

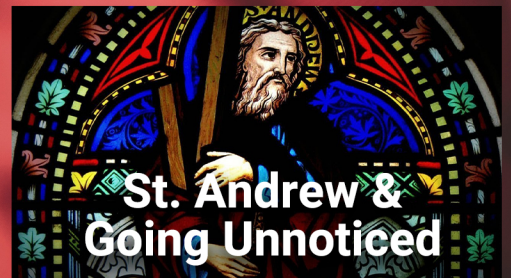
NOVEMBER 2022

EMPTY TOMB PROJECT

THE MAGAZINE

SAVING AMERICAN POLITICS

The Need for Virtue in our Nation



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ETP: The Magazine

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Thomas Griffin is the founder and editor-in-chief of Empty Tomb Project. He is the chair of the religion department at a Catholic high school on Long Island where he lives with his wife and son.

THE MISSION *AND* A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The Mission:

Empty Tomb Project: The Magazine exists to bring the reality and power of the empty tomb to as many people as possible. We are convinced that if practicing Catholics, and fallen away Catholics alike, encounter Jesus as a real living person their lives will be radically changed.

We are a Catholic magazine that desires to bring relevant cultural and spiritual topics to our readers in an honest and fresh manner. We dive into topics that truly matter to people, themes that are brought up in people's homes as well as in church circles. We desire to bring uniformity in message and an increase in inspiration to Catholics across Long Island.

Along with providing the most dynamic content we are committed to producing a product that is beautifully captivating to the eye. To do so we will always rely on the best Catholic designers (StartUpCatholic) so that the content can be amplified by the aesthetics of the magazine.

In order to reach as many people as possible with the critically important message of Christ we rely on donors in order to grow the mission and impact of our magazine. This will allow us to remain free and ensure that anyone who desires to meet Jesus today will have that opportunity. If you feel called to support us, please reach out to me via email: EmptyTombProject@gmail.com and join us in the mission!

Editor's Note:

Use the camera on your phone to scan this image and watch a Thanksgiving message (produced by MT28 Project)



Thomas Griffin is the founder and editor-in-chief of Empty Tomb Project: The Magazine.

MAJOR HEADLINE:

Saving American Politics The Need for Virtue in Our Nation

By Thomas Griffin

There are some notions that yearn to be discovered and lived by. There are principles that place mankind on a launchpad towards what is most true, good and beautiful. In the midst of a culture that is growing more antagonistic towards Christian values and objective truth there are lessons that need to be taught anew. Particularly, we need principles or rather virtues to organize politics, for politics is the avenue by which human beings derive how they should or should not act.


Pivotal to human flourishing is the understanding of and call to be virtuous. A man named Aristotle outlined them twenty-three hundred years ago. Among all of the virtues there are four specific ones that bind the rest together and push one towards living in true freedom. These are called the cardinal virtues. The cardinal virtues are fortitude, temperance, justice, and prudence. These are the virtues that all other virtues hinge upon or draw their source from in some way, shape, or form.

All virtues are “destroyed by defect and excess” and are found in the mean between these two extremes. Whether we speak of pain, pleasure, confidence, fear or other states one is called “to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right aim, and in the right way,” says Aristotle. When pleasures or pains control our actions we are shackled to irrational desires, worldly acclaim, and fleeting moments rather than being moved to act according to what is right and just.

For example, fortitude is not the absence of the feeling of fear, but the rightly ordered response in the face of fear. Again Aristotle explains that “a man who flies from and fears everything and does not stand his ground against anything becomes a coward, and the man who fears nothing at all but goes to meet every danger becomes rash.” The virtue of fortitude is the mean between cowardice and rashness and, as a hinge virtue, gives rise to acting in both a patient, profound, insightful, and courageous manner.

Too often, politics is controlled by a cowardice which is exemplified by candidates changing what they believe in whenever it seems most advantageous or neglecting to fight for the weakest in society because it will cost them honors with their party. Too often, the months leading up to November of an election year are riddled with a rashness which makes bold claims and promises that the ordinary listener knows the candidate cannot live up to.

Next, temperance is not the absence of pleasure nor the indulgence in painful sacrifice, but the rightly ordered response seeking pleasure. “The man who indulges in every pleasure and abstains from none becomes self-indulgent, while the man who shuns every pleasure...becomes in a way insensible.” The virtue of temperance is found in the intermediate between self-indulgence and the rejection of anything to be experienced with the senses. As a hinge virtue, temperance allows one to experience life in moderation and never allow the enticements of worldly allurements to run their decision making.



Too often, politics is organized by those who are avid glory seekers. The excitement of a race for the future of the country is epitomized by the candidates who run ads with no boundaries and the multitudes who spew more hatred for their opponent than acclaim for their choice. All sides need temperance; all sides need clear decision making which is not controlled by worldly desires, but clearly seeks the good of the other, even if they are my adversary.

Justice is not grabbing everything and anything for oneself and it is not consumed by merely pleasing others, but the rightly ordered response to giving others their due. Aristotle claims that “both the lawless man and the grasping and unequal man are thought to be unjust, so that evidently both the law-abiding and the equal man will be just.” The virtue of justice is the hinge virtue for countless other virtues because of its ability to directly order interactions with others and the self.

Too often, political debate is not ordered towards giving the other person what they are due but towards giving them what I believe they deserve. The difference between due and deserve is that one is dependent on me, while the other is determined by the fact that every person has dignity and is deserving of respect. When disagreements arise justice shines through the position which upholds the infinite worth of all those involved.

Finally, prudence is not simply having knowledge and commanding others to act as you please in all circumstances, nor is it knowledge that is consumed in the self, but prudence is having the ability to rightly respond to and communicate knowledge and advice to others at the right time and in useful circumstances that concern things “that conduce to the good life in general.” The virtue of prudence is the hinge virtue for numerous others because it orders correct action for situations.

Above all of the cardinal virtues prudence is most needed in our times. In our streets, homes, cities, schools, and social media networks there is most often the neglect of speaking and acting at the right time in the correct circumstances. We are what we do; our actions show the world what we believe and what we stand for. Prudence rules over fiery disagreements and heated political grand-standing by enabling one to respond to differences with rational dialogue and never with empty slogans and deceptive political verbiage.

The cardinal virtues are offered for the taking, for all of us during this election cycle. Virtue is needed in the candidates and in the nation which will elect our next president. Don't be controlled by hatred and organized through fear. Respond, act, speak, and vote in virtue so that the electorate personifies the freedom which our leadership is meant to permeate.

Thomas Griffin is the founder and editor-in-chief of Empty Tomb Project: The Magazine.

Catholic Commentary: The Role of Women in the Church

By Theresa Marino

Why doesn't the church step into the 21st Century with roles for women? It's safe to say that if you're an American Catholic, you've heard this question tossed around a time or two. As a Catholic millennial female myself, my own notion of femininity has been through the ringer and back again. On the one hand, the Church emphasizes from youth the meekness, purity and obedience of Mary which is held out as the idyllic model of female perfection. On the drastic other end of the idea spectrum, American popular culture wastes no opportunity to leverage TV, media or educational platforms to promote images of strength, independence and autonomy as ideals for women. It is culturally understood that a woman ought to be liberated from every traditional gender role which may have its roots in the natural cycles of her biology and that she ought not be silent before any man, much less any institution founded by one.

It is important to note here that not all of modernity is being raised in the same cultural dichotomy that I was as a Catholic American. Having been very blessed to travel around the world in my lifetime, I have observed firsthand the differences of cultures in third world nations which are in contrast to ours. Nations in coastal Africa and the rural Caribbean which I've visited still maintain traditional gender roles which are ingrained and seldom raised as problematic unless by anglo saxon visitors such as myself, who transplant for a time from more progressive countries on missionary or humanitarian efforts.

To demonstrate my point, a brief story. I attended a lively community dance in developing El Cercado, a poor inland region of the Dominican Republic. Many different local men asked me to join them on the dance floor, continuously, one after another for the entire night. I was beat by the end and had so much fun! Being taken by their initiative and interest in partnering with me despite my clear lack of knowledge of the Bachata, it was explained to me that in Dominican culture it is "the man's job to make sure the woman is having fun." It would be considered rude to leave a woman sitting without a partner, and if she didn't enjoy herself it would be the collective fault of the men around her.

I had never heard such a thing in all my life as an American who has attended very many weddings and parties without a dance partner, and seldom asked to dance by one man in the room let alone an endless line of strangers! There was something so tangibly easy and uncomplicated about the formula they all subscribed to in an unspoken way. I'm sure something that helped was my ignorance of the steps, so that I had no inclination to compete but was instead happy to follow their lead, which was in every case pronounced and unique.

To the point of whether or not women are meant to have more "leadership" roles in the Catholic Church, my inclination is that we may be asking the wrong question from a place of overcorrection in response to the un-Christian practices of some cultures throughout history which have not respected women. From the beginning, Christ Himself elevated the role of



women in 1st Century Israeli society by demanding they be treated with dignity in each His public teachings, including them in the evangelization efforts of the first apostles, giving them privileged roles in His own personal life, and assuming one into Heaven body and soul as no other human being ever has been. The highest saint in Heaven is unarguably a woman. It was through a Woman that God chose to become incarnate. Women were entrusted with the preparation of God's body after crucifixion, and the discovery of His body in the Resurrection. Women have been entrusted with the divine mystery of bringing forth life into this world as men can never do. Today, women in America hold every position of leadership in the Church that can be held outside of ordained ministry, which was clearly reserved by Christ for men configured uniquely to His physical image.

Perhaps, those of us women who still insist on asking the question "Why doesn't the church step into the 21st Century with roles for us?" need to be countered with this question: "Why doesn't the 21st Century woman step into God's plan for her, though it is different from the man's?" Is it perhaps because we have devalued our own unique role so severely that we are displeased with it unless it is more masculinized? If we spent more time emphasizing the precious value, unique strengths and gifts of women, and less time comparing it with the precious value of men, perhaps we would feel less at odds with the differences between them. They are intentionally different. The Divine Mind made it so.

The beautiful truth which we keep avoiding as Americans is that we are meant to be helpful to one another as two partners in a beautiful dance. We are helpful because we are different, moving in cooperation and not competition - stepping back and forth not at the same time. The more we resist acknowledging the dignity in our differences as women, the less happy we will be and the less time we'll have to delight in the dance that God wants us to enjoy! God has always had a special role for women in His plan for humanity. It is time we take pride in it once again, as male and female saints throughout our Church's history have always done, to no detriment of the other.

Theresa Marino is a New York native who has served the Catholic Church throughout her twenties in various ministry capacities. Currently a middle school Religion Teacher, she has also worked in high school campus ministry, music ministry, mission work and parish settings.



Live Biblical: WHAT BEING AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS DOES TO YOU

By Matthew Chicavich

In the Gospel of John, Nicodemus makes three appearances. In each successive appearance, Nicodemus' faith grows. His conversion begins with curious questions in the dark and culminates at the Foot of the Cross.

In John 3, Nicodemus meets with Jesus under cover of night in the dark. A Pharisee, Nicodemus cannot be seen associating with Jesus. The scandal would be too much for his reputation as a leader in the Jewish community. Still, the healings Jesus performs and the authority with which He speaks have moved Nicodemus to risk a secret meeting. Nicodemus is searching for answers, for truth.

Jesus challenges Nicodemus: "No one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above...without being born of water and spirit" (Jn. 3: 3,5). Nicodemus finds only confusion in this statement. Jesus then points this scholar of the Torah to Moses: "And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life" (Jn. 3:14-15). In the last line of their exchange, Jesus tells Nicodemus, "But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God" (Jn. 3: 21). The reference from Numbers is clear but the typology is subtle and confusing. One would imagine that Nicodemus left the conversation with more questions than answers.

The next we see Nicodemus is in John 7 when he makes an attempt to stand up for Jesus in front of his fellow Pharisees: "Does our law condemn a person before it first hears him and finds out what he is doing?" (Jn 7:51). This is a far cry from proclaiming Jesus the Son of God, but Nicodemus' encounter with Jesus has planted seeds that have taken root.

Nicodemus' third and final appearance is at the burial of Jesus. He brings a mixture of about one hundred pounds myrrh and aloe. He assisted in preparing Jesus' body for burial. Truly this is an act of a believer. Nicodemus' faith is clear to see in the light of his actions.

What happened to Nicodemus between the time of his meeting with Jesus under the cover of night in darkness to assisting with the care of his burial in the light of day? How has this man gone from curious bystander to devoted disciple? The Son of Man was lifted up.

When the Israelites looked upon the bronze serpent, they were healed. When Nicodemus looked upon Jesus on the Cross, he was healed of his doubt, rationalism, intellectual pride, and fear of what following Jesus would cost him. After seeing Jesus raised up, there is no cost too great. One hundred pounds of burial spices is nothing compared to eternal life. Salvation is found at the foot of the Cross.

This reality is as true today as it was for Nicodemus. We have eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear. Often it is the Cross which opens our senses to the Truth of who Jesus Christ is. Saint Teresa of Calcutta is often quoted as saying, "Pain and suffering have come into your life, but remember pain, sorrow, and suffering are but the kiss of Jesus – a sign that you have come so close to Him that He can kiss you."

Dwelling in the mystery of Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the Cross is the opportunity for all of God's children to draw close to him. At the foot of the Cross, suffering is given meaning. At the foot of the Cross, truth comes to light. At the foot of the Cross, we are converted.

Matthew Chicavich teaches religion and physics at a Catholic high school on Long Island where he lives with his wife and four children. He has a masters degree in theology and a bachelor's degree in physics.

MONTHLY FEAST: *St. Andrew* *Being Alright Outside the Spotlight*

By Thomas Griffin

Known as “Peter’s brother,” Andrew is the one who introduces Peter to Jesus - and changes his life forever. The following quote by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI highlights the need to live for the vision of St. Andrew.

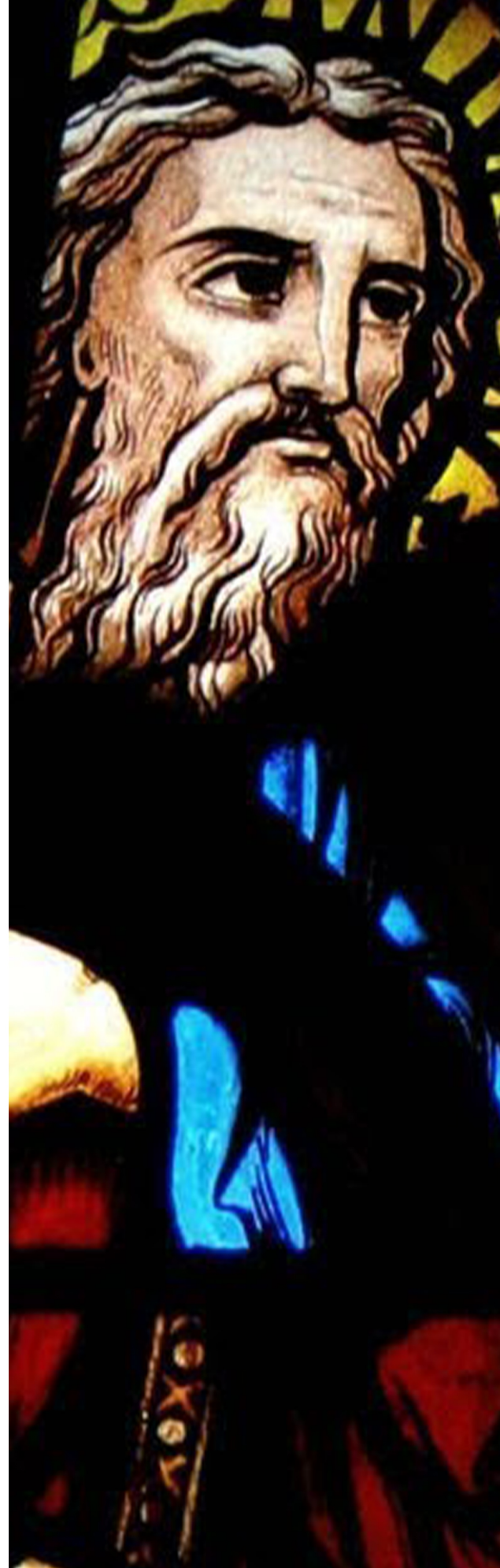
“Andrew had previously been a disciple of John the Baptist: and this shows us that he was a man who was searching, who shared in Israel’s hope, who wanted to know better the word of the Lord, the presence of the Lord. He was truly a man of faith and hope; and one day he heard John the Baptist proclaiming Jesus as: ‘the Lamb of God’ (Jn 1:36); so he was stirred and, with another unnamed disciple, followed Jesus...The Evangelist says that ‘they saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day...’ (Jn 1:37-39). Thus, Andrew enjoyed precious moments of intimacy with Jesus. The account continues with one important [note]: ‘One of the two who heard John speak, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first found his brother Simon, and said to him, ‘We found the Messiah’ (which means Christ). He brought him to Jesus (Jn 1:40-43), straight away showing us an unusual apostolic spirit. Andrew, then, was the first of the Apostles to be called to follow Jesus.’ [Ratzinger, Joseph. *Jesus, the Apostles, and the Early Church*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007. (pages 54-55)]

The feast day of St. Andrew is one that should be most relevant to the contemporary disciple. Andrew always comes in second to his brother, Peter. He goes unnoticed and often unrecognized. He lives in the shadow of Christ and of his own brother. In the grand scheme of life we can often experience feelings of insignificance and unworthiness. Following God, in our day and age, can be a sentencing to life among the outcasts. St. Andrew paves the way for us to understand how to live out of the spotlight. He always drew near to Christ, listened to him while no one else was around, and allowed Jesus to run the show.

Andrew steps in today on our journey and echoes the essential truth of our faith: following Jesus is not about becoming known or being seen as great in the eyes of the world, but is concerned with a love that has no borders. It is something we cannot forget as we approach Advent.

This insignificant Hebrew child, born in the middle of nowhere and at a time foreign to our technology, is the most important birth in history. At the manger, God will seem insignificant, but nothing could be further from the truth. Insignificance paves the way for the Church. Discipleship is a way of humble service, but great intimacy with the One who calls us by name, and stops at nothing in order to meet us face-to-face.

Thomas Griffin is the founder and editor-in-chief of Empty Tomb Project: The Magazine.





emagazine
FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Nunzi's
MODERN ITALIAN

By Marc Piperno

Inspired by their beloved Grandpa Nunzi, keeping the traditions of the good ole days alive has become the center of owner Michael Napolitano's vision. To sit at the dinner table to talk and laugh with friends and family, while enjoying an elevated take on old world Italian cooking, Nunzi's invites you to come and experience the "New" Good Ole Days and create more memorable moments for the people in your life that you care about.

Opening last October, Nunzi's is quickly becoming the hottest new restaurant in Farmingdale. With the help of Michael's father Vincent and brother Vincent Jr., they have all worked tirelessly to demonstrate that the incredible dishes made in the kitchen are only rivaled by the fantastic hospitality of Nunzi's, where everybody is treated like a VIP. Traditions and respect for the good ole days, have all been incorporated into a sleek and modern layout by renowned designer Derek Axelrod.

"In keeping our grandfather's traditions alive, you will eat with us, drink with us and laugh with us. Families and friends will all enjoy delicious food, fine drinks, good music and making memories," states Napolitano. The modern take on classic dishes, highlights a menu that incorporates unique twists on old school Italian meals. With superb creations such as Grandmas Meatballs, Pappardelle & Lamb, Heritage Pork Chop; and desserts like Cannoli Cream with Biscotti.

Not to be missed are fascinating interpretations that will satisfy the cravings of adventurous foodies such as one-of-a-kind Limoncello Chicken Wings and a boisterous menu placement of a Philly Cheesesteak Sandwich. What Chefs Anthony LoCastro and Marc Wisehart have collaborated to produce, are memorable moments on a plate.

Nunzi's is considered, by its loyalists as an immersive cultural experience that warmly embraces. The moment guests walk in the door they are dazzled by a lively environment that is both edgy and delightful. Both Axelrod and the Napolitano's worked harmoniously to launch what has now become a distinct trademark at Nunzi's. Michael Napolitano seeks to enchant young and old alike by capturing a fresh, contemporary, and sleek look, with nods to the glamour and romance of classic Italian meals.

For more information, please visit nunzis1274.com, and on Instagram at [@nunzifarmingdale](https://www.instagram.com/nunzifarmingdale).

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TAKEAWAYS:

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2. Women Have an Irreplaceable Location in the Church.
3. Live Biblical.
4. Andrew Helps Us See Our Place is Important.



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