then it is not the high cultural and theological tradition that is the bearer of this sensibility but something else. This confusion exists throughout Greeley's book, because he cannot or will not come to terms with the role and place of the hierarchy and the magistrum as protectors of this sensibility and imagination that he values. We will look more at this later.

After the Introduction, the bulk of this book, chapters one through seven, consists of wide-ranging discussions of various topics, including "Sacred Place, Sacred Time" (chapter 1), "Sacred Desire" (chapter 2), "Community" (chapter 4) and "Hierarchy" (chapter 5), with a conclusion entitled "The Enchanted Imagination." In these chapters Greeley generally discusses some concrete work

of Catholic art or literature, seeking to show how it embodies a particular imaginative quality he wants to show that Catholics possess, then rounding off the chapter with polling data that show that Catholics do indeed possess that quality, or something akin to it at any rate. Frequently he is at pains to argue that the hierarchical Church does not possess this quality very much as compared with the erring, sinning Catholic people, who seem to have a sort of underground tradition of Catholicism that is the real heart of the Faith. For the purposes of this review, we will look at three of Greeley's chapters, those dealing with place and time, with sacred desire or sex, and with community.

Greeley's first chapter, "Sacred Place, Sacred Time," speaks about two Catholic churches, the cathedral in Cologne (which he persists in calling the Dom in Köln), and the small mission church of St. Francis Xavier in Arizona, "the last mission station that Eusebio Kino founded on the trail north from Mexico." What does he say about these two churches? This is a little hard to summarize, for Greeley is not the most analytical of authors. But what he seems to distill from these two sacred buildings is that the Church formed the imaginations of her children by the very buildings, by the statues of the saints, by the creation of sacred places such as these. "The more artistically skillful the church and professional the works of art which accompany the central narrative of the Eucharist, the better the storytelling

and the more Catholic the church. The honouring of God and the passing on of the stories are tasks too important to be done poorly. A Catholic church is a place where the rich stories of the Catholic heritage are told over and over again, with every skill that human ingenuity possesses."

In celebrating these sacred places, however, Greeley seeks to celebrate, or at least to suggest, a way of being Catholic that is not necessarily orthodox. He refers to a friend of his who left the Church in anger at the Pope, but who was still and who always would be a "Kölnsch Catholic." Greeley explains, "She meant that she would always look at the world from the vantage point of one who lives in the shadow of the *Dom*." So these churches and their statues have formed a sensibility, but not necessarily a sensibility that is always in harmony with the so-called institutional Church. But it is a sensibility that is attracted to the fine arts. And here our author produces his first sociological data as he demonstrates that Catholics who attend Mass regularly are more likely to appreciate the fine arts than non-Catholics. For example: "Catholics were more inclined to say that they liked the opera (27 percent to 19 percent) and classical music (55 percent to 47 percent). They were also more likely to report attendance at a fine arts performance in the preceding year—24 percent to 15 percent for dance, 21 percent to 13 percent for music, and 47 percent to 35 percent for visual arts."

This is all gratifying data, no doubt, but I wonder a bit whether an appreciation of and an attendance at serious artistic events is really the same as an appreciation of sacred space and sacred images. Greeley, however, thinks that there is a connection. "My theory led me to wonder whether Catholic church attendance, steeped as it is in a sacramental or metaphorical context, would have a special impact on fine arts consumption. If one is surrounded by cultural artifacts . . . when one worships, one might perhaps also have a greater interest in the fine arts. Frequency of churchgoing correlates dramatically with Catholic fine arts attendance and does not correlate significantly with Protestant fine arts attendance."

Or perhaps Greeley's argument might actually be an example of the secularization that he says is not taking place among Catholics. For if the mediating of the Divine by means of art has now become simply attending concerts or visiting museums, might we not see in that something of secularization? Of course, if this is simply a spillover from Catholic devotional life, then it is all for the good, though perhaps not really an argument for Greeley's overall thesis. For sacred place and time are not the same as "the greater level of interest in the fine arts among American Catholics." But Greeley does have a fine passage about the liturgy in this chapter which illustrates his unusual position, a viewpoint that is likely to

offend both the orthodox and the modernists.

"By 'liturgy' here I do not mean 'the Liturgy' in the ordinary Catholic sense. Nothing could be more destructive of the liturgical imagination than what passes for Liturgy in many American parishes: weekly doses of precious theorizing, cute tricks, inarticulate commentators, semiliterate readers, drab music, and poor homilies, and the multiplication of non-canonical (and hence illegal) rules by various gatekeepers ('liturgists,' religious educators, RCIA directors). If the liturgical imagination continues to survive, it will do so despite the 'liturgists' and not because of them. Its strength is rooted in the depths of the Catholic psyche with its ability to sense grace lurking everywhere."

And even more so, this description of his own seminary days. "(Chant was probably the only truly excellent thing which occurred at that seminary.) Thus, when one heard '*Rorate Coeli desuper et nubes pluunt justum!*' from the *Scola Cantorum*, one knew it was Advent and could almost taste Christmas."

Surely Greeley is right about Catholic attitudes toward place and time. Our entire liturgy and culture proves this. But whether the greater appreciation of Catholics for opera proves that they are not at the same time losing this attitude toward time and place seems to me not proven.

Chapter two is called "Sacred Desire," and is about sex. Its thesis is something like this: Despite the fact

that the hierarchical Church, particularly under the influence of Augustine, has sometimes taken a negative view of marital sex, Catholics have better sex lives than non-Catholics, and this is because of a popular Catholic attitude toward sex that has been transmitted via "the rituals, the art, the music, the architecture, the devotions, the stories of ordinary people." In this chapter Greeley seems more confused than usual, for he himself does not appear to know whether there is really a conflict between two traditions, the "high" and official tradition of the hierarchy, that was allegedly less than friendly toward marital sex, and the "popular tradition," handed down by "ritual and story, through song and dance, through priestly advice, through the instructions of one generation to another in the home and village . . . through the religious ambiance in which people lived." At one point he suggests that it is merely "an apparent conflict." And indeed, one might wonder what exactly shaped this magnificent folk Catholicism that Greeley praises so often, if it was not the official Catholicism of the hierarchy? For if Catholics are different from others today, what has made them different except that their lives and cultures have been shaped by the official hierarchy? If the further one goes from the Church the more authentic one's Catholicism is, then why is it among Catholics, especially practising Catholics, that Greeley finds his authentic Catholic tradition? Why not among those outside the Church who are surely entirely

free from the taint of the "high tradition"?

Of course, it is true that certain elements in the tradition have taken a negative view of human sexuality, and that, rightly or wrongly, this negative view is often associated with St. Augustine. Here I cannot fault Greeley, for in essence he says much the same about Augustine that Chesterton did in his biography of Aquinas. Consider some of what Chesterton wrote: "For instance, it was a very special idea of St. Thomas that Man is to be studied in his whole manhood; that a man is not a man without a body, just as he is not a man without his soul. A corpse is not a man; but also a ghost is not a man. The earlier school of Augustine and even of Anselm had rather neglected this, treating the soul as the only necessary treasure, wrapped for a time in a negligible napkin."

And later, of the Augustinian tradition, which "derived only from Augustine, and Augustine derived partly from Plato, and Plato was right, but not quite right. It is a mathematical fact that if a line be not perfectly directed towards a point, it will actually go further away from it as it comes nearer to it. After a thousand years of extension, the miscalculation of Platonism had come very near to Manicheism."

And I think that it is doubtless true that Catholics have intuited the natural sacramentality of marriage and the marriage act (what C.S. Lewis called a "natural sacrament, our human participation in, and ex-

position of, the natural forces of life and fertility—the marriage of Sky-Father and Earth-Mother"), from the Catholic penchant to see all reality as sacramental. But the official Church, despite some ambiguity, was often encouraging in this matter too. One might compare most Catholic translations of Proverbs 5:18-19 with most Protestant translations to see just one example. So when Fr. Greeley documents that "Sixty-eight percent of Catholic, as opposed to fifty-six percent of others, engage in sexual union at least once a week" or "Frequency of intercourse declines with age less precipitously among Catholics than among others" or "Catholics score significantly higher on the sexual playfulness scale," perhaps we are justified in seeing not only a popular tradition of folk Catholicism, but that "official" Church which surely exhorts love and affection between spouses and is responsible for those very sacraments without which we could hardly have a sacramental view of reality.

Next we will look at chapter four, which is entitled "Community." Here one is sometimes reminded of Michael Novak's book, *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*, a book which celebrates the uniqueness of southern and eastern European Catholic ethnic groups. Here Greeley talks chiefly about films and novels whose characters are rooted in Catholic neighbourhoods, and he argues that this neighbourhood setting and rootedness in one's neighbourhood are characteristic of Catholics.

“Clearly, family and local community are overwhelming issues among Italian American filmmakers. They do not choose to make such films simply because they find the settings interesting or because they have discovered that audiences like the trappings of Italian American culture, though these motives are doubtless at work, too. They choose their settings because in a certain sense that’s all they know. They do not use the Catholic sacramental rituals merely to provide local colour but because, whatever their relationship to the Church and its sacramental system, the rituals are an important part of their lives, a forceful way of presenting their experiences of critical turning points.”

And here again Greeley, however much he may complain about the “official” Church, finds it very much in tune with popular Catholicism. “Michael Schuck studied the 284 papal encyclicals written between 1740 and 1987 and found that, regardless of context, subject matter, and the personal concerns of various popes, the emphasis has always been on community, whether geographically regional as in the early years or global as in the later years.”

Quoting Schuck, he continues: “Internal to all the popes’ social recommendations and judgments is a communitarian understanding of the self and society. Whether rooted in territorial custom, cosmological nature, or affective sentiment, the self is invariably defined by the totality of its relations with other beings,

and particularly, with other selves. Hence, the encyclicals constantly protest liberalism’s Enlightenment inspired notion of the self as a radically unencumbered, autonomous chooser of ends.”

And does Fr. Greeley find that this communitarian ethic persists? Yes; whether it is in the fact that “at the University of Arizona, in the allegedly homogenized Sunbelt . . . Catholics are more likely than Protestants to phone home or e-mail their parents or siblings,” or that “Protestants were more likely to value industry and thrift in their children and Catholics more likely to value religious faith and a sense of loyalty and duty,” or in the other data that he has gathered, Greeley sees signs that “the Catholic social ethos was alive and well.” And surely here, as generally in his other chapters, Greeley is correct in his broad brush assertions, however much one may want to quarrel with some of his specifics. His most troubling is undoubtedly his frequent diatribes against the hierarchical church, as in the following: “How is it that Catholics live in a world that is enchanted, despite the fact that their church leaders and thinkers are incorrigibly prosaic and seem to have hardened their hearts against the poetry of religion?” Or, as when in his concluding chapter, “The Enchanted Imagination” he addresses those with any authority in the Church: “And those of you who are leaders and teachers—of whatever ideological hue—may ponder the

possibility that you might have missed completely a powerful and critically important component of the Catholic heritage, that indeed you might be prosaic persons surrounded by enchantment.”

I do not know why Fr. Greeley assumes that only the laity are favoured enough to possess a Catholic imagination. Although it seems true enough that most of those who so easily jettisoned the Latin Mass in the 1960s did not understand well the importance of mystery and enchantment in the Faith, it is not the Holy Father and Cardinal Ratzinger but the ICEL crowd that Greeley should be criticizing. And surely the general demoralization which has overtaken the Church since Vatican II has as part of its root cause this loss of the Catholic imagination, although many, both clergy and laity, still do not understand this very well.

Thus I have no trouble in agreeing with Fr. Greeley not only that there is such a thing as the Catholic imagination, but that it is still evident in the lives of ordinary Catholics, even Catholics whose identification with the Church is less than what it should be. But while this Catholic sensibility doubtless continues, has secularization had absolutely no effect on it? Is this sensibility impervious to secularization? Has secularization not really occurred, or has it been trivial in its effects? Greeley arguably thinks that secularization has not occurred. He says: “I don’t believe in either modernity or post-modernity. I find no persuasive

evidence that either modern or post-modern humankind exists outside of faculty office buildings. Everyone tends to be pre-modern.” But we might wonder whether this is so. And so, finally, I want to take a look at the question of the continuance and meaning of the Catholic imagination in the face of modernity and in the face of the peculiar kind of secularization that has occurred among Catholics since the Second Vatican Council.

First the general secularization of the modern world. This has had more than one part. The loss of millions of Catholics to Protestantism was certainly a kind of secularization. Sociologist Peter Berger in *The Sacred Canopy*, in his description of the differences between the Catholic and the Protestant cosmos, seems not only to recount a profound secularization but to have already stated Greeley’s thesis as well. “If compared with the ‘fullness’ of the Catholic universe, Protestantism appears as a radical truncation, a reduction to ‘essentials’ at the expense of a vast wealth of religious contents. This is especially true of the Calvinist version of Protestantism, but to a considerable degree the same may be said of the Lutheran and even the Anglican Reformations. . . . If we look at these two religious constellations more carefully, though, Protestantism may be described in terms of an immense shrinkage in the scope of the sacred in reality, as compared with its Catholic adversary. The sacramental apparatus is reduced to a

minimum and, even there, divested of its more numinous qualities. . . . At the risk of some simplifications, it can be said that Protestantism divested itself as much as possible from the three most ancient and most powerful concomitants of the sacred—mystery, miracle, and magic. This process has been aptly caught in the phrase ‘disenchantment of the world.’ The Protestant believer no longer lives in a world ongoingly penetrated by sacred beings and forces.”

But there has been another type of secularization, not just the disenchanting universe of Protestantism, but the explicit removal of God and religion in any form from culture and life, also described by Berger. “By secularization we mean the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols. When we speak of society and institutions in modern Western history, of course, secularization manifests itself in the evacuation by the Christian churches of areas previously under their control or influence—as in the separation of church and state, or in the expropriation of church lands, or in the emancipation of education from ecclesiastical authority. When we speak of culture and symbols, however, we imply that secularization is more than a social-structural process. It affects the totality of cultural life and of ideation, and may be observed in the decline of religious contents in the arts, in philosophy, in literature and, most

important of all, in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world. Moreover, it is implied here that the process of secularization has a subjective side as well. As there is a secularization of society and culture, so is there a secularization of consciousness. Put simply, this means that the modern West had produced an increasing number of individuals who look upon the world and their own lives without the benefit of religious interpretations.”

Now all the Protestants of Europe were originally Catholics, and whatever Catholic imagination they had had, eventually they or their descendants were unable to transmit further. And this is true of those Catholics who, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, lost their faith altogether—eventually they were unable to transmit a Catholic imagination to their children. Several times Fr. Greeley points out that Catholics who practise faithfully score higher on his various polls and tests than those who do not. But with the massive decline in practice since the 1960s, who is going to socialize the children or grandchildren of the new generation of Catholics, those who still may have some identification with the Church, but whose children may well not? My wife knew a woman from Argentina, irregular in her own practice and not entirely orthodox in her faith, who proclaimed that the Faith was “in her bones.” I do not doubt but that in an important sense it was, but what of her children

or her grandchildren? I suspect that many of us know more than one person like this, people who received deficient religious training in the 1960s or 70s, but who are living on the capital of generations of their Catholic ancestors. But this cannot go on forever, and the Catholic sensibility that Fr. Greeley celebrates will eventually die away if it is not strengthened by that entity that he is so ambivalent about—the hierarchical Church with its dogmas and morals, the stuff without which the Catholic imagination will not last.

But there is one more issue of secularization that we need to look at. As Berger goes on to say, the “carrier” of secularization within Western culture has been “the modern economic process, that is, the dynamic of industrial capitalism.” And our culture has been overwhelmed by this dynamic for quite some time. One will even find Catholics who defend this dynamic, though as Chesterton wrote, “To brag of brute prosperity, to admire the most muddy millionaires who had cornered wheat by a trick . . . all that is as simply and openly Anti-Christian as the Black Mass.” But this economic secularism has been characteristic of the modern world, and so our last question is whether and how modern religion, in particular modern Catholicism, may have been tainted in its religious imagination by this very secularism masquerading as religion.

Will Herberg, in his 1955 book, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, argued

that in the United States religion itself had become a kind of secularism. That to be Protestant, Catholic or Jewish was simply a way of being an American and that to be an American is to subscribe to the American Way of Life. “It seems to me that a realistic appraisal of the values, ideas, and behavior of the American people leads to the conclusion that Americans, by and large, do have their ‘common religion’ and that that ‘religion’ is the system familiarly known as the American Way of Life. It is the American Way of Life that supplies American society with an ‘overarching sense of unity’ amid conflict. It is the American Way of Life about which Americans are admittedly and unashamedly ‘intolerant.’ It is the American Way of Life that provides the framework in terms of which the crucial values of American existence are couched. By every realistic criterion the American Way of Life is the operative faith of the American people.”

Nor, according to Herberg, are American Catholics different in this respect. At one point he calls “American Catholicism . . . American Protestantism and American Judaism . . . the three ‘religions of [American] democracy.’” And he goes on to say, “No institution can remain part of American life without being extrovert and activist, and the Catholic Church, which so aspires to be American, cannot help but take on the color of the American environment.” So my last question, the last matter we will look into, is

whether, if Herberg is right, how a separate "Catholic imagination" could coexist within this dominant American religion.

The United States of America, from the very beginning, has held itself out to be the New Order of the Ages, creating and fostering a new man, whose civic life, as stated in the first amendment to the Constitution, was to be altogether free from religious notions and constraints. To the extent that Catholics have identified with that secular messianic mythos, to that extent we have given up areas of life and culture to secularism. And one of the chief effects of the American New Order has been the unleashing of economic forces which an earlier and Christian civilization had tried to restrain. So to the extent that Catholics became "good Americans" they lost some of their Catholicism. But it seems to be the case that here again we have been living on the capital of past generations. Greeley's polling data, and in fact, one's general impression of Catholic life as against Protestant and secular life, indicate the reality of the "Catholic imagination." This has survived, probably because Catholics in America have roped off areas of life from their religion, and kept other areas within the ambit of Catholic culture. Thus while exhibiting in many ways an allegiance to the American Way of Life, American Catholics have also segregated parts of their lives which continue, to some degree at least, to be permeated with a Catholic sensibility. Herberg's Catholics of the 1950s could

wear scapulars and blessed medals while otherwise identifying with the ethic of success and materialism. In doing so, we have been living off the Catholicism of our ancestors, of the European immigrants, and now of the many immigrants from Latin America, the Philippines and elsewhere. But to the extent that we recognize that a Catholic imagination is the necessary and natural concomitant of adherence to the Church's dogmas, that a Catholic consciousness and a Catholic culture ought to result from Catholic belief, then we may begin to make explicit efforts to retain and revive this sensibility, even if that means that we must explicitly reject much of what American culture offers us by way of her pseudo-goods.

Orthodox Catholics have been right to insist on the importance, the necessity, of accepting magisterial teaching on faith and morals. But is there not sometimes a danger of reducing the Faith to a system of thought and behavior, whereas it is a way of life as well? In the face of the massive loss of faith which has occurred since the middle of the 1960s, we do well to stress the basics of doctrine and morality. But we must also stress Greeley's Catholic imagination, not indeed, entirely as he understands it, but as a way of thinking, feeling and living, both individual and corporate, that flows out of being a Catholic. And the relationship of this Catholic imagination to our surrounding culture must be studied and reflected upon more seri-

ously than was done in the past if we hope to retain and even to strengthen it. It is not enough to believe, as Greeley appears to do, that somehow, despite anything that may happen, the Catholic sensibility will never die. No, the Catholic imagination is important, it is essential, and it must receive the attention of those Catholics who know that the hierarchical Church is not the enemy but rather the friend and guardian of that imagination.

That is simply one part of recognizing that Catholicism is a culture as well as a religion, or rather, that as a religion it creates a culture, and as a culture it presupposes a religion. The sooner orthodox Catholics recognize this truth with all its implications, the sooner will any revival or restoration of Catholic faith be complete and genuine. Then, although what we accomplish may be small, it will be true, and exhibit a Catholic imagination that is both faithful to the magisterium and faithful to that sense of the Faith that the faithful have passed down for many centuries, not, indeed, in spite of the teaching Church, but as past of the deposit of faith and Catholic life that comes to us from the Apostles.

Thomas Storck
Greenbelt, Maryland

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Greene on Capri by Shirley Hazzard (Vivago, 2000), 149 pages, £12.99

No one in a hurry should pick up Shirley Hazzard's *Greene on*

Capri to extend their knowledge of Greene's biography, to glean a chronological account of a particular friendship, even to find signposts or chapter headings indicating a sense of direction. Any such potential reader should be discouraged, or at least admonished about patience, and reminded of the possibilities of serendipity. Even the title of this "memoir" is misleading: lengthy sections of this short book are not concerned with Greene, but with aspects of Capri, its history and literary associations, or Harold Acton, or Norman Douglas. It is a rambling, rather Edwardian, essay, which jumps randomly from describing a long friendship with Greene, to judgments on his books, to quotations (never referenced) to other authors. Most irritatingly, there are no chapter or section headings, and of course no index. Your reviewer persisted. Shirley Hazzard met Greene on Capri when the young Australian and her older husband, Francis Steegmuller, visited there in the late 1960s, and a sporadic relationship began which was resumed about twice a year when they severally returned to Capri, until the late 1980s. It was largely conducted over meals in a café in Anacapri. But these last sentences are oddly precise and factual, informative, as introduction to an account of this book. At first Greene seems almost dwarfed in importance by the writer, who indulges in some ill-considered fine writing in her description of Greene. His presence was "immediate and interesting, with