THE LEGACY OF
AVERY CARDINAL DULLES, s.j.

HIS WORDS AND HIS WITNESS

EDITED BY ANNE-MARIE KIRMSE, o.p. AND MICHAEL M. CANARIS

Foreword by Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick
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The just shall flourish like the palm tree,
Shall grow like a Cedar of Lebanon.
Planted in the house of the LORD,
They shall flourish in the courts of our God.
They shall bear fruit even in old age
Always vigorous and sturdy.

—Psalm 92:13–15

In gratitude for the life and ministry of
Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.—
mentor, colleague, friend
May his memory live among us as a loving benediction!
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I first had the privilege of meeting Avery Dulles when he was a young scholastic and came to Fordham University in the 1950s. I say young because, even though he was much older than we were, he had the gift of being able to be part of our life and he always knew how to find the words to be helpful even if we did not always perceive the depth of his conversation.

In those days, Fordham College had two sodalities. One was for juniors and seniors and the other for the lowerclassmen. It was 1952 and I was prefect of the freshmen-sophomore sodality, and a Father Monahan was our moderator. Avery Dulles had just come to Fordham as a scholastic in what the Jesuits call regency. He would have an opportunity to teach and to perform other useful functions at the university and, during that time, he had been assigned to be the assistant moderator of the freshmen-sophomore sodality. We all stood in quite a bit of awe of him since we knew that he had been a naval officer and indeed a submariner and, after January 1953, also that he was the son of the secretary of state. We also recognized that he had been a convert and looked forward to our meetings with him.

My recollection is that he did not speak too much. He was a great listener, and only on occasion would he do more than comment on what we were doing and maybe give us some words of guidance. We were not students of great theological or philosophical themes but were interested in the role of Catholic action that the sodality encouraged, along with developing a greater devotion to Our Lady and through her to her Son.

Avery was very helpful to us there. He obviously was, even at that time, a man of rather intense prayer and understood the mysteries and values of the Church in a special way. We sometimes marveled at his conversation and the depth of his faith which often, almost accidentally, were revealed as he spoke to us. We knew, of course, that he had not grown up
a Catholic and it was wonderful not only that he had absorbed the deepest understanding of our faith but that he saw in it so much that was to be lived and exercised and appreciated. My recollections of him were of a man who truly understood the things that we tried to do as members of the sodality, but understood them in a way that was far beyond us. By this I do not mean that he spoke above our heads. Maybe the best thing to say was that he often spoke directly to our hearts and that made a difference.

A tall, lanky man with a quick smile and not too many words, he was always there at our meetings, challenging us from time to time, but never interfering with the somewhat complex day-to-day routines of a freshmen and sophomore group of sodalists. It was during that time that there was a photo taken for the college yearbook. Every group in the university had to have a picture, if not of the entire membership, at least of the officers, and I was privileged to be in the photo with Avery and with my classmates who had been elected to guide the sodality that year. The picture, of course, became somewhat famous in that, just about fifty years later, two of the five or six people in it were named cardinals of the Church on the same day. The coincidence was striking. Of course, the reality was that Avery had made an enormous contribution to the Church and to theology and I was just so privileged to say that I knew him and that I had known him for a long time.

After his regency at Fordham, Avery returned to the seminary to complete his theological studies, and I left Fordham to go to Saint Joseph’s Seminary in Dunwoodie, where I too began to prepare for the priesthood, in my case for the Archdiocese of New York. During that period, we spoke from time to time and kept some level of contact, although he was so much more intensely involved in his studies and in the preparation for his remarkable teaching and writing in theology during the years that lay ahead of him.

At a certain point in time, I believe it probably was in my second theology year, I got a call from him that was more than just the normal greeting. He was obviously somewhat concerned over the accidental details that would accompany his ordination to the priesthood. He told me that he would have to have a reception following his first Mass and he really had no idea what one does to get something like that ready. Somewhat rashly, I assured him that it was very easy and that, if I could help,
I would certainly be delighted. There was a note of great relief in his voice as he told me that he would be very happy if I would do the whole thing.

I realized that I had had no experience in doing these things either, and so it began, a very interesting and even somewhat comical approach to making this as pleasant and fitting an event as possible without overshadowing the more important event of his ordination and the beginning of his priestly service. I truly do not remember all the things that we organized for that day. I know that I gathered some of my classmates and we all worked together to arrange the Mass and the subsequent reception. It came quickly and he seemed to be very pleased with it. I think that everyone was pleased, but, since he would put us all very much at our ease right from the start, I think the guests would have been satisfied by anything we did. He was extraordinarily gracious in thanking me and the others for what we had done, although it was a labor of love for a dear friend and for someone we somehow knew would make an even greater contribution to the Church in the world and especially in our own country.

Some few years later, when I was studying toward my own postordination degrees at the Catholic University of America, he was living at Georgetown, and once or twice he would be so good as to take the bus over to the other side of town and spend an hour or so chatting with me and talking about the things that he was doing. Our lives in education were very different. He continued to delve into the deepest and most difficult areas of the theological sciences, wrestling from time to time with some of the great Fathers and doctors and coming to an understanding that would be sharp and thoughtful and add its own special gift to the Church’s teaching. I, on the other hand, had become one of the chaplains of Catholic University, and my own studies, although hopefully pastoral, were in no way as profound and as theologically or philosophically as rich as those of my friend.

Ultimately, I moved down to the missions in Puerto Rico for some years and lost track of Avery. When I came back to New York, my life became very much taken over by responsibilities to another holy man, the Servant of God, Cardinal Terence Cooke, whose secretary I was for almost seven years. In those days, I read about Avery and heard about him and perhaps had one or two chances to greet him and talk for a few moments about “the old days,” but I more or less lost contact with him, except through the scholarly journals.
I had heard the rumors, from the curia and from friends who know more about these things than ordinary bishops do, that Father Avery Dulles might be named a cardinal. That was a matter of rejoicing, because it would put the Holy Father’s seal on the long and fascinating work of my friend. The great surprise came when we were named cardinals at the same time, since I had just recently received my appointment as archbishop of Washington. Greeting him as the new cardinals gathered was a real cause of joy for me and I suspect for him as well. He was rather baffled by the extraordinary preparations made for the day and by all the things that we as new cardinals had to learn and to remember. Many of us will never forget the problem he had with his biretta as he knelt before the Holy Father and seemed to have it bounce off his head two or three times. I was not close enough to see John Paul’s face but, knowing him as well, I am sure there was a smile there as he continued the service and hoped that there would be no more biretta-tipping than was necessary!

I always had a chance to be with him when we were in Rome together or at the bishops’ meetings. For some reason or other, since I was more experienced in the matters of clerical life at the episcopal level, I tried to make sure that someone was always with him and that someone could take care of him to check that he was okay and that he had whatever he needed. The Jesuits always assigned someone who was both thoughtful and gracious and careful of their special cardinal, and I was really never needed, but it was nice to see that he was taken care of so well and that he received the respect of so many others in the College of Cardinals for his brilliance and his teaching. I also think he made an impression on all of us by his simplicity, his humility, and his kindness.

He made in American theology and on the American hierarchy a mark that will not be forgotten. Even now, some years after his death, bishops and cardinals mention his name and some of the things that he may have taught or may have spoken about, or positions that he gave voice to during some of our gatherings. We always listened when he spoke. I confess that we did not always agree with him, but you had to be pretty sure of yourself to disagree, because not only did he have the reputation of being a great theologian, but he could present his arguments and his deepest thoughts with an extraordinary clarity and forcefulness.

I miss him very much for so many reasons. One of which is that his writings are still challenging and it would be so good to sit down with him and talk about them. Another reason is that his voice was always a
voice of reason and of caring for his brothers and sisters. He made a mark on our Church and on our society not just because of his deep theology and his learning but maybe just as much by his presence and his kindness. Cardinal Egan, as he preached his eulogy at Avery’s funeral, said some beautiful things, but the best part of it was that he and I were able to say farewell not just to a brother cardinal but to a brilliant theologian, to a remarkable teacher in the Church, to a splendid follower of Ignatius, and to a friend.

Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick
Archbishop Emeritus of Washington, D.C.
Fordham University stands as the bookends surrounding the beginning and the end of the long and influential academic career of Avery Dulles. He came to Fordham as Mr. Avery Dulles, S.J., a Jesuit regent, to teach philosophy in the fall of 1951. He ended that career as the Laurence J. McGinley Professor of Religion and Society when he died in 2008. In the intervening years he taught at Woodstock College and The Catholic University of America, from which he took mandatory retirement in 1988 when he turned seventy, and retained the title of professor emeritus of that university. He also served as visiting professor in colleges and universities at home and abroad and received thirty-nine honorary degrees. Many of his lectures were published in periodicals and as chapters in books. In fact, he himself published several books containing various essays based on his lectures. The amount of his publications is staggering. He wrote twenty-five books, coauthored four more, published more than eight hundred articles, book reviews, forewords, introductions, and letters to the editor. To date his writings have been translated into Italian, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish, Greek, Polish, Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Hungarian, and Czech and are available in hardcover, paperback, and in digital versions, including online and even on Kindle. And he wasn’t finished! He had plans of writing at least one more book and had asked us to begin compiling his homilies. Hopefully, these projects will one day come to fruition.

It is our hope that this work will serve—for theologians, scholars, contemporary believers, and all men and women of goodwill—as a research guide, a sort of liminal passageway, into the splendid mansion of Dulles’s thought. We have made every effort to be careful, thorough, and exhaustive in our diligent attempt to check by hand each entry for content, spelling, and accuracy. However, in Part I, some of the entries in “Articles
and Essays” and “Reviews and Letters to the Editor” do not include a date of publication or volume number, because this information wasn’t included in the periodical in which the article was published. This is especially true with some of the foreign material.

A project of this kind can never be definitively pronounced complete. The cardinal’s writings are constantly being translated, disseminated, republished, and commented upon. If any major lacunae or bibliographical citation errors are discovered, we would welcome the correction, as we too are pilgrims traversing with the reader and with Dulles toward “Him in whom we have believed.” Our goal in publishing this bibliography is to extend, not to speak the final word on, the web of influence of our beloved cardinal.

The structure of the present work is as follows. We are blessed to have Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, archbishop emeritus of Washington, D.C., pen the foreword. The then-Mr. Dulles worked with young Ted in the sodality here at Fordham five decades before they were raised to the cardinalate together on February 21, 2001.

The first section presents Dulles’s comprehensive bibliography in a series of chapters: books; articles and essays; book reviews and letters to the editor; and translations, forewords, and introductions to other authors’ writings. The poems and essays he had published while he was a student at Choate Preparatory School in Connecticut are listed separately. While these are not specifically academic writings, they show what interested him as a young teenager. Every entry in the bibliography represents an original publication. Therefore, all reprints, translations, excerpts, adaptations, and new editions are listed under the entry for the original publication.

The second section contains numerous elements that we hope will shed light upon the inspiring twilight of Dulles’s life. But we begin with the first of Avery Dulles’s lectures of which there is a written copy in existence. It was given to the sodality alumni at Fordham in September 1952. It is appropriate to include it here, just before the last of his lectures. We then present the “Farewell Address as McGinley Professor,” his last lecture, which was given on April 1, 2008, just after the publication of Church and Society: The Laurence J. McGinley Lectures, 1988–2007 by Fordham University Press. The response to that lecture was given by Rev. Robert P. Imbelli of Boston College and is included in this present volume. Dr. Anne-Marie Kirmse, O.P., has written a reflection on our daily life with
him as he suffered the ravishing effects of post-polio syndrome, and she describes the services that followed the cardinal’s death. The book ends with the beautiful homily given by Edward Cardinal Egan, then-archbishop of New York, at the final funeral Mass at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, and the inspiring homily by Patrick J. Ryan, S.J., at the Mass of Internment for Cardinal Dulles at the Jesuit cemetery in Auriesville, New York, just before he was laid to rest. Father Ryan has succeeded Cardinal Dulles as holder of the McGinley Chair.

This book has been the product of many hands. Joseph M. McShane, S.J., president of Fordham University, has been most supportive in his desire to honor the cardinal’s memory. It was Father McShane’s idea to publish the bibliography as a companion volume to *Church and Society*. We wish to express our deepest gratitude to the following friends of the McGinley Chair Office. Without them this book would not exist. Many student workers over the years typed the individual items. In particular, two of the students, Emily Cardozo and Mary P. Kolar, deserve special mention for their excellent office skills. Dr. Jonathan Armstrong did yeoman’s work in organizing the various entries into the present chapter format. Without his attention to detail and his clear and precise thought patterns, the present book would have taken many more years to prepare for publication. Mrs. Maureen Noone, the cardinal’s secretary, spent many hours tracking down elusive references. And we are deeply indebted to the staff in Walsh Family Library on the university campus for their support both to the cardinal and to ourselves in our research. We would be remiss in not publicly acknowledging the assistance of Henry Bertels, S.J., special collections; Jan Kelsey, head reference librarian; Patrice Kane, director of archives; Robert Hinkle, duplicating services; and Alicia Castillo and Helena Cuniffe of circulation. They have been gracious and competent partners in our work. Last, but by no means least, we are grateful for the encouragement and guidance of our editors at Fordham University Press.

It has been one of the great joys of our lives to immerse ourselves so fully in the thought and writings of Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., during the compilation of the present work. Cardinal Dulles must be included in any objective conversation of the most influential and prolific theologians in American history. And while his personal and professional life as a teacher, author, prominent ecclesial figure, and devoted Son of
Ignatius affected and shaped innumerable journeys of faith, we can testify only to two.

*Ad majorem Dei gloriam!*

Anne-Marie Kirmse, O.P., and Michael M. Canaris
February 11, 2011
Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes
THE LEGACY OF
AVERY CARDINAL DULLES, S.J.
PART I

Cardinal Dulles’s Legacy in His Words
Choate School Writings

Charles Avery Dulles

Editor’s note: Avery Dulles was baptized Charles Avery Dulles but was never called Charles. As a young adult he legally changed his name to Avery Dulles.

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Reviews and Letters
to the Editor

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Forewords, Introductions, and Translations of Other Authors’ Works

1953

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PART II

Cardinal Dulles’s Legacy in His Witness
Lecture to Sodality Alumni

Mr. Avery Dulles, S.J.

September 21, 1952

I am very happy to be able to talk to this group. My relatively large number of years as a layman gave me some opportunity to observe, from a layman’s point of view, the enormous possibilities of the apostolate of laymen by laymen. As you will hear from me in a few minutes, in my own journey to the faith I was completely out of contact with the clergy but was greatly helped by several apostolic laymen such as yourselves. While in the navy during World War II, I saw a great deal of heroic devotion and Catholicity in a number of my fellow officers and men. I feel that we are in an age when the laity are regaining the important place that they had in the apostolate in the early centuries of the Church.

This is, is it not, an age of collective action? The wars of our age are total wars, not the work of a few professional soldiers. Every citizen is actively engaged in the struggle. The Church on earth is a Church at war—it is the Church militant—locked in eternal struggle with the powers of darkness. If the Church is to be abreast of the times—and through God’s providence she is abreast—all Catholics are called upon for active service. Collectively organized.

That is what the Holy Father has been proclaiming. Last February, speaking to the Roman people, he called upon them, clergy and laity together, to initiate a “mighty spiritual reawakening . . . having as its aim the complete renewal of Christian life . . . and the reconstruction of a Christian order.”

The sodality is consecrated to just that task. That is why the sodality is an instrument ideally suited to our times. That is what the Holy Father said in 1948 in his apostolic constitution! The perfect Catholic, the Catholic of the stature that the sodality has ever been accustomed to aim for, is
more than ever needed in our times to overcome the “spiritual barren-
ness” that afflicts men’s hearts.

It is my privilege to work with the sodality of Fordham College, and I
consider it a double privilege to address you today, who are postgraduate
sodalists, super-sodalists.

My topic, as announced in the letters which were mailed to you, is
“How I found my faith at Harvard.” The title will perhaps strike you as
strange and almost paradoxical. Harvard, no doubt, symbolizes to your
mind the epitome of secularism, of faithlessness. How many there are
who could stand up, if they were here, as soon as I have sat down, and
address you on the topic of how they lost their faith at Harvard.

Now I am not here to make any generalizations about Harvard or
about the Catholics there. I am not going to discuss what happens to
others at Harvard but to tell you, as simply as I can, my own story. The
topic, how I found my faith, is a very personal one—and how can the
subject of faith be phrased in anything except personal terms. For each of
us the story of his faith is the intimate history of his own personal relations
with the divine Person who seeks to enter into each of our hearts by every
door which we will open to Him.

I was raised a Presbyterian, but most modern Presbyterians, as you no
doubt know, have shelved the teachings of John Calvin, with the result
that they are left with what could be called a nondogmatic brand of
Christianity. Religion among liberal Presbyterians is pretty much di-
vorced from any well-defined creed. That was my home environment.
But my ideas were molded far less by home influences than by the schools
which I attended. From the age of twelve I was in boarding schools, and
my teachers were, almost to a man, a negative influence on my religion.
The whole curriculum of the modern secular school, at least in the hands
of nearly everyone teaching in it, is, in my opinion and from my experi-
ence, calculated to lead the student away from God. I studied languages,
history, and physical science, but in no course that I took did it seem that
God had any place in it at all. Even the chapel service conducted in these
schools seemed to have nothing to do with God. The sermons were for
the most part talks on school spirit, suggestions for getting ahead in the
world, winning friends, influencing people, and leading a generally happy
life. I did not mind the chapel services. I found them interesting and
educational. But I never felt in the least out of place as I sat in my pew
without any definite belief in even the existence of God. I am quite sure
that nearly the whole congregation, and very many of the preachers, considered that Christ was nothing better than a fine and noble man.

There is no student who can resist such influences. I cannot bear to think of Catholic boys being placed in the sort of atmosphere that prevails in the modern secular boarding school. I am sure that most of them are sooner or later sucked into the morass of skepticism. The boys whom I knew well—some of them very honest and honorable—were religious skeptics.

In this state of mind, and with these companions, I went to Harvard in 1936. Harvard is not a college in the sense that Fordham is. What is called the college is almost completely absorbed in the university. The organization is immense and impersonal. Nobody knows who you are or takes much notice of you. The incoming freshman is free to do whatever he pleases, and most of us did exactly what we pleased. We showed up occasionally for classes and regularly for examinations, and just about got by, and the rest of our time was our own.

The influences, needless to say, were not strongly religious. My friends were the same general group with whom I had entered college. They became increasingly confirmed in materialism. There were a few Catholics about, but they seemed very quiet. I guess that a fair number of them really had the faith, but they didn’t shed an aura of faith about them. They were on the defensive, and avoided religious discussions. How could they help but be, since they were few against so many?

Frankly, I found it hard to understand how, if they really believed the astounding and revolutionary doctrines taught by Christ, they could be so passive. I was a bit scandalized, at least when I began to come nearer to the faith myself. I still feel that the Catholic, wherever he goes, should, out of a desire to give the truth to others, show a quiet realization that he has something very special—he has found what is for all mankind the Way, the Truth, and the Life. (I don’t advocate being pugnacious, of course. There is nothing worse than the Catholic who is always refuting everybody else’s errors, whether he understands them or not.)

But to return to my story. I have reached ebb tide. About the end of my freshman year I began to look on life as completely meaningless. Nothing, in the long run, made any difference at all. The world was rolling on its way from eternity to eternity, driven by blind mechanical necessity. What if, through some accident, life momentarily appeared on
some planet spinning giddily through space? Did it make much difference if men fought and cheated and killed one another? Soon the nightmare would be over. Life would be extinct in the universe, and the elements would shift without pain or pleasure, without purpose and without frustration.

In this sort of universe—the universe in which I thought I was actually living—there was no room for moral duty, there was nothing for man to adore, no one worthy of his service.

Is it a wonder that crime increases among a people many of whom look upon the world in this light? Is it a wonder that the birthrate goes down and that insanity grows more frequent? This sort of philosophy, this outlook of confusion and despair, can do only two things—it can drive a man to drink or it can drive him to think!

I found out in those days what I now know is true of every man—that the strongest impulse of the human heart is to love. Man needs something above him to which he can consecrate himself. The deepest instinct of his nature is to serve, to adore. Yes, and he needs to be loved.

A good many of my friends were attracted toward new political philosophies, which they frankly accepted as substitutes for religion. There were a few Fascists, Nazis, Trotskyites, but a great number turned toward Stalinist Communism. Some of the best boys in college with me, boys who would have made fine Catholics—and I still have hope for many of them. They were driven by generosity, they couldn’t live merely for the sake of a large income, they felt a deep bond of communion with the poorest workingman in Spain, the most oppressed Negro in South Africa, the starving untouchables of India. Communism seemed to them an effort to do something to elevate these men, to give their lives new meaning and dignity.

Now I never had the slightest inclination toward Communism. Perhaps I was too individualistic. I could not think in sociological terms.

But I began to find my faith in another way. In connection with the courses I was taking I had to read Plato. Now Plato taught a doctrine which is very familiar to all of you but struck me as completely new. He said that there is an objective world of values. In other words, values are not merely in my mind; they are “out there” just as much as chairs and tables are. In fact they are even more real than tables and chairs, since they are above man. Man is obliged to do good and avoid evil, irrespective of what he wants. Even if it means death, you must go on doing what is
good. Otherwise you are not acting according to the highest faculty of your nature, your reason.

It’s very simple once you see it. There is such a thing as good and evil. It is better to be wise than to be ignorant, to be just toward others than to treat them unjustly, to control one’s cravings and fears than to be the slave of appetites and passions. Now if anything was better than another thing, it was to be done, and the other avoided. The good was always to be done, since that was its very definition. I can’t express to you what a revolution it was in my life when I saw this and resolved to do what I clearly saw was good. I decided that I would seek wisdom and practice, to the limit of my ability, justice, temperance, and courage.

Now there was another thing which I found in Plato. It was his conviction that the soul is tainted and corrupted by sin and not by anything which others can do to us. If man had this capacity of aiming for the absolute, there must, I felt, be some great consequence for the soul if it turns away from good and pursues evil. Plato left me with the suspicion, if not with the conviction, that the soul was immortal and that its future state was greatly influenced by the sort of life a man had lived in this world.

So far I have been discussing the first, and in many ways the decisive, step in my conversion. Out of despair I was driven to read and to think, and Plato introduced me to a realm of values which I had never even suspected.

But the influences which led me on to the Catholic Church were very numerous and complex. One of them was the fact that I was, for the first time in my life, living in a Catholic community. Up to that time I had been sheltered in boarding schools or among Protestant friends. The only Catholicism which had come to my attention was the Catholicism of the Middle Ages. I had visited cathedrals in European cities but always with the impression that they were relics of a past civilization. Now in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Saint Paul’s Catholic Church was standing there, almost in the midst of the college buildings, and the population of Cambridge literally poured in and out. At times one could go by before daylight and find the church almost full. That set me thinking. Was Catholicism, that beautiful religion of the past, quite so dead after all? Had modern science punched the dogmas of the Church so full of holes as I had always imagined?
Now I come to the third great influence—which linked together what I had read in Plato and what I saw in the streets of Cambridge. It was my fortune to sit for a few months at the feet of Paul Doolin, a teacher of French history, who was assigned as my tutor. Incidentally, I might remark here that I am a great believer in the tutorial system. I learned more from my tutors at Harvard than from all the courses I took put together. There is something truly educational in the person-to-person contact of teacher and student, which cannot be made up for in any other way.

Now Doolin, although Irish by descent, had not been raised in the faith. He was a convert of some four or five years. He had a clear and brilliant mind which penetrated right to the core of every problem. He also had a heart so full of tenderness and love that he retired behind a wall of gruffness. He was always denouncing, with bitter scorn, all the liberalism and secularism in the atmosphere about Harvard. And he was an ardent Platonist. Once, when I mentioned something about Plato, he told me to keep reading Plato, and added, “Plato was very close to Christ.” I can still hear him saying so. The comparison had never occurred to me. And yet here was a man who saw into the diseases of our culture better than any man I had ever met. And what was the greatest compliment he could pay to the greatest of philosophers? To say that he was very close to the Jewish carpenter named Christ!

I spent the next two years exploring the implications of the sentence. I started to read a book that had lain untouched on my bookshelf for years—the New Testament. Plato, I remembered, had said that the wise man should go about seeking for some divine revelation and, if he should find it, cling to it as a raft. When I came face to face with Christ, I found the teacher and the revelation which, as I still think, Plato was seeking. It is needless for me to try to put into words the wisdom, the power, and the incomparable virtues of Christ. Above all I was struck by his insistence on the imperative necessity of following him at any sacrifice. He came into the world like a bombshell—a sign of contradiction. With or against. No neutrality. Not peace but a sword. Nothing else made a difference. What shall separate me from love of Christ? I was completely overwhelmed by His transcendence and could not refuse his call for all men to put their faith in Him.

And so, quite alone, without discussing the matter with anyone, I came to believe in the divinity of Christ. When all my friends were assuming that Christianity was a dead religion, and that the hope of the world lay
in sociology and physical science, I could see only one thing—that Christ was the Savior of the world and that men could not be saved in any other name under heaven. Every night before going to bed I would do two things—I would read a chapter of the New Testament and I would take a quiet stroll. Often I found myself standing beneath the stone crucifix on the outer wall of Saint Paul’s Catholic Church, just a block from where I lived. Just to look at that crucifix was to pray.

The rest of the story is merely a filling in of details—I can hardly summarize in a few words why I accepted Catholicism rather than some brand of Protestantism. There were so many reasons. I studied a good deal of history, and every bit of it confirmed the authenticity of the Catholic Church. Even my Protestant teachers could find nothing to say in favor of Luther, Calvin, and Henry VIII. I read Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas and found the perfect integration of Greek philosophy with Christian revelation. I used to go to a Catholic bookstore, and there met, almost for the first time, some living Catholics. They, with their holy joy and their humble assurance, were the best advertisement for the faith of all.

To condense into a sentence the thought of years, I might say I entered the Catholic Church because it was the only place where I could get into living contact with the living Christ. With the Church the truth of Christ had always been preserved intact against every human error. Christ still spoke with human lips through the teaching of bishops, he still offered Himself in sacrifice through the hands of His priests, He still forgave sins through the lips of His ministers. I could not remain forever outside the Church looking in.

Such, then, is the story of how I, as a lonely individual, wandered toward the Church at Harvard. Harvard didn’t have much to do with the story, except in a negative way. At Harvard I found only confusion and despair about the ultimate values of human life, the total meaning of the universe. That confusion can be a very dangerous thing for men who go to Harvard with any convictions. But for others—who find it impossible to go on living unless life makes sense—it can be a great help. If it doesn’t drive them to drink, it may drive them to think. And if they begin to think, God may take pity on them and lead them to Himself. Each year a few Harvard students trickle into the Church, and I hope that, through the prayers of many good Catholics the world over, the trickle may soon grow into a steady stream.
Farewell Address as McGinley Professor

Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.

Laurence J. McGinley Lecture
April 1, 2008

It is a matter of surprise that I have occupied the Laurence J. McGinley Chair in Religion and Society for twenty years. When I reached the statutory retirement age at The Catholic University of America in 1988, I received several academic offers. As a Jesuit, I consulted my provincial superior as to which I should accept, and he replied that I should await an offer from Fordham that was still in the making. In another month I received a letter from Father Joseph O’Hare, the president of Fordham, inviting me to be the first holder of this new professorship named for the president emeritus, Laurence J. McGinley. Father O’Hare gave me a choice of accepting for two years or for one year renewable. Being of a cautious nature, I opted for the second alternative. As it turned out, there was no limit on the number of possible renewals, which have cordially been extended both by Father O’Hare and by his successor Father Joseph McShane, and so here I am, twenty years later, still sitting on the metaphorical chair.

Why, then, a farewell? Why not thirty or forty years on this blissful seat? In this life, unfortunately, all good things must come to an end. I was already making serious preparations to resign when I began to be stricken with a succession of health problems, all resulting from a bout of polio dating from 1945, when I was a naval officer in World War II. Until at least the year 2000 it seemed that I had pretty well overcome the disabilities, but the aftereffects began to manifest themselves in recent
years, and in the past year they have become so acute as to prevent me from doing the teaching, lecturing, and writing that my duties here at Fordham require. Divine Providence, which has graciously guided my career throughout these many years, is giving clear signs that it is time to move on and make way for a younger and healthier successor.

Among the principal responsibilities attached to the McGinley Chair are the semiannual public lectures that I have been delivering since the fall of 1988. This lecture ought by rights to be the fortieth, but, because I had to miss one lecture back in 1994, there are only thirty-nine. The first thirty-eight have been gathered into a book, which is on sale here and now for the first time. The book will probably be the most substantial, if not the sole, memorial of my tenure of the McGinley Chair.

All told, I have given hundreds of lectures on a great variety of themes during the past twenty years, but the McGinley Lectures belong in a category by themselves. I have given them my closest attention to make sure of having in each case a publishable text. Whereas in other cases the theme was usually set by the persons issuing the invitation, almost all the topics and titles of the McGinley Lectures are my own.

The designation of my professorship—religion and society—leaves open a very wide field of choice, ranging from the religious to the secular, from ecclesiastical doctrine to social analysis. I have spoken on strictly theological themes such as the sacrifice of the cross, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, heaven and hell. But also, gravitating toward the societal pole, I have talked of secular themes such as politics, human rights, and the death penalty.

In the selection of topics I have followed three criteria.

First of all, I wanted all the topics to have at least a theological dimension. A theologian is what I am, and I work within the Catholic tradition, which is my home. Although I try not to display ignorance of fields such as philosophy, history, literature, and sociology insofar as they are relevant to my inquiry, I claim competence only in theology.

In the second place, I attempted to concentrate on themes that were matters of debate among Catholic theologians. These lectures are not a simple exercise in catechesis or Christian doctrine. In every instance, I suspect, a controversy is being addressed, or at least lurks in the background. My intention is to give an informed judgment as to which positions are sound and which should be rejected.
Thirdly, I have tried to choose topics of general interest not reserved to a small clique of specialists. For these lectures are public. I make an effort to avoid theological jargon and to speak a language that all educated Christians can understand. I recognize the necessity of using technical terms for discussing recondite questions, and even in these lectures I borrow from the councils terms such as “substantial presence” and “subsisting in,” but I hope I have made these terms generally intelligible. Theologians are sometimes tempted to display their erudition by adopting the most recent coinages of sophisticated European intellectuals even when the terminology serves more to obscure than to clarify their message.

As I glance over the titles of my McGinley Lectures, I have the impression that they form a solid collection dealing with major theological and social issues inherited from the Second Vatican Council and still under discussion today. I dare to hope that the opinions I have proposed and defended are true and persuasive. The faith that underlies them is not true today and false tomorrow; its teachings are permanent and universal.

A certain number of these McGinley Lectures, I acknowledge, are linked with events now past, such as the advent of the third millennium. Pope John Paul II, however, used the great jubilee as a teaching moment to impress on the faithful ideas that should guide them, and us, at all times. The teaching ministry of that extraordinary pope until his death in 2005 gave me much necessary guidance.

I cannot claim that these lectures are unified by a single method. In each case the method has to be adapted to the topic. But in general I have begun my investigation by asking what others, especially authoritative voices, have had to say about pertinent questions. I want to learn before I speak. If all the witnesses agree, and if there are no unanswered objections, it will be sufficient to note the consensus. But because I have deliberately selected controversial topics, I have generally found both agreements and disagreements. After ascertaining the spectrum of opinions I search out the best arguments in favor of each major position. To present and classify the existing opinions is, I take it, a service to theology, but I think it necessary also to criticize views that are inadequate. Feeling a responsibility to reach a judgment, I draw conclusions that bring me into conflict with some of my colleagues. In my conclusions I try to incorporate the valid insights of all parties to the discussion, rather than perpetuate a one-sided view that is partial and incomplete. I think of myself as a moderate
trying to make peace between opposed schools of thought. While doing so, however, I insist on logical consistency. Unlike certain relativists of our time, I abhor mixtures of contradictions.

I mentioned above that I speak as a theologian. By that term I mean that I draw conclusions from what I believe as a Catholic Christian. The Church teaches, and I firmly believe, that the Son of God became man some two thousand years ago, died to redeem us, and rose for the sake of our salvation. Christ the Redeemer, who has given the fullness of revelation, has also made provision for the revelation to be kept alive in the Church without corruption or dilution. These basic teachings of our faith, held in common by all believers, are presupposed by Catholic theology. The faith takes nothing away from what I can know by my native reasoning powers, but it adds a vast new light coming from on high.

In my lectures, then, I have made continual use of Christian revelation as conveyed through holy Scripture and Catholic tradition. I am reluctant to say anything that runs against these sacred sources on the pretext that we have superior insight today. Respect for the deposit of faith should not be called conservatism in the pejorative sense but a simple loyalty to the word of God. When in these lectures I affirm that Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross, or that he makes himself substantially present in the Eucharist, or that the gate to salvation is a narrow one, or that priestly ordination is reserved to men, or that capital punishment is sometimes warranted, in each case I am willingly adhering to the testimony of Scripture and perennial Catholic tradition.

These lectures, I hope, make it clear that tradition is a developing thing because the Church lives in history. Tradition develops in fidelity to its own deepest principles, as this set of lectures illustrates, for instance, with reference to religious freedom and Mariology. To anticipate what developments are appropriate often requires an exceptional sense of the faith. Developments of doctrine always involve a certain continuity; a reversal, of course, is not a development.

As the reader will easily discover, I do not particularly strive for originality. Very few new ideas, I suspect, are true. If I conceived a theological idea that had never occurred to anyone in the past, I would have every reason to think myself mistaken. The current confusion in theology is in no small part due to a plethora of innovations, which last a few years only to be overtaken by further, and equally ephemeral, theories. The effort to keep with the latest theological fashions is hardly a profitable investment
of time. Far more valuable would it be to insert oneself in the great tradition of the Fathers and doctors of the Church. I myself try to think and speak within that tradition, while taking due notice of new and deviant opinions.

Without in any way comparing myself to Pope Benedict XVI, I feel that I can make his words my own when he writes:

I have never tried to create a system of my own, an individual theology. What is specific, if you want to call it that, is that I simply want to think in communion with the faith of the Church, and that means above all to think in communion with the great thinkers of the faith. The aim is not an isolated theology that I draw out of myself but one that opens as widely as possible into the common intellectual pathways of the faith. (Salt of the Earth [San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997], 66)

These words speak very powerfully to me because, as a Jesuit, I am committed to Saint Ignatius of Loyola’s “Rules for Thinking with the Church.”

The present climate of opinion does not favor tradition and orthodoxy, two terms that have negative connotations for many hearers. Our culture is dominated by experimental science, which works by entirely different methods, leaving its own past behind as it forges into the future. Science, we all know, does not rest on a treasury of revealed knowledge handed down in authoritative tradition. Science has wonderfully increased our powers to make and to destroy, but it does not tell us what we ought to do and why. It does not tell us where the universe came from, or why we exist, or what our final destination is. And yet some scientists speak as though their discipline were the only kind of valid knowledge.

This brand of scientism has been around for centuries, but only today is it boasting of its powers to displace philosophical wisdom and religious faith, as I noted in my McGinley Lecture, on God and evolution, a year ago. Already as a college undergraduate seventy years ago I felt the oppressive nature of a culture that had no place for objective moral norms and meaning. I was desperate for enlightenment about whether anything was worth living and dying for, as I explained in one of my earliest books, A Testimonial to Grace. That very desperation set me on the path that led through ancient Greek philosophy to Catholic faith.

All of us today are immersed in a culture that lacks abiding truths and fixed moral norms. But there is no necessity for our culture to have
taken this negative turn. Ancient philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle had refuted the materialism, relativism, subjectivism, and hedonism of their day and had demonstrated the validity of metaphysical knowledge. Western thought followed in the path of cognitive realism for many centuries before the revival of agnosticism in the Renaissance. Catholic believers and indeed all clear thinkers have good reasons not to be engulfed in the superficial trends of the times. In his great encyclical on Faith and Reason, which forms the topic of one McGinley Lecture, John Paul II summoned philosophy to resume its original quest for eternal truth and wisdom.

As mentioned earlier, I entered college in a quagmire of confusion about whether life and the universe could make sense at all. I was conscious of the emptiness of a selfish life based on the pursuit of pleasure. Happiness, I gradually came to see, is the reward given for holding fast to what is truly good and important. To some extent the philosophers of antiquity identified these goals. But Christian revelation brought a tremendous increase of light. God alone, I learned from the New Testament, was good and true in an unqualified sense. And the same God in all his beauty and majesty became one of our human family in Jesus Christ, the Truth, the Way, and the Life. The most important thing about my career, and many of yours, I feel sure, is the discovery of the pearl of great price, the treasure hidden in the field, the Lord Jesus himself.

As I approach the termination of my active life, I gratefully acknowledge that a benign Providence has governed my days. The persons I have met, the places I have been, the things I have been asked to do, have all coalesced into a pattern, so that each stage of my life has prepared me for the next. My twenty years on the McGinley Chair have been a kind of climax, at least from my personal point of view. I often feel that there is no one on earth with whom I would want to exchange places. It has been a special privilege to serve in the Society of Jesus, a religious community specially dedicated to the Savior of the world.

The good life does not have to be an easy one, as our Blessed Lord and the saints have taught us. Pope John Paul II in his later years used to say, “The pope must suffer.” Suffering and diminishment are not the greatest of evils but are normal ingredients in life, especially in old age. They are to be accepted as elements of a full human existence. Well into my ninetieth year I have been able to work productively. As I become increasingly
paralyzed and unable to speak, I can identify with the many paralytics and mute persons in the gospels, grateful for the loving and skillful care I receive and for the hope of everlasting life in Christ. If the Lord now calls me to a period of weakness, I know well that his power can be made perfect in infirmity. “Blessed be the name of the Lord!”
Response to Farewell Address

A LABOR OF LOVE

Rev. Robert P. Imbelli

Associate Professor of Theology
Boston College
April 1, 2008

It is a great privilege to be here with you this evening: to be with the many friends and admirers of Cardinal Dulles, and to offer these words in deep appreciation and gratitude for all that he has been for us, all that he has shared with us as priest, as theologian, and as friend.

It would be negligent of me not to express heartfelt thanks to two collaborators of the cardinal who have worked tirelessly to make this evening possible: Mrs. Maureen Noone, who has been a mainstay in the office of the McGinley Professor for the past six years; and, most especially, Sister Anne-Marie Kirmse, O.P., who for twenty years has been the cardinal’s executive assistant. Those who know Sister Anne-Marie know how much we all owe to her generosity and dedication.

I have entitled my reflections this evening “Cardinal Dulles’s McGinley Lectures: a Labor of Love.” May I suggest to you that we reflect upon them as the fruit of a fourfold love: for Fordham, for the Society of Jesus, for the Church catholic, and, grounding all these loves, a love for the Lord Jesus: “In quo omnia constant”—in whom all holds together.

I first set foot on this campus as a freshman on a late summer day in 1956. Laurence J. McGinley, S.J., was the president of Fordham University, and Leo P. McLaughlin, S.J., who became a mentor and friend, was dean of Fordham College. W. Norris Clark, S.J., was already inspiring students and pioneering a more personalist approach to the thought of Thomas Aquinas.
Like a number of my peers from New York–area Jesuit high schools (Regis and Fordham Prep, Xavier and Saint Peter’s), one of the organizations I joined was the flourishing Fordham College Sodality. The sodality saw its role as wedding spirituality and devotion with intellectual commitment. Among the seniors in the sodality there were still respectful reminiscences of the Jesuit scholastic who had been moderator of the freshman and sophomore sodality from 1951 to 1953: the young Mr. Avery Dulles of the Society of Jesus.

In addition to guiding his “sodalists” (among whom was a young lad, Ted McCarrick, created cardinal by Pope John Paul II on the same day as his friend Avery Dulles), the young scholastic taught philosophy, thus beginning his Jesuit teaching career and his Fordham commitment. An outcome of that teaching was a book that he co-authored entitled *Introductory Metaphysics*: one of the first in a long line of scholarly works from the fecund pen, typewriter, and computer of Avery Dulles.

I will not pretend that in the mid-1950s Vatican II was on the horizon of even the most far-sighted. But I very much want to insist that seeds were germinating at Fordham as elsewhere, indeed that Vatican II’s *ressourcement* was well under way. And let it be acknowledged that Pope Pius XII surely deserves credit for making much of that *ressourcement* possible: promoting biblical studies with *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, enriching ecclesiology with *Mystici Corporis*, revitalizing liturgy with *Mediator Dei* and the reform of the Paschal Triduum. Perhaps the book most quoted by the Fordham sodality members of that decade was Yves Congar’s *Lay People and the Church*, while Newman and Blondel, de Lubac, and Danielou figured prominently on our reading lists.

My point in recalling this is, I admit, to evoke the Fordham of the fifties fondly, as a place intellectually alive: one to which devoted laypeople and Jesuits, like Avery Dulles, contributed so creatively. Dulles’s two years of committed teaching and guidance were but providential prelude to his twenty years as McGinley Professor of Religion and Society. And a ripe fruit of these twenty years is the volume of superbly crafted McGinley lectures now fittingly and handsomely published by Fordham University Press.

But I confess to another motivation, a tad more controversial, as I recollect those Fordham years of the fifties. It is to assert that Vatican II’s achievement looks, in retrospect, to have been the fruition rather than reversal of what we were already experiencing as laypeople in the Church.
From this vantage Vatican II can clearly be read, as Cardinal Dulles surely
does read it, in terms of a hermeneutics of deep-rooted continuity amid
enriching change.

If love for Fordham is a characteristic of the Dulles legacy, an even
more defining feature is his love for the Society of Jesus, the brotherhood
from which he has received much and to which he has given so much.
And, of course, the animating spirit for “this least Society” is provided by
the spiritual vision and method of its founder, Ignatius of Loyola.

In my foreword to the McGinley Lectures volume, I suggest that “one
may profitably read these collected essays as so many soundings of the
Ignatian charism brought to bear on crucial theological and societal issues
of our day.”

Let me identify four aspects of the Ignatian vision that underlie Dul-
les’s commitment to the Society of Jesus and that structure his lectures. I
lift up, first, the radical sense of the transcendent mystery of God, who is
semper Major—alone worthy of adoration and praise. In a time and cul-
ture of often one-dimensional secularity (recognized even by so sympathetic
a scholar as Charles Taylor in A Secular Age), Avery Dulles has consistently
called his hearers and readers beyond programs and causes, however
worthwhile, to the transcendent Source in whom we live, and move, and
have our being. Absent God, the abolition of man follows.

The second aspect of the Ignatian vision is inseparable from the first.
It is the celebration of the wondrous exchange of natures, the admirabile
commercium, whereby God’s eternal Word has taken flesh in the beloved
humanity of Jesus the Christ. The Society that Ignatius founded is dedi-
cated to the Lord Jesus himself and is animated, as Dulles writes, by
“a personal love for Jesus and a desire to be counted among his close
companions.” In his address this evening, Cardinal Dulles shows himself
a true son of Ignatius as he speaks movingly of “the discovery of the pearl
of great price, the treasure hidden in the field, the Lord Jesus himself.”

Christological reductionism and relativism is not the way of Ignatius,
and not the way of his spiritual son, Avery Dulles.

Thirdly, Ignatius’s vision refuses to countenance any sundering of Jesus
from his body, the Church. To say, as some do today, “Jesus—yes!
Church—no!” would, for Ignatius of Loyola, be to speak nonsense, as it
makes no sense for Avery Dulles. How can Christ be separated from his
body, or the Church divorced from its Lord? Moreover, neither for Igna-
tius nor for Dulles is the Church some Platonic entity, floating above
history or possessing a merely invisible nature. Rather, the Church of Christ, concretely immersed in history, subsists, in visible form, in the Catholic Church, in hierarchical communion with the successor of Peter and the college of bishops in union with him.

To these aspects of Ignatius’s vision, a fourth must be added: the practice and virtue of discernment. The word is, of course, frequently invoked, but the reality is, perhaps, less in evidence, because quite exigent. Two of the demands of authentic discernment strike me as characterizing Dulles’s McGinley Lectures.

Discernment requires, first, the ability to listen carefully to a variety of voices. In his address this evening the Cardinal put it with disarming simplicity. Speaking of his approach in the lectures he says: “In general I have begun my investigation by asking what others, especially authoritative voices, have had to say about the topic. I want to learn before I speak” (emphasis mine). In this the cardinal’s method more closely resembles the “quaestio” of Thomas Aquinas than it does the “thesis” procedure of the neo-Scholastic manuals (pedagogically useful as these latter may have been).

But authentic discernment requires more than respectfully marshalling opinions. Its further responsibility is to come to judgment, to critique courageously what appears inadequate. Inadequate to what? Well, inadequate to reason—as, for example, when positions lack consistency or coherence. Or in Dulles’s typically laconic admission: “I abhor mixtures of contradictions.” But most especially inadequate to the gospel, to the scriptures and the Great Tradition of the Church Catholic. In this ample and life-giving sense, Dulles strives to found his discernment on the Ignatian principle: sentire cum ecclesia—to discern with the Church.

The McGinley lectures, I contend, offer us exemplary models of ecclesial discernment.

The third, yet more comprehensive, love that these lectures manifest is Cardinal Dulles’s love for the Church catholic. We know well that this love led the young Harvard student, Avery Dulles, to enter the Catholic Church in 1940, finding here his spiritual and intellectual home. For more than sixty years his love for the Church has grown ever stronger, not because he is unmindful that the earthly Church, in the words of Augustine, is a corpus permixtum but because precisely as such it remains the corpus Christi, the ever beloved bride of Christ.

I entitled my foreword to the McGinley-lectures volume “Avery Dulles, Vir Ecclesiasticus,” because I am convinced that this Patristic accolade
sums up the priestly and theological service of this man of the Church. But however indispensable the institutional dimension of the Church is, a dimension signaled clearly by his rank of “cardinal of the Holy Roman Church,” Cardinal Dulles knows better than anyone that the institutional element is not the heart of the Church. As faithful interpreter of the Second Vatican Council, Dulles insists, with *Lumen Gentium*, that the heart of the Church is the Mystery that the Church embodies.

Here is how he puts it in his splendid book *The Craft of Theology: From Symbol to System* (1992):

> As a great sacrament [the Church] extends in space and time the physical body of the Lord. It is not a mere pointer to the absent Christ, but the symbolic manifestation of the present Christ. The members of the Christ, insofar as they are remade in Christ’s image by the power of the Holy Spirit, represent Christ to one another and to the world. He identifies himself with them. Especially is this true of the saints, those who allow themselves to be totally transformed in Christ. The Church, in its most basic reality, is a holy fellowship built up through the self-communication of the triune God. (*Craft*, p. 35)

I think that Dulles’s best-known work, *Models of the Church* (1974), proceeds from this realization that the essence of the Church is an inexhaustible mystery to which no one perspective can do full justice.

As a young priest and teacher of theology in the mid-seventies, I can testify to the theological and pastoral impact of that book, which allowed us to articulate a legitimate pluralism in our understanding of Church and hence to promote dialogue among different (sometimes competing) perspectives, whether in religious communities, in seminaries, or in parishes.

Yet the book’s very success may have, unwittingly, fostered a too facile accommodationism, especially when filtered through the seventies’ soft relativism of the “that’s your model/that’s my model” variety. Perhaps this is what led Dulles to elaborate in the 1980s an approach to Church, as “community of disciples,” that, without pretending to be a supermodel, nevertheless served to refocus ecclesial reflection upon the distinctive identity of this community, this assembly, this body. Community of disciples serves to displace attention from an unhealthy ecclesiocentrism, with its ever real risk of partisan polarizations, to a Christocentrism that directs minds and hearts to the Source of the Church’s life. It also helps bring to
the cost of discipleship, the realization that love for the Church can be (in Dostoyevsky’s words) a harsh and dreadful thing, not like love in dreams.

Dulles’s concern about polarization and the spread of an almost promiscuous pluralism in theological circles led him, in *The Craft of Theology*, to outline a way forward that he called an “ecclesial-transformative” approach to the theological task. I will not endeavor this evening to expatiate upon it, save to call attention to the equal importance of both adjectives: ecclesial and transformative. It proposes an understanding of the theological task as ecclesial mission: to speak and act faithfully and creatively within, not over-against, the Church. Here is how the Cardinal himself states it:

[Theology] must deal with new questions put to the Church by the course of events and by the circumstances of life in the world. Continual creativity is needed to implant the faith in new cultures and to keep the teaching of the Church abreast of the growth of secular knowledge. New questions demand new answers, but the answers of theology must always grow out of the Church’s heritage of faith. (*Craft*, 10–11)

Can we fail to recognize in these words the very program of the McGinley lectures?

I spoke a short while before about “discernment” as a salient characteristic of the Ignatian charism. In words made common currency by Vatican II, the theologian, standing *in medio ecclesiae*, is to discern “the signs of the times.” But two provisos must immediately be entered. First, the injunction of the council is that the signs of the times be scrutinized and interpreted *in the light of the gospel* (*Gaudium et Spes*, 4). Second, since the Church is immersed in history, the signs needing discernment in 2008 may not be, in all respects, the same as those prevalent in 1965 at the council’s conclusion.

Allow me to hazard a “for instance.” I have suggested in other places that a great achievement of the council was the recovery of a more ample notion of tradition (a suggestion with which Cardinal Dulles has concurred). I develop this further by distinguishing two understandings of tradition: tradition as *tradita*—those things handed down, the deposit of faith, if you will; and tradition as *traditio*—the process of handing down, of ongoing interpretation.
At the time of Vatican II the former sense of tradition (as tradita) was firmly “in possession,” accepted by almost all. What was needed was to reappropriate the tradition as living reality, as more than rigid propositions unreflectively parroted—in a word: as traditio.

Today voices ranging from Commonweal through America to First Things acknowledge that a widespread biblical and theological illiteracy afflicts the Church in the United States. The tradita can no longer be taken for granted as understood, or even accepted. Thus Dulles’s discernment—as we heard him reiterate this evening—is that “the present climate of opinion does not favor tradition and orthodoxy.” Avowing this honestly does not lead him, however, to repudiate the complementary recognition that “tradition is a developing thing because the Church lives in history.” Rather, it spurs him to affirm with one of his heroes, John Henry Newman, that “tradition develops in fidelity to its own deepest principles . . . a reversal, of course, is not a development.”

Are we then left to oscillate between shifting emphases, now on tradita, now on traditio, reduced to continual course corrections? Is the promise of Vatican II postponed to an ever receding horizon? Here is where I think it imperative to descend, with Dulles, yet deeper, to the heart of tradition, to that fourth, all-encompassing love animating these McGinley Lectures: love for the Lord Jesus himself, given for our sake.

For the tradita, the storehouse of Church teachings and practices, point mystagogically to a deeper reality; and traditio, ongoing interpretation, is at the service of the inexhaustible revelation that it seeks to communicate ever anew. Thus Tradition, at its deepest, is the Traditus, Jesus Christ himself, handed over for our sake, who gave and gives himself out of love.

To my knowledge Cardinal Dulles does not himself employ the term Traditus, but the reality of the Eucharistic Christ, the Traditus, forms the heart of his teaching as it does his priestly existence.

In this regard, I call your particular attention to two of the McGinley lectures that are vintage Dulles: “Crucified for Our Sake” (Spring 1995) and “How Real Is the Real Presence?” (Spring 2005).

In “Crucified for Our Sake,” the cardinal affirms, consonant with the Great Tradition, that “the cross of Christ constitutes the very center of world history.” And, while ready to learn from the insights and concerns of those who find “sacrificial” language problematic, he holds such language indispensable to the scriptural and liturgical witness to “the Lamb sacrificed to redeem the sins of the world by his most precious blood.”
And a quote from Ephesians anchors his persuasion: “Christ loved us and
gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Eph 5:2).

In “How Real Is the Real Presence?” Cardinal Dulles, though grate-
fully affirming the multiple forms of Christ’s presence in the Church,
singles out, with Vatican II, his unique presence in the Eucharist: the
sacrament that “contains the entire spiritual wealth of the Church.” He
celebrates the truth that “in the Eucharist is [Christ’s] presence inherent
and abiding,” and he concludes the lecture by probing the Eucharist’s
multidimensional richness, which “has singular power to recapture the
past, transform the present, and anticipate the future because it contains
the Lord of history truly, really, and substantially.” In résumé:

The Lamb, once slain for the life of the world, continues to give him-
self eucharistically as humanity’s food and drink in the Spirit. In the
Eucharist we encounter and embrace the Traditus, the crucified and risen
Savior, truly present among us.

In the McGinley Lectures, fruit of his lifelong labor of love, Avery
Dulles has gifted us—not with the last word but with an authoritative,
always enlightening word. And for this we are most deeply grateful.

I close by calling to mind the recent General Congregation of the
Society of Jesus held in Rome. Toward its conclusion the delegates, to-
gether with the new father general, had an audience with Pope Benedict
XVI. At the end of his address to them the Holy Father said something
truly remarkable (my undergraduates would say: “awesome!”). He asked
those present to join him in the prayer that Saint Ignatius gives as the
culmination of the Spiritual Exercises: the Suscipe.

But the pope prefaced the prayer with a stunning, perhaps unprece-
dented papal admission. “It is a prayer,” he confesses, “that always ap-
ppears to me to be overwhelming [troppo grande]—to the point that I
almost dare not say it [quasi non oso dirla]; nevertheless we must appro-
priate it ever anew.”

And so, together with the Holy Father, with Cardinal Avery Dulles,
with his brothers in the Company of Jesus, we all seek the courage to
pray: “Take, Lord, receive, all my liberty: my memory, my understanding,
my entire will—all that I am and possess. You have given all to me; I now
give all back to you, Lord. All this is yours, dispose of it according to your
will. Give me only your love and your grace: that is enough for me.”

Amen.
The Last Days of Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.

Anne-Marie Kirmse, O.P.

Sister Anne-Marie Kirmse, O.P., Ph.D., was Avery Dulles’s research associate and executive assistant, August 1988–December 2008.

During his remarks at the McGinley Lecture of spring 2007, Rev. Joseph M. McShane, S.J., president of Fordham University, announced that he was commissioning the publication of all the McGinley Lectures that Cardinal Dulles had delivered in the course of his almost twenty years as the Laurence J. McGinley Professor of Religion and Society at the university. The holder of the McGinley Chair is expected to give a public lecture twice a year, and Cardinal Dulles had done so since he came to assume that position in fall 1988. There was only one exception. In spring 1994 he had unexpected minor surgery, and the doctor would not allow him to give the lecture. Thus, there were thirty-eight in all. The decision by Fr. McShane seemed premature. Although Cardinal Dulles was beginning to have more health problems and had offered to retire several times (the offer was never accepted by Fr. McShane or by his predecessor, Rev. Joseph A. O’Hare, S.J.), the time did not seem ripe for such a publication. Why not wait until his tenure in the McGinley Chair was actually over?

So Cardinal Dulles (and the rest of us in his office at Fordham!) spent the summer and fall of 2007 reviewing the thirty-eight McGinley Lectures and preparing them for publication by Fordham University Press. These lectures, and therefore the book that comprises them, do not have a unified theme. Cardinal Dulles had based his lectures on pertinent topics when the lectures were given, on suggestions given to him, and on consultations with his colleagues.
The cardinal was continuing his busy schedule of writing, lecturing, and teaching, with no apparent reduction in these commitments. Although he had been experiencing the effects of post-polio syndrome for several years, he was able to walk with the help of a leg brace and a cane, and there were no other visible effects of the disease.

This all changed in the summer of 2007, when his speech became slurred and difficult to understand. Together with Maureen Noone, the cardinal’s secretary, I accompanied him to appointments with various specialists at the Rusk Institute in Manhattan and with doctors recommended by Rusk. He also began having difficulty swallowing, and eating became difficult. Looking at the size of Cardinal Dulles (6 feet 2 inches and 130 pounds for most of his adult life), one would not get the impression that he enjoyed his meals, but he did! He relished mealtimes, savoring not only the food on the table but his dinner companions. He valiantly bore the changes in his lifestyle, writing on a small pad he carried with him at all times so that he could be part of the conversation, and eating pureed food.

He had three lectures scheduled for the fall of 2007. He was able to type these himself on his computer, but a member of his Jesuit community accompanied him to the lecture site and delivered the lecture for him. Remarkably, Cardinal Dulles after each lecture was able to answer questions from the floor.

Doctors’ appointments and physical-therapy treatments began to take more of his time and energy. Undaunted, he planned to teach his graduate course in Fordham’s theology department in spring 2008. Another responsibility of the holder of the McGinley Chair is to teach one graduate course a year. In 2008, Cardinal Dulles was slated to teach a graduate seminar on the theology of Benedict XVI. He was increasingly unable to speak but wanted very much to give this course. With the help of Michael Canaris, my coeditor in this bibliography project, and me, Cardinal Dulles was able to conduct the seminar. Since he could still use his computer, he decided that he would type his lecture notes, that I would be his voice in reading his notes, and that Mike and I would lead the discussions. The cardinal was able to participate in these discussions by writing his comments and questions for the group, and either Mike or I would read them. Classes were originally held in the seminar room on the same floor as his office in Faber Hall. But a fall in February 2008 necessitated his moving to Murray-Weigel Hall, the Jesuit infirmary just outside the university
gate on Fordham Road. The class moved with him to a seminar room in the infirmary.

Why a course on the pope’s theology? In Cardinal Dulles’s opinion, Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI is the greatest theologian of our time, and, for this reason, he wanted to acquaint the seminar participants with the rich and varied writings of the pope. In his first set of lecture notes for this seminar he wrote, “By virtue of his intelligence, his learning, and the positions he has held, he [Pope Benedict] is in my judgment the most important Catholic theologian of the day.” Cardinal Dulles spoke from personal experience. The two had met for the first time back in 1972 at a Faith and Order meeting and were present at several gatherings and meetings after that. Father Dulles served on the International Theological Commission from 1992 through 1997, when Cardinal Ratzinger was prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Cardinal Dulles had given a McGinley Lecture on the new pope in fall 2005 entitled “Benedict XVI: Interpreter of Vatican II.” Cardinal Dulles had spent his theological career doing this very same thing, interpreting the council. In an interview for The New York Times in 1988 he told Peter Steinfels, “What I’ve been doing these last 20, 25 years really centers about interpreting Vatican II.” He could have said the same in 2005 just by changing “20, 25 years” to “40, 45 years.” As he chose the readings for the seminar and prepared class each week, it was as if Cardinal Dulles was reviewing his own life’s work.

But his overarching passion in his last days was evangelization. It was the subject that Cardinal Dulles addressed the most in the last months of his life. His appreciation of the significance of Pope Paul VI’s Evangelii Nuntiandi (1975) deepened during his years at Fordham. During those twenty years, he delivered twenty-three lectures, both here and abroad, pertaining to some aspect of evangelization, and he published eighteen articles on the topic. Some of these articles were translated into other languages. Cardinal Dulles had long been planning to write a book on evangelization, but his busy schedule delayed his opportunity to do so. In February 2008, he seriously began his work on this project, so dear to his heart.

Cardinal Dulles labored over the details of preparing this manuscript. Despite his rapidly declining health, he wanted to be involved in it, every step of the way. Mike gathered the lectures and articles, and Cardinal Dulles chose the ten works that appear in this book. At first, he was able
to edit the texts himself on his computer in the infirmary and then gave me the individual files to be merged into the manuscript. Then Cardinal Dulles read the entire corpus and wrote his changes by hand in the margins. But soon after making these corrections, he was no longer able to write, type, or speak. He then read the next version of the manuscript and indicated further corrections by crumpling the bottom right-hand side of the page. When I went over the text, I would look for those pages that weren’t smooth and then searched for the passage to be changed.

Although Paul VI is usually remembered for his encyclicals *Ecclesiam Suam* (1964) and *Humanae Vitae* (1968), Cardinal Dulles maintained that the pope’s apostolic exhortation on evangelization was his greatest and most important contribution to the life of the Church in our time. It was the cardinal’s hope that his own book on evangelization would play a role in revitalizing this subject, and for this reason he devoted the last days of his life to working on it.

Even this cursory, bird’s-eye view of the cardinal’s projects in the last months of his life indicates a recurring theme: the Church. When he had his conversion experience as a junior at Harvard, he spent the next two years searching for a church in which to live his newly found faith. His search was intense. The young Dulles read, studied, discussed, prayed, observed the ordinary people at Mass, and finally decided that the Roman Catholic Church was the one true Church. The deep fulfillment he found in the Church lasted the rest of his life (and he lived to the age of ninety), so it is no surprise that his last days were directed toward that Church in one way or another. As the poet wrote, “In our end is our beginning.”

The spring McGinley Lecture on April 1, 2008, was to be his last. By that time, Cardinal Dulles could no longer speak and was confined to a wheelchair. He had chosen as his title “Farewell Address as McGinley Professor.” In that lecture, which was read for him by Father O’Hare, president emeritus of Fordham University, the cardinal explained his rationale for his choice of lecture topics and summed up the activities of his twenty-year tenure in the McGinley Chair. In an eloquent and very moving conclusion to that lecture, he showed the depth of his spirituality. He was not afraid of suffering, nor was he angry. Rather, he saw diminishment as a necessary part of the aging process, and his inability to speak or to move helped him to identify with the mutes and paralytics of the gospel stories. This lecture and the response by Rev. Robert Imbelli of Boston College are published in this volume.
After the lecture, Father McShane surprised Cardinal Dulles by be-stowing on him the President’s Medal, which is one of the highest awards conferred by the university. It was a fitting tribute to the cardinal, who began and ended his academic career at New York City’s Jesuit university. The book of the McGinley Lectures, entitled *Church and Society: The Laurence J. McGinley Lectures, 1988–2007*, was also launched that evening, another fitting tribute to his work at Fordham. In retrospect, what seemed to be a premature decision on the part of Fordham’s president, Father McShane, was actually a prophetic one. But the cardinal’s career, although slowing down, was not over.

Pope Benedict XVI came to visit the United States three weeks later. All of the U.S. cardinals were invited to take part in the papal visit. Cardinal Dulles’s health would not allow him to be part of the red-robed entourage, and he planned only to attend the ecumenical service in New York City on April 18. When it became known that Cardinal Dulles would not be able to be present with the other cardinals, the Vatican planned a private meeting between him and the pope. It took place in Saint Joseph’s Seminary, Dunwoodie, on Saturday afternoon, April 19.

The pope literally bounded into the room with a big smile on his face. He went directly to where Cardinal Dulles was sitting, saying, “Eminenza, Eminenza, I recall the work you did for the International Theological Committee in the 1990s.” Cardinal Dulles kissed the papal ring and smiled back at the pope.

Then the pope looked at the people in the room who had accompanied Cardinal Dulles to the seminary. He met Rev. Thomas R. Marciniak, S.J., of the Fordham Jesuit Community, who served as Cardinal Dulles’s priest chaplain for the meeting, and then me and Francine Messiah and Oslyn Fergus of the cardinal’s medical staff at Murray-Weigel Hall. The entire time the pope spoke to each person, he looked directly at him or her and held their hands in his. He was so focused on the individual to whom he was speaking that he probably would not have noticed if the room suddenly evaporated! Pope Benedict was warmer and friendlier in person even than he was on television. His eyes sparkled as he spoke.

After this warm and friendly exchange of greetings, the pope sat down next to Cardinal Dulles to hear the remarks that the cardinal had prepared and that were read for him by Fr. Marciniak. During the presentation, Fr. Marciniak handed the pope a copy of *Church and Society*. A photo of this presentation appears on the following page. The pope expressed great
interest in the book and even interrupted the reading of the remarks to ask again when the book had been published. He eagerly paged through it, and was touched by Cardinal Dulles’s inscription to him. The pope seemed disappointed when an aide took the book from him. I think if the pope had had his way, he would have sat down and started reading it immediately.

Before leaving, he blessed Cardinal Dulles, assuring him of his prayers for him, and encouraged him in his sufferings. He then said good-bye in turn to each of the four persons who had accompanied the cardinal. Although his aides were hastening him along to the gathering of young people on the grounds of the seminary, when the pope was told that there were two trays of religious articles that members of the various security departments had requested to be blessed, he stopped before each tray. Bowing his head in prayer for a few minutes, the pope then blessed their contents.

Naturally, members of the media were anxious to learn what Cardinal Dulles had written in his remarks to the pope. When I conveyed their
request to the cardinal, he shook his head vehemently “no.” He then typed that these were his private sentiments and the words were never to be disseminated publicly. After the cardinal’s death, I had the hard drive from his laptop computer destroyed in front of me so that this desire of his would be honored.

On August 24, 2008, Avery Dulles turned ninety. The Jesuit community at Fordham wanted to celebrate this milestone birthday and, to our great surprise, the cardinal agreed. There was a special Mass in the University Church and a party outdoors after the Mass. Edward Cardinal Egan, the archbishop of New York, attended the celebration and pushed Cardinal Dulles’s wheelchair up the aisle in the opening procession. It was a moving experience to see New York’s two cardinals in this way, especially since Cardinal Egan also had polio and walks with a limp. In fact, he quipped to Cardinal Dulles that this walk up the aisle was “a case of the ‘lame pushing the lame.’” Cardinal Dulles, who never lost his sense of humor despite all his sufferings, broke into a wide smile. Later, Cardinal Egan led the singing of “Happy Birthday” and made the ceremonial first cut of the birthday cake. Members of the cardinal’s family and many of his friends were present for this joyful event. For most of them, it would be the last time they would see him before he died.

Ever since Avery Dulles came to Fordham in 1988, I was his assistant. In this capacity I proofread his lectures, articles, and books (both for content and for style), scheduled his appointments, arranged for his travel, and kept his office running. For twenty years I took care of his affairs. And then in the last few months of his life, I took care of the cardinal.

Please do not misunderstand me. I was not his sole caretaker. The nurses and staff at Murray-Weigel Hall took very good care of his physical condition. But as he became increasingly unable to communicate, it was difficult for him to state his needs and wants. I became his link to the outside world. When his niece Janet told me that she went to visit him on two successive Sundays in the summer of 2008 and saw the newspaper untouched, I asked the Jesuit scholastics to come over from Ciszek Hall on Sunday afternoons to turn the pages for him so that he could keep up with the news. Vincent Strand, S.J.; Marc Veladao, S.J.; and Stephen Wolfe, S.J., were his faithful companions every Sunday, and special thanks should be given to Vincent, who organized their schedule. Early in the fall of that year, Cardinal Dulles’s former student, Dr. Robert C. Christie of DeVry University, asked if there were any way that he could
be of service. Bob then came on Saturdays to help the cardinal keep up with the many theological journals and newspapers he received. True to the way he never wanted to inconvenience anyone on his behalf, Cardinal Dulles was concerned that their arms hurt from holding the books and newspapers! Although she was no longer working as the cardinal’s secretary, Maureen Noone continued to stop in frequently to see him, and she and Susan Munroe, a friend of the cardinal’s, also came by on weekends to see if they could be of assistance to him. Mike also continued to shuttle between spending time in the infirmary and helping me keep the cardinal’s office and archival work running smoothly.

Cardinal Dulles learned to use a machine called a Lightwriter. This was composed of a small computer-like keyboard and a one-line display that spoke the words that were typed into it. Unfortunately, Cardinal Dulles was less and less able to use his hands. So I ran the stylus along the keyboard and, when I came to the correct letter, he would shake his head. It became like an acrostic puzzle or a game on *Wheel of Fortune* as I tried to figure out the remaining letters from what was already typed. When his godson Andrew Curry came to visit from Germany, Andrew observed that it wasn’t that his Uncle Avery couldn’t communicate any more, he just did so in a different way. What a touching and beautiful insight!

A book to which Cardinal Dulles had contributed a chapter several years ago was being reprinted, and he was asked to update his piece. In late August I downloaded the latest pronouncements from Rome on the topic, which he read very carefully several times. Then I typed his revisions on a wireless laptop computer that was placed on his tray table. Using a large type font and bold formatting, he was able to follow the typing on the screen. We again used the “stylus–headshaking at the right key” method. As one might imagine, this procedure was tiring for the cardinal, and it took three afternoons to complete the project. When it was finished several days before the deadline, I was ecstatic. “We did it, Cardinal Dulles. Your own words will be in the new version of this book. I am so excited and happy for you.” The cardinal looked back at me with a very sad expression. Sensing what he was thinking, I continued, “It seems that you’re not as happy as I am,” and he nodded in the affirmative. I saw his pain in the midst of what I thought was a great achievement. “I know why you are unhappy,” I went on. “You would rather be sitting at your desk in our office and typing this yourself on your computer.” He shook his head vigorously in agreement. “Well,” I continued, “that is
what I want with all my heart. But, until we get our miracle, you will have to be content with plan B. You are stuck with me.” And then he smiled.

This anecdote demonstrates how the cardinal was struggling to accept God’s plan. He certainly meant what he said at the end of his last McGinley Lecture in April 2008. But it was not easy for him to let go of his ministry of lecturing, writing, and teaching—his life’s work in the vineyard of the Lord. In September, he submitted his comments to the meeting of Evangelicals and Catholics Together. Undaunted by his reaction to the previous incident, I told him how wonderful it was that his words would be there, even if he couldn’t be physically present. Again, his sad expression spoke volumes. However I was justified when Dr. Timothy George wrote to Cardinal Dulles, telling him how much the Evangelical members of the committee appreciated his remarks and were taking them under advisement.

I saw a deep loneliness in Cardinal Dulles the last few months of his life. People shied away from visiting him, because they felt ill at ease with his inability to speak. His close friends and colleagues continued to come, but the days were long and the physical discomfort increased. I sensed that he was unhappy with the approach of Thanksgiving. He always enjoyed meals with friends, and now, unable to speak or to eat, there was little opportunity to celebrate this day. Two weeks before the holiday, I told him that I would be spending Thanksgiving with him. His face took on a puzzled expression, so I explained that I didn’t want him to be alone and that I would be there but we would not do any work that day. After all, it was a holiday! He shook his head feebly in agreement, and I knew I had to explain my decision further. “Cardinal Dulles, I believe that one should spend the holidays with those they love the most. And that is the real reason I am coming to be with you that day.” He broke into a smile, and I thought I saw tears in his eyes. (By the way, on the day itself, we looked at a beautiful coffee-table book, on Renaissance art, that had been a ninetieth-birthday gift. He heard me when I said that there would be no work that day.)

I felt that the last straw with respect to how much Cardinal Dulles had to suffer came when he could no longer receive even a small part of the host at Mass. One day as I was going up to receive Holy Communion in the Murray-Weigel Chapel, I saw him agitated and looking around as to where I might be. This was so out of character for him, to be so distracted
during Mass, that I wondered what was happening. As I went back to my place behind his wheelchair, I realized that the host had fallen out of his mouth and was on the side of his chin. I retrieved the host and he was able to consume it. Shortly thereafter, Cardinal Dulles could no longer receive the Eucharist at Mass. When we got back to his room, I told him that for the first time in my life I was mad at God. He looked at me quizzically, and I explained how cruel God was in not allowing the cardinal to receive Communion anymore. “All the other deprivations I could accept as part of God’s plan for you,” I said, “but this is totally unreasonable on God’s part. And I am angry, and I will certainly tell God how I feel about this.” Cardinal Dulles shook his head “no.” He indicated that I should get the Lightwriter, and he had me write that, since he wasn’t angry at God, neither should I be. Through my tears I mentioned to him that he was taking this situation much better than I was! And he agreed. The matter was resolved when he was able to receive a drop or two of the Precious Blood through an eyedropper. It was a privilege for me to give Holy Communion to him this way until the very day before he died.

On December 4, Msgr. Christopher Walsh, one of Cardinal Dulles’s doctoral students at The Catholic University of America and now pastor of a parish in Connecticut, came to visit. As he was preparing to leave, Chris asked him if he ever felt like giving up. The cardinal frowned in disagreement. Chris continued, “Do you ever want to say I’ve had enough? I’ve done enough writing?” Another frown. “Do you ever wish that this was all over?” Another frown. Finally, Chris said, “Well, the psalmist says to God that God’s ways are not our ways. I guess somehow this must be in the plan of God for you.” Now the cardinal nodded in agreement. It was a very moving experience for Chris and me to see the cardinal’s reactions to these questions.

As I was leaving his room on December 11, Cardinal Dulles had me type “Xmas cards” in the Lightwriter. Although he was weak and had a slight case of pneumonia, he wanted to get his cards mailed in time. I had already handwritten the envelopes because he thought labels were too impersonal for Christmas cards, and I had shown him several samples of type fonts that I could use to print his names on the cards. He had chosen one, and I planned to come in early the next morning to print them. I did come in early, but not for that reason.

After I left his room, I went to Mass with the Jesuit community in Loyola Hall. The refrain of one of the songs played that evening was
“Lord, set us free.” I prayed that Cardinal Dulles would be set free of his suffering. During the night, Cardinal Dulles became very restless. Rev. William Scanlon, S.J., chaplain at Murray-Weigel, spent most of the night with him. Father Scanlon read the Divine Office and the cardinal tried to follow the prayers. To calm him and probably to distract him, Father Scanlon even played music on the tape recorder and sang along with the songs. Finally, he had to go to bed as he was falling asleep and needed to be up early that morning. One of the aides sat praying at the cardinal’s bedside for the rest of the night.

At 6:30 a.m. on December 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, I received the call from Father Scanlon with the news that the cardinal had died. I was able to get to Murray-Weigel before the undertaker came, so I was able to say my goodbyes in private. Cardinal Dulles looked so peaceful, and there was a slight smile on his face. His chin was resting on a throw pillow that bore the inscription “Faith is being sure of what you hope for and certain of what you do not see.” I had given him this pillow because its translation of the Scripture verse was similar to the title of his book on faith, The Assurance of Things Hoped For. Now his faith and hope had come to their completion. Cardinal Dulles had visited the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe and had devotion to her under this title. I believe that the patroness of the Americas came to lead the first United States–born theologian to be appointed as a cardinal who was not a bishop in this important event, his entrance into eternal life. As I stood there for a few minutes, I could almost hear him saying, as he did so many times, “Now we have work to do.” And so I returned to the office.

Cardinal Dulles’s body reposed in Fordham University Church on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 16 and 17. Members of Fordham’s United States Naval Reserve ROTC formed an honor guard during the wake. This was a fitting tribute, as Avery Dulles served in that branch of the military during the Second World War, rising to the rank of lieutenant and receiving the Croix de Guerre from France for his service to that country. Ironically, it was the polio that he contracted while in the service that caused his death some six decades later.

Members of his family and friends traveled from all over the country to attend his funeral. His nieces and nephew came from Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington, D.C.; his first cousins from upstate New York and New Mexico, and other cousins from Colorado, Texas, South Carolina, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and even England. Church
custom calls for three funeral Masses to be celebrated for cardinals on their death. The first two of these took place in the University Church. The first one, on December 16, was the Mass of the Holy Name of Jesus, celebrated by the Very Rev. David S. Ciancimino, S.J., provincial of the New York Province of the Society of Jesus. Rev. John Cecero, S.J., rector of the Fordham University Jesuit community, was the homilist. The second one was the Mass of the Holy Eucharist, celebrated by Father McShane, with Cardinal Egan presiding. Father O’Hare was the homilist. At the end of the Mass, Father McShane noted that, as a cardinal, Avery Dulles belonged not just to Fordham but to the universal Church. Therefore, his body was to go to Saint Patrick’s Cathedral to lie in state there. The Jesuits of Fordham were joined by Jesuits from many other places as they lined the walkway from the church to the waiting hearse. After the coffin was placed in the hearse, Father McShane blessed it with holy water and then gave the sprinkler to Cardinal Egan and Bishop Gerald Walsh, rector of Saint Joseph’s Seminary in Dunwoodie, where Cardinal Dulles had taught for several years before his death, to do the same. Finally, Father McShane gave the sprinkler to me, and I was the last person to bless the cardinal before he left Fordham for the last time.

At Saint Patrick’s Cathedral, the Cardinal reposed in the Lady Chapel. The final funeral Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Egan, assisted by five cardinals (among them his former student, Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, archbishop of Washington, who wrote the foreword to this book), many archbishops, bishops, and clergy. Cardinal Egan’s beautiful homily is included in this volume. As the procession came down the aisle at the end of Mass, the crowded cathedral broke into applause, a fitting tribute to the man who had spent his life as a theologian in service to the Church. Traffic on Fifth Avenue even came to a standstill as the coffin was placed in the hearse!

Cardinal Dulles could have been buried at Arlington National Cemetery, with his parents and in view of his own military service, or at Saint Patrick’s Cathedral with the other cardinals of New York City. But, first and foremost, he was a Jesuit, a member of the New York Province, and he chose to be buried in the Jesuit cemetery at Auriesville (near Albany, New York). Because of inclement weather and the extreme cold in the winter months, Jesuits who die in late fall or winter are buried in the spring. Cardinal Dulles’s interment took place on June 1, 2009.
His coffin was on view that morning in the mausoleum at Auriesville, and there was an honor guard of two members of the United States Navy. Members of the cardinal’s family and his friends came from far and wide for the burial. Bishop Howard Hubbard of Albany was the main celebrant of the Mass on the Day of Burial, and Abbot Gabriel Gibbs (a longtime friend of the cardinal) was present at the altar. Rev. Patrick J. Ryan, S.J., who succeeded Cardinal Dulles in the Laurence J. McGinley Chair in Religion and Society at Fordham, preached the homily.

At the graveside, the navy bugler played “Taps,” and Bishop Hubbard said the final prayers of commendation. While most of those gathered started back to the Auriesville Shrine cafeteria for refreshments, Father Marciniak, who had been so devoted to the cardinal in his last illness, the cardinal’s niece Ellen, and I all watched as the coffin was lowered and the cardinal was laid to rest. Later that afternoon, the cardinal’s service flag was presented to his nieces and nephews.

But this is not the end of the story of Cardinal Dulles, by any means. His influence will continue to play an important part in theology, as this bibliography of his published writings is used for research by scholars and students alike. There are many topics listed here that can serve as springboards to further insights and developments; there are many themes that lend themselves to further elaboration. Ever the lover of the sea, Cardinal Dulles would see his own work as a navigational tool, leading in many directions. For some, this will mean charting new waters and finding new places to explore. For others, this will mean plumbing more-familiar depths more deeply. But, for all, his writings will be a beacon to light and guide their own theological voyages. Ad majorem Dei gloriam!
Homily at the Funeral Mass at Saint Patrick’s Cathedral

Edward Cardinal Egan

Archbishop of New York
Saint Patrick’s Cathedral
December 18, 2008

Your Excellency, Archbishop Pietro Sambi, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States
Your Excellency, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the United Nations
My Brother Archbishop and Bishops
Reverend Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus
Beloved Clergy and Religious
Dear Relatives of Cardinal Dulles, and
Friends—each and every one:

First of all, I wish to express my heartfelt sympathy to the friends, admirers, and especially the relatives of His Eminence, Avery Cardinal

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Dulles. Also, I want once again to extend to the Jesuit community here in New York and across the world my sincerest condolences. Since the passing of Cardinal Dulles on December 12, he has had a very special place in my prayers as he has had in the prayers of so many priests, deacons, religious and laity of the archdiocese. We all feel his loss deeply. Nor will we ever forget his brilliance, his kindness, his generosity and—above all—his uncompromising loyalty and devotion to the Lord and to the Church he loved and served so well.

Permit me to begin with a little story. Well over fifty years ago, I visited a tiny chapel on a dusty, country road in the province of Umbria in Italy with a group of fellow seminarians, all of whom were studying in Rome. One of our number had heard of the chapel and convinced us to walk to see it from the town of Orvieto, where we were making a retreat.

The worn, wooden door of the centuries-old edifice stood wide open. We entered and were immediately greeted by a sacristan who was advanced in years but full of energy and enthusiasm all the same.

“You have surely come to see our crucifix,” he announced, “and I will be happy to show it to you. It is a treasure with a beautiful lesson to teach.”

With that, he led us to a side altar over which there hung a life-size image of the crucified Savior, carved in heavily varnished wood and attached to a rough, gnarled cross. With a bit of drama, he directed us to move to the right of the altar and focused the beam of a flashlight onto the left side of the Redeemer’s face. It was contorted in pain, just as one might have expected it would be.

With another dramatic gesture, he told us to move to the left of the altar and focused the flashlight beam onto the right side of the Savior’s face. It bore a clear, unmistakable, and—indeed—challenging smile.

“Suffering and triumph!” the sacristan cried. “This is what our crucifix proclaims. There is bound to be a measure of pain in every life, especially toward the end of life,” he said. “But if we live as the crucified Son of God has taught us to live, we will die as our crucifix tells us He died—suffering, but in triumph too.”

“When you are priests, tell this to your people,” our sacristan added. “Say to them: ‘For those who embrace the will of the Father in heaven and fashion their lives according to the example of His Beloved Son,
death will always have two faces; and neither is to be ignored if the mystery of death is to be understood.’”

Certainly, in the life of Avery Cardinal Dulles, both sides of the Umbrian crucifix were in evidence. He was, of course, born into an illustrious family. His father was secretary of state in the Eisenhower administration; his great-grandfather was secretary of state in the administration of Benjamin Harrison; and his great-uncle was secretary of state in the administration of Woodrow Wilson. He was, moreover, reared in affluence and afforded the best of academic formation, first in the Choate School and then in Harvard University. All the same, until his early twenties, he was a man bereft of the blessings and consolation of faith. With the grace of God, however, he escaped the emptiness of disbelief in his third year at Harvard, when he discovered the Creator one spring day as he observed the flowering of a tree on the bank of the Charles River. In a book of his entitled *A Testimonial to Grace*, he reports the experience in these words:

How could it be, I asked, that this delicate tree sprang up and developed and that all the enormous complexity of its cellular operations combined together to make it grow erectly and bring forth leaves and blossoms? The answer . . . of [the Scholastic philosophers] was unknown to me. . . . The “nature” which was responsible for these events was distinguished by the possession of intellect and will, and intellect plus will makes personality. Mind, then, not matter, was at the origin of all things . . . [the mind of] a Person of Whom I had had no previous intuition.

A year after graduation from Harvard, the future cardinal entered the Catholic Church, a believer whose new and beloved faith proved to be, by his own statement, the greatest blessing of his life.

All of this, of course, entailed a considerable element of pain as a result of the reaction of his family, as I learned from one of his dearest friends. Nor should we be surprised. For the Dulleses had been committed Presbyterians for generations. In fact, one of the cardinal’s grandfathers was among the most celebrated Presbyterian theologians of his time. The young convert, however, accepted the hurt and moved on without regret or hesitation.

But far greater suffering lay ahead. While serving in the United States Navy during the Second World War, Lieutenant Avery Dulles contracted poliomyelitis in Naples, Italy. Brought to Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland, he experienced paralysis in his legs and shoulders, and also in
his right arm. The doctors forecasted that he would never be able to write; and, happily, he proved them monumentally wrong. In due course, he conquered the paralysis, regained his strength, and in 1946 entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus in Poughkeepsie, New York, to become a priest of the Jesuit order.

In the 1980s, the effects of the poliomyelitis that he had fought off as a young man began to reemerge. He started to limp a bit, and by the 1990s he needed braces on his legs. Throughout the years that followed, the situation became ever more serious, so that during his final months he was confined to a wheelchair and was ultimately rendered unable to speak. Suffering had clearly taken hold, as he himself admitted in his “Farewell Address” as the Laurence J. McGinley Professor of Religion and Society at Fordham University. His words, lovingly read for him by the president emeritus of Fordham, the Very Reverend Joseph O’Hare, were these:

Suffering and diminishment are not the greatest of evils but are normal ingredients in life, especially in old age. They are to be expected as elements of a full human experience. Well into my ninetieth year, I have been able to work productively. As I become increasingly paralyzed and unable to speak, I can identify with the paralytics and mute persons in the gospels, grateful for the loving and skillful care I receive and for the hope of everlasting life in Jesus Christ. If the Lord now calls me to a period of weakness, I know well that his power can be made perfect in infirmity. “Blessed be the name of the Lord!”

Suffering had indeed figured mightily in the life of Avery Cardinal Dulles, a suffering accepted in loving union with the “Suffering Servant” on the cross, a suffering such as I had once seen carved by a medieval artist into the left side of the face of the crucified Son of God.

We dare not, however, stand on only one side of that image. For in the life of our lamented Cardinal, there was also triumph in the most authentic sense of that word. Avery Cardinal Dulles was a widely admired Professor of Theology at Woodstock College in Maryland from 1960 to 1974 and at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., from 1974 to 1988. From 1988 to 2008, he was, as mentioned above, the Laurence J. McGinley Professor of Religion and Society at Fordham University here in New York. During these years he authored twenty-three books and more than eight hundred articles on virtually every facet of theology. In addition, he served on countless boards and committees for the Holy See, for Jesuit
institutions, and for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Among them were the Vatican’s International Theological Commission, the Papal Secretariat for Dialogue with Non-Believers, the Committee on Doctrine of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the board of trustees of Fordham University, and the Catholic Theological Society and the American Theological Society, both of which chose him to be their president. Add to this numerous assignments as a visiting professor in seminaries and theological faculties—Catholic and non-Catholic—in the United States and across the world, and you have an example of a triumphant life-story, never matched to my knowledge by any other American Catholic theologian.

Throughout all of this, Father and later Cardinal Dulles advised and guided bishops, university presidents, professors, and students with wisdom and unlimited generosity. That for which I am personally most grateful in this regard is the time he gave for seven years to instruct the future priests of the Archdiocese of New York at our archdiocesan seminary, Saint Joseph’s in Yonkers. The master theologian was as well an incredibly kind and patient instructor in the fundamentals of the theological science. We could never thank him enough.

On February 21, 2001, Father Avery Dulles, S.J., was named to the College of Cardinals by Pope John Paul II and became the “Cardinal Deacon of the Church of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary on the Via Lata” in Rome. I had the honor of being one of his cardinalatial “classmates,” as was Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, who at that time was the archbishop of Washington. We have both always rejoiced in our having shared that day with Cardinal Dulles, whom we counted a priest of extraordinary achievement, extraordinary wisdom, and—most importantly—extraordinary goodness.

On August 24, 2008, a scant four months ago, Cardinal Dulles was to celebrate his ninetieth birthday at a Mass in the chapel of Fordham University on the Rose Hill campus. Confined now to a bed-on-wheels on which he lay able to move only the muscles in his face and in one hand, he knew that he could not join the priests at the altar. Hence, he asked if I would be willing to attend the Mass dressed as he would be dressed in a black suit and sitting next to him in the front row of the chapel. I was, of course, delighted to accept his proposal. However, at the entrance of the chapel, there was some confusion. How were we to handle the procession? The master of ceremonies inquired if I would be willing to push the...
Cardinal’s bed-on-wheels up the aisle. I agreed immediately and with pleasure.

When we got safely into our places, I leaned over to the cardinal to ask if it had been a bumpy ride. For I too was having some problems with my legs partly due to the poliomyelitis I had had as a boy. “Your Eminence,” I quipped, “forgive me if the procession was not as smooth as it should have been. I am afraid it was a case of the ‘lame pushing the lame.’” A broad smile covered his face very much like the one I had seen a half-century earlier on an image of the suffering Lord in a chapel in Umbria.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.
Homily at the Mass of Christian Burial in Auriesville

Patrick J. Ryan, S.J.

Vice President for Mission and Ministry
Fordham University
Successor to Cardinal Dulles in the McGinley Chair
June 1, 2009

The burial of the dead is more than a corporal work of mercy urged on us as Christians. It is an ancient sacred tradition not only of the Jewish people but also of the ancient Greeks. In the Greek Old Testament Book of Tobit, the eponymous hero of the tale, an exile in Assyria, gets into trouble for burying fellow Jews in Nineveh. The crime of Antigone in the play of Sophocles was that she carried out the burial rites for her brother, Polyneices, against the will of her tyrant-uncle, Creon.

In the general area of this Shrine of the North American Martyrs at Auriesville, the martyr Saint Isaac Jogues buried his lay companion, Saint Rene Goupil, who had been clubbed to death on September 23, 1642. Jogues, like Tobit and Antigone, felt a moral obligation to do so, as we learn from his own narrative:

The following morning, I could not restrain myself from going out to determine where they had thrown his blessed body, for I wished to bury it, no matter what the cost. A few Iroquois who were anxious to save my life said to me: "You have no sense. You see that they are looking for you everywhere to kill you, and you still go out! You want to go and look for a half-corrupted body which they have dragged far from here. Do you not see these young men going out who will kill you if they catch you outside the palisade?"
Jogues and another companion, Jean Lalande, were not granted rest in the earth but a watery grave in the Mohawk River in October 1646.

Today, nearly six months after his death, we are bringing the mortal remains of Avery Cardinal Dulles of the Society of Jesus to be buried here in these hallowed grounds. Fifteen years ago, as I drove eastward along the New York State Thruway, I suddenly realized that I was within sight of Auriesville. I was in a bit of a rush, having left Syracuse for Worcester later than I had planned. But somehow I felt that I should stop briefly for a visit to this graveyard, a graveyard where I will probably also be interred some day. At the time I was working overseas, so I had not had many opportunities to visit Auriesville since the time I spent here at the end of my Jesuit formation in 1975.

I was stunned when I came to the graveyard by the sight of so many headstones of people I had known and loved. The words of Dante, paraphrased by T. S. Eliot, echoed in my mind: “I had not thought death had undone so many.” So many of my teachers, my superiors, even some of my contemporaries were buried here! They were men who had died old, men who had died young. They were all buried here together on these rolling hills overlooking the Mohawk, land consecrated by the blood of Jogues, Goupil and Lalande. My short visit to the graveyard stretched into two hours or more; I arrived very, very late in Worcester.

Saint Paul helps us to make sense of death and burial in the first reading, or at least as much sense as we can make of this human experience of finitude—an experience not of the deceased but of us who live on. Paul describes our baptism as a watery grave into which we have been lowered and from which we arise to new life: “We were indeed buried with [Christ Jesus] through baptism into his death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). Precisely by our descent into the grave of baptism, the burial or cremation of our mortal remains becomes something that is not really ultimate. As Paul goes on to write, “If we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection” (Romans 6:5). Our first death, in baptism, prepares us for our second death at life’s ending. It is good for us to visit graveyards to reflect on this reality.

When Greeks—Greek-speaking Gentiles, it would seem—approached Jesus in the Gospel of John, he seemed to sense in that event the beginning of the end of his life as a mortal Jew in first-century Palestine, as well
as the beginning of his life of glory attained through death and resurrection. “Amen, amen, I say to you,” Jesus said, “unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit” (John 12:24). Jesus feared the coming of his hour when he would “leave this world and go to the Father” (John 13:1), and this gospel passage from John is the closest that gospel gives us to the synoptics’ account of the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. “I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name” (John 12:27).

Majestic and apparently imperturbable as Jesus is in the Gospel of John, it is good to have at least one glimpse in that gospel of his mortal fear of death, his terror about entering into the all-consuming fire of God’s glory. The prayer of Jesus, “Father, glorify your name,” is John’s equivalent of the synoptics’ “Not what I will but what you will” (Mark 14:36).

Avery Cardinal Dulles of the Society of Jesus, after ninety years on this earth, has entered into the purifying glory of God. Throughout his sixty-two years as a Jesuit, Avery glorified God’s name, not the name of Avery Dulles. He lived his life ad majorem Dei gloriam: for the greater glory of God. God responded in thunder to the perfect self-surrender of Jesus to the glorification of God’s name with words from heaven: “I have glorified it and will glorify it again” (John 12:28). We thank God today that Avery has reached his goal, remaining faithful to the end. May we also hear God’s word of joyful thunder.

Let me end with words from the hymn “Be Still My Soul.” The German original, a partial paraphrase of Psalm 46, was written in the eighteenth century by the Lutheran pietist Katharina von Schlegel; it was translated into English in the nineteenth century by a Scottish Free Church hymn-writer named Jane Borthwick. The most famous modern setting of it utilizes a melody by the twentieth-century Finnish composer Jan Sibelius, well known to us as Finlandia. How suitable it is, then, and also how ironic, that this old Protestant hymn accompanied the funeral liturgies of this great son of American Presbyterians who became a Catholic, a Jesuit and a cardinal of the Church of Rome.

Be still, my soul; the Lord is on thy side!
Bear patiently the cross of grief and pain;
Leave to thy God to order and provide—
In every change He faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heavenly Friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul: thy God doth undertake
To guide the future, as he has the past;
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.

Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on
When we shall be forever with the Lord.
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past,
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.