

in walking towards the Kingdom of God, it is not enough to say “Lord, Lord,” and he roots his theology in Christ’s redemptive role, repeatedly citing Pope Benedict XVI’s Aparecida address: “The preferential option for the poor is implicit in the Christological faith in the God who became poor for us, so as to enrich us with his poverty (cf. 2 Cor 8:9).”

Liberation theology, as presented in *In the Company of the Poor*, would benefit from a firmer anchoring in the tradition of Catholic social thought. Of the many papal encyclicals on social doctrine, Gutierrez cites just Paul VI’s *Evangelii nuntiandi*. Ideas like ‘accompaniment’ or ‘drinking from our own wells’ might have been linked fruitfully to the concepts of solidarity and subsidiarity as they appear throughout the tradition. In urging a move beyond the class conflict of his day, Pope Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* (1891) wrote that “the Church . . . aims at joining the two social classes to each other in closest neighborliness and friendship.” Accompanying the poor is about cultivating a love of neighbor and recognizing the dignity of every human person, regardless of their status.

Mary Clare Imparato
Rutgers University, New Jersey

Stephen M. Krason (editor), *The Crisis of Religious Liberty: Reflections from Law, History, and Catholic Social Thought*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.

There has been talk about the crisis of religious liberty for many years. To cite just one example, the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty (Committee) of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement in 2012 entitled “Our First, Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement on Religious Liberty.” In the face of growing threats to religious liberty and around the world, the Committee made an impassioned plea for the protection of religious liberty. No one thinks that this situation has improved since 2012. In fact, the threats to religious liberty have escalated since the Committee’s statement was released. This is particularly true outside the United States. As the Committee noted, the age of martyrdom is not over. It is important to recognize that the situation in the United States is less grave. The threats to religious liberty here, however, are ever more apparent.

There are profound ironies about this current situation. The United States has long been associated with the idea of religious liberty. Judge

John Noonan has even described the free exercise of religion (and here he means the idea of inscribing in fundamental law an ideal of freedom of religion) “as an American invention.” Saint Pope John Paul II has described religious tolerance as “one of the cultural cornerstones of American democracy.” Pope Benedict XVI described the United States as “this land of religious liberty.” Despite this heritage, the constitutional law in the United States provides very little protection for religious liberty. Moreover, it is intriguing that the Catholic bishops in the United States have emerged as leaders in the defense of religious liberty. In the nineteenth century, the popes repeatedly condemned the idea of liberty of conscience. In his encyclical *Mirari Vos*, Pope Gregory XVI stated that it was “an absurd and erroneous proposition . . . [to] claim that liberty of conscience must be maintained of everyone.” The Church in the United States was long regarded as an enemy of freedom. But this view of the Church has largely changed.

Despite these ironies, it is increasingly clear that threats to religious liberty in the United States are growing and that the Catholic Church is a key voice in the resistance.

In April of 2014, the Veritas Center for Ethics in Public Life, Franciscan University of Steubenville, and the Society of Catholic Social Scientists (SCSS) co-sponsored a conference (“Truth, Conscience, and Religious Freedom”) to address these themes. The newly founded Veritas Center “exists to bring faithful Catholic scholarly reflection to bear on the most pressing ethical questions in contemporary culture—questions of marriage and sexuality, war and peace, life and death, as well as economic and social justice.” The Center is under the direction of Dr. Anne Henderstott; its Associate Director is Dr. Stephen M. Krason.

The April 2014 religious liberty conference was the Center’s inaugural annual conference. The conference brought together an impressive group of scholars and the papers from the conference served as the foundation for the book under review.

The Crisis of Religious Liberty was edited by Dr. Stephen M. Krason, co-founder of the SCSS, its long-time President, and a distinguished scholar. In recent years, under Krason’s leadership, the SCSS has developed an arrangement with Rowman & Littlefield to produce a Catholic Social Thought book series. *The Crisis of Religious Liberty* is the ninth book in the series.

The Center and the Catholic Social Thought book series are encouraging developments. The crisis in religious liberty is just one of the cultural issues we are currently facing. As the Veritas Center’s Mission notes, we confront “what Pope Benedict XVI described as ‘the dictatorship of

relativism.”” These Veritas Center conferences and the Catholic Social Thought book series will bring to bear the wisdom of Catholic social thought on this challenge.

The April 2014 conference focused on the HHS mandate and the then-pending Supreme Court case (*Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores Inc.*, which was decided on June 2014). It is certainly critical to focus on the technical aspects of the legal doctrine involved. There are important, ongoing debates about how to interpret the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. It is necessary to think through with care issues such as the HHS mandate and the growing threats to religious liberty presented by the legal recognition of same-sex “marriage.” But in thinking about how to make progress on these issues, it is critical to reflect more broadly on the issues. *The Crisis of Religious Liberty* does just that.

The contributors to this volume are all leading scholars. The contributors to the volume are (in order of appearance) Robert P. George, Gerard V. Bradley, Randy Lee, Vincent Phillip Muñoz, Kevin Schmiesing, Robert A. Destro, Kenneth L. Grasso, and William L. Saunders. Anne Hendershott contributed the Foreword and Stephen Krason wrote the Afterword.

The papers offer contributions from a range of perspectives—legal, philosophical, historical, and theological. In this brief review, I will highlight two of the papers. The complementary papers by Kevin Schmiesing and Kenneth Grasso are enormously helpful in trying to understand our current predicament. Schmiesing’s paper focuses on the history of Catholicism in America. He explores at length the changing understandings of freedom that we’ve seen in American history. We have moved from a freedom grounded in truth to a freedom characterized by extreme notions of autonomy. The latter understanding represents a profound threat to religious freedom, properly understood. According to Schmiesing, our task is to reinvigorate an older understanding of freedom. His proposal is to advance a narrative that communicates the message that “the Catholic Church is a champion of freedom, and the freedom Catholics promote is a boon to the welfare, dignity, and fulfillment of all human persons.”

Grasso’s paper explores America’s engagement with the “problem of religious pluralism.” He explains that historically the United States has not faced a clash between militant secularists and devout Christians. There were denominational differences, to be sure, but there was a longstanding consensus informed by a “common biblical culture.” This “made possible a broad, overlapping consensus on the nature of man, the character of human good, and the structure of social relations that should inform human life.” But, Grasso explains, this consensus has collapsed and there are now

two Americas: “an America loyal to the older Western heritage, to the legacy of biblical theism and the natural-law tradition, and another America committed to the ideological secularism and ethic of human autonomy that issues from the radical Enlightenment.” These two versions are locked in a culture war, and there is a need for “a fundamental rethinking of American Catholicism’s cultural orientation.” There is also a need for wisdom and courage as American Catholics evangelize the world around them, an exhortation echoed in Stephen Krason’s Afterword.

The papers in this volume explain that the current situation is quite precarious. Moreover, the papers make it clear that there aren’t any quick fixes. The problems we face won’t be solved by a favorable Supreme Court ruling or two. The problems are far deeper and are largely cultural.

The Crisis of Religious Liberty is a valuable contribution to the ongoing debates about religious liberty. As is true with the other volumes in Rowman & Littlefield’s Catholic Social Thought series, *The Crisis of Religious Liberty* should be a part of any serious academic library.

Richard S. Myers
Ave Maria School of Law, Florida

Wilfred M. McClay and Ted V. McAllister (editors), *Why Place Matters: Geography, Identity, and Civic Life in Modern America*. New Atlantis Books, 2014.

Edmund Burke famously argued that modernity prizes disembodied virtues. In our day the Enlightenment values of *equality*, *freedom*, and *rationality* are overwhelmingly expressed using technological criteria like *mobility*, *access*, and *efficiency*. The authors in *Why Place Matters*, the brilliant fifth title published by *The New Atlantis: A Journal of Science and Technology*, argue that this bodes ill for virtues grounded in the skills, experiences, dependencies, and limits of the concrete human body. Its essays represent the profound efforts of poets, philosophers, historians, and geographers to grapple with the effects of globalization, technocracy, and an ascendant cosmopolitanism on human culture and well-being. In their place the authors offer diverse and robust accounts of a “localism” that emphasizes the ways we are shaped by the architecture of our homes and cities, by the use and maintenance of our tools, and by the narratives imbibed with our mother’s milk.

The volume is particularly adept at challenging three contemporary theses. First, popular liberal narratives about technology tend to conflate