

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SEMINARY

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

A CENTURY OF PAPAL REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES

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"Hence we cheerfully sent one who should represent Our Person..." wrote Pope Leo XII in his encyclical *Longinqua Oceani*¹ to the Church of the United States, January 6, 1895, referring to the appointment of the first apostolic delegate, Archbishop Francesco Satolli, just two years previous. That January 21, 1993, will be the centennial of this event suggested the topic of this year's Archbishop Gerety Lecture, "A Century of Papal Representation in the United States."

Thank you for the invitation to be part of this distinguished lecture series. For the record, I have dedicated this meagre effort to the preeminent church historian of the United States, Monsignor John Tracy Ellis, my teacher, mentor and friend who, at 87, is now recuperating from hip surgery in Washington, D.C. May the Lord of Truth whom he has served so diligently be close to him in his recovery.

I propose to develop this topic under five points. First, I will treat the way the Holy See approached America prior to Archbishop Satolli's appointment; secondly, I will consider the give-and-take surrounding his nomination in 1893; then will come a staccato-like overview of the comings-and-goings of his 10 successors; fourthly, I will take a look at just what, in general, the delegates have done, offering two examples of their activities; and, finally, I will conclude with a segment on the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the government of the United States.

First, before Francesco Satolli set up shop in our nation's capitol a century ago, how did the Apostolic See deal with us here? It is general knowledge that the relationship was somewhat complicated and awkward. For one, there was the obvious difficulty of distance. In these days of telephones, faxes and seven-hour flights to Leonardo da Vinci Airport, we easily forget the burden of communication by letter carried by an unreliable ship. It is no exaggeration to say that some of the archives most precious to American ecclesiastical historians are at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean!

Secondly, there was canonical confusion. In those heady years surrounding our independence, just who was in charge of the approximately 20,000 Catholics here? The bishops in the colony's mother country? Wait a minute - the hierarchy in England was itself irregular, led by vicars-apostolic who hardly enjoyed full jurisdiction and who labored under strangling penal legislation. Since 90% of the early clergy were Jesuits, could not their superiors have authority? Not when you recall that, beginning in Portugal in 1758, the Society of Jesus was suppressed in one country after another, culminating in the Brief *Dominus ac Redemptor* of 1773 in which Pope Clement XIV abolished the society.²

Thirdly, not only was Rome confused about who was in charge of the church here, but they were really at a loss to understand this baffling new political arrangement boasting of independence, freedom and democracy in a society with no established church.

However, the Holy See was by no means oblivious to the march of political events across the ocean, and was eager for proper ecclesiastical government. Having no official through whom to approach the matter directly in the United States, Rome decided to use the offices of the French, friendly allies of the new nation. As early as 1783, the Nuncio in France, Archbishop Giuseppe Doria Pamphili, was instructed to consult the court of France to see if the King would use his influence to insure the insertion in the peace treaty of some provision "concerning the free exercise and the maintenance of the Catholic religion."³

Later, showing a laudable sensitivity, Leonardo Cardinal Antonelli, Prefect of the Congregation De Propaganda Fide, the curial dicastery responsible for the church in the United States until 1908, indicated to the Nuncio in Paris that an American priest would be preferable to Rome as the first ecclesiastical superior in America, but, he went on, if no one suitable could be found, that the new congress should be asked if a foreigner could be appointed. Doria Pamphili wisely conferred with Benjamin Franklin, the American commissioner in the French capital. Franklin replied that it would be "absolutely useless to send it to congress, which ... cannot and should not ... intervene in the ecclesiastical affairs of ... any religion ... ⁴

Can you imagine the shock this reply caused in Rome? Here was a new nation saying in effect that it was really none of their business how or by whom the

Catholic Church in the United States was governed! And this at a time when rulers in Europe jealously guarded their prerogatives to propose bishops, nominate cardinals, censor papal documents, and even legislate how many candles should be lit for high mass!

Talk about troubles in communication! Soon after our first bishop, John Carroll, was appointed, he wisely considered the selection of a second prelate lest the nascent church be orphaned for an undue period should he unexpectedly die. After receiving permission from Propaganda Fide to poll his priests, he sent to Rome in May 1793, the nomination of Father Laurence Graessl, a Jesuit from Bavaria who had been laboring in Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, in October of that same year, Graessl died of yellow fever contracted while ministering to the victims. There was, of course, no quick way to inform the Holy See of this, so, sure enough, the dead man was appointed coadjutor to Carroll in December 1793. Rome did not learn of this till six months later, so the process had to begin all over again. Not until six years later did the Bull appointing Leonard Neale as his coadjutor reach Carroll! Eight years from start-to-finish to appoint a bishop!

Believe it or not, in spite of complications caused by the novel Church/State arrangement in America and the utter unpredictability of communications, the relationship between the American Church and the Holy See was quite cordial, with Rome trying to be sensitive to the new church existing in such volatile surroundings, eager for data, and attentive to correspondence and requests from our bishops.⁵ Two of our prelates, John England, first bishop of Charleston, and Joseph Rosati, first bishop of St. Louis, even undertook delicate diplomatic missions to Haiti on behalf of the Holy See.⁶ The first apostolic legate (a representative of the Holy See on a temporary mission) was the Bishop of Quebec, Joseph-Octave Plessis, sent in 1820 to investigate lay trusteeism in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore.

Nevertheless, the situation was hardly ideal, leading Rome to desire early on more stable contact with this rapidly developing church, hopefully in the person of an apostolic delegate. That the Apostolic See was a bit naive in such a hope is clear from the incident Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick of St. Louis called "a blunder from every point of view," that is, the disastrous visit of a papal diplomat, Archbishop Gaetano Bedini to America in 1853.⁷ His "cover" was that he just happened to be passing by on his way to Brazil, but his real assignment was to tour the United States, settle some thorny trustee-ship disputes, investigate the possibility of reciprocal diplomatic relations between the United States and the Holy See, and submit a thorough report on the state of the Church in America.

Unfortunately, Bedini's visit coincided with one of our country's seasonal upsurges of vile anti-Catholicism, with the befuddled Bedini harassed by mobs, burnt in effigy, denounced from Protestant pulpits, and called words he could not find in his pocket dictionary. The cathedrals in Wheeling and Cincinnati were surrounded by torch-carrying toughs during his stops there. Finally, in disguise, he was rowed out to a departing ship in New York harbor, escorted by Archbishop John Hughes, so as not to be roughed-up on the dock.⁸ Not to be put-off, however, this ecclesiastical Tocqueville wrote to his superiors in Rome a most intriguing account of his visit, concluding, from the safety of his ship on the Atlantic, that "the establishment of an Apostolic Nunciature in the United States is much more than a simple hope or deep desire of the American 119 Catholics ... and should come at once."⁹

Patienza, as the Italians say, for they would have to wait four more decades! There were periodic visitors from the Holy See, such as George Conroy, Bishop of Ardagh, Ireland, who, as apostolic delegate to Canada was asked by Propaganda to make a study of the church in America in 1877. During this time, too, much of the business between Rome and the church here was channelled through the Archbishops of Baltimore. Questions as to the division of dioceses, establishment of new sees, candidates for the episcopacy, refereeing of tensions, and application of Canon Law, for instance, usually ended up on the desk of the premier see's occupant. In fact, Rome had even appointed the Archbishops of Baltimore as temporary apostolic delegates at both the Plenary Councils of 1852 and 1866. When the Holy See dared to hint that it was about to appoint Bishop Luigi Sepiacci as apostolic delegate to the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884, there was so firm a protest from our bishops that the idea was withdrawn, and, following custom, James Gibbons was named.¹⁰

But Rome could not be put off much longer, and the year 1892 provided them their chance. Here I bow to the acknowledged expert on the events before, during and immediately after the coming of Satolli, Father Robert Wister, a priest of this Archdiocese, a good friend, whose dissertation remains definitive on this event.¹¹ Asheably chronicles, what made the time ripe for the arrival of a resident papal representative was acrimony within the church particularly over two questions: one was how to implement the decree of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore that there should be a Catholic school in every parish, with obligatory attendance, under penalty, of every Catholic child, and then how to deal with public schools.

This so-called "school question," plus disunity on issues of secret-societies, temperance, immigration and assimilation, and the founding of The Catholic University of America, had bitterly divided the American hierarchy in the 1880s into two camps, the liberals or "Americanizers," led by John Ireland, espousing an accommodation between the Church and American culture, and the conservatives, led by Bernard McQuaid of Rochester, Michael Corrigan of New York, and the German bishops, who believed that the church had to stand firm against a society so inimical to Catholic values.

The second pressing problem which, in Rome's mind, made the dispatch of a delegate essential was the increasing number of appeals reaching the Eternal City from priests in trouble with their bishop, climaxing in the notorious split between Archbishop Corrigan of New York and one of his most prominent priests, Dr. Edward McGlynn.¹² In a considerable proportion of these cases, Rome ruled against the bishops, causing irritation among prelates who felt such leniency undermined their authority. The answer of the Holy See to such complaints was frequently that the bishops did not keep Rome fully informed. Even a bishop stubbornly opposed to any suggestion of a delegate, Bernard McQuaid, had reluctantly admitted that Rome had a point, writing Cardinal Gibbons that they as bishops were much to blame since they were slow to advise the Holy See about trends in the United States.¹³

Why were our bishops so opposed to the sending of a papal representative? For one, they feared a backlash from the ever-present anti-Catholicism endemic to American society. Charges that Catholics were slaves to a Roman despot, who eventually wanted to dominate America, would be harder to rebuff if that

sovereign had an ambassador here. Two, the hierarchy was sincerely convinced that strong, unquestioned episcopal leadership was necessary if the Church was to flourish in a society where it was misunderstood, with a flock growing daily due to immigration, and led by independent-minded priests itching to rebel against their shepherds. To them, an apostolic delegate breathing down their backs would make them timid and indecisive, plus send a signal to their priests that Rome did not fully trust American bishops. Almost unanimously, then, they resisted the idea of a delegate. They were willing to accept the naming of a representative of their own stationed in Rome, as the British had with Cardinal Howard, and Gibbons would use the rector of the North American College, Monsignor Dennis J. O'Connell, in just such a capacity."¹⁴

This disquietude must have created some discomfort when Archbishop Francesco Satolli, the president of the Pontifical Academy for Noble Ecclesiastics, was designated to represent Leo XIII at the centennial of the hierarchy and the opening of The Catholic University of America in 1889. However, the visit passed without incident, and Satolli went home. That he was not home for good, though, was clear from a letter to Cardinal Gibbons from Monsignor O'Connell, written right after the rector had returned from a private audience with the Holy Father. O'Connell quoted Leo XIII as saying:

"The whole evil is this, that they do not want to have a representative Of me there. If they had one of my representatives there all these troubles would not have happened! But, for some reason of jealousy among themselves they don't want to have my representative there If I had my Nuncio there all would go better ... However, I respect their sentiments on this and I don't love them the less. Let's talk about something else!"¹⁵

The venerable pontiff was not to be put off, and soon was afforded a golden opportunity. Eighteen ninety two was the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America and was to be celebrated in Chicago with the World's Columbian Exposition. The organizers were eager to obtain maps and charts similar to those used by Columbus. Since many of these were preserved in the Vatican Library, American Secretary of State, John W. Foster, wrote Mariano Cardinal Rampolla, Papal Secretary of State, concluding with the magic words: "...should His Holiness see fit to entrust them in the care of a personal representative who will bring them to the United States, I am authorized by the President to assure ... that such representative shall receive all possible courtesy..."¹⁶ "Rampolla lost no time in replying that Leo would be represented personally by Archbishop Satolli.

As has been mentioned, Satolli was to arrive in the thick of dissension between the liberal and conservative branches of the American hierarchy. Thus, each side wanted to impress this visitor from Rome. Any of you with even passing knowledge of American Catholic history will not be surprised to learn that the winner of this race to charm Satolli was none other than the Archbishop of St. Paul, "the consecrated blizzard of the North," John Ireland, who succeeded in meeting the ship carrying Satolli in a government cutter, then taking him to a dock other than the one where his enemy, Archbishop Michael Corrigan, was waiting to greet the delegate. Not familiar with this tango, the touchy diplomat interpreted it as a slap in the face from Corrigan, leading to his initial mistrust of the conservatives and approval of the Americanizers - for a while!

The alliance was sealed at the November meeting of the country's archbishops in New York when Satolli dropped the bombshell that Leo XIII was serious about establishing an apostolic delegation. All the archbishops but one - John Ireland - responded thanks, but, no thanks."¹⁷ When Satolli went on, acting on the orders of the pope, to render a lenient interpretation of the discipline that parents not sending their children to Catholic schools were to be denied the sacraments, then lifted Dr. McGlynn's excommunication, and decided to reside for a couple of months at the liberals' home base, The Catholic University of America, it appeared that Satolli was in the Americanizers' hip-pocket.

Following through on the sentiments of the archbishop, though, Gibbons wrote Leo XIII on January 3, 1893, reporting that the hierarchy was still opposed to the appointment of a permanent apostolic delegate. This correspondence was well-across the Atlantic when Gibbons received a telegram from O'Connell bluntly reporting: "Delegation established. Satolli first delegate." The cardinal shrewdly cabled the rector not to present the first letter to the pontiff, and graciously penned a new message to the pope claiming that the American bishops were overjoyed at the appointment, language Ellis calls "exaggerated and fulsome." They even magnanimously contributed to purchase a house, allowing him to move from Caldwell Hall on the University campus to a comfortable home at Second and I Streets, N.W."¹⁸

So, the deed was done and, as Father Gerald Fogarty remarks, "The permanent delegation most of all represented the most definitive step that the Holy See had taken in the Romanization of the American Church."¹⁹ "It is the well-known thesis of respected historians such as Fogarty and Jay Dolan that, with their man now in Washington, the Holy See could more easily keep the independent-minded American hierarchy in tow, taking from the bishops the power of directly sending episcopal candidates to Rome, and insuring that new bishops would be more docile to the Apostolic See. Indeed, when Satolli during his three years (1893-1896), and his successor, an Augustinian, Sebastian Martinelli, in his five-year term (1896-1901), began to favor the conservative wing of the American hierarchy, it became fretfully clear to the liberals that they had promoted the very institution which was orchestrating their eclipse.

Would you bear with me now as I, for the sake of completion, at least mention each of the prelates who followed Satolli and Martinelli. Diomide Falconio served as apostolic delegate from 1902-1911, coming from the same post in Canada. By the way, although born in Italy, he became a naturalized American citizen while rector of the Franciscan house in Allegheny, New York. Giovanni Bonzano followed until 1922, coming from Rome where he had been rector of the Urban College, there having come to know many seminarians from the North American College, as well as its rector, William O'Connell, by then archbishop of Boston. From 1922-1933, Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi was delegate, having been previously posted as papal representative to India and then Japan.

The dean of all our delegates was Amleto Cicognani, who spent a quarter-century in Washington from 1933 to 1958. He had no prior diplomatic posting, but was a canonist of world repute. During his tenure, the delegation was moved to its present location on Massachusetts Avenue, a new building erected in 1938. One of Pope John XIII's first acts was to call Cicognani back to Rome, making him a cardinal, and naming him his secretary of state in 1961.

Egidio Vagnozzi followed until 1967, coming to America from the Philippines where he had been first delegate. Luigi Raimondi served from 1967-1973, followed by the Belgian, Jean Jadot, who had been delegate in the Cameroons. From 1980-1990, Pio Laghi was papal representative, and it was during his tenure that diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the American government were established, making him the first Apostolic Pro-Nuncio. The current papal representative is Agostino Cacciavillan, who had prior assignments as head of mission in Kenya and India.²⁰

Can we say anything in general about the 11 men who have served as papal representatives in the United States? First, all but one - Jean Jadot - have been Italian. Two, Washington has been for all 11 their last diplomatic mission, indicating that assignment here would be the culmination of one's international career for those in the diplomatic service of the Holy See. Three, all 11 were recalled to Rome and there named head of one of the dicasteries of the Holy See. Four, all but one - Jean Jadot - have received the red hat upon departure from America. Five, since the close of the First World War, six of the seven men came with extensive international backgrounds, all having served as head of mission in another country, in the case of two of them, India. This would indicate the Holy See's developing appreciation of the role of the United States in world affairs.

For the past century, these 11 prelates have served as representatives of the Holy See to the Church, and, since 1984, to the government of the United States. It is worth quoting Canon 364, since it concisely summarizes the duties of the pontifical representatives. "The principal duty ... is to work so that day by day the bonds of unity which exist between the Apostolic See and the particular churches become stronger and more efficacious," observes the canon, emphasizing that his role is basically to serve as a liaison between the bishops of a given country and the central government of the Church Universal. List to the ways the canon suggests this should be accomplished. For one, the delegate is "to send information to the Apostolic See on the conditions of the particular churches and all that touches the life of the church." Yes, the legate spends much of his time gathering data and keeping Rome up-to-date on the developments of the church in the host country.

Then, according to the canon, the pontifical representative is "to assist the bishops by action and counsel, while leaving intact the exercise of the bishops' legitimate power." Diplomats of the Holy See insist they are not "super-bishops" supervising a nation's hierarchy. Our I 1 have been especially sensitive about this, knowing that, as we have seen, our bishops feared the arrival of a delegate lest he come in just such a role, and that our hierarchy enjoys, in the words of James Hennesey, S.J., a proud tradition of vibrant collegiality. Especially have the last four delegates been fond of quoting the words Pope Paul VI used to describe the papal representative:

"His mission does not put itself above the exercise of the power of the bishops, nor does it take its place or hamper it, but respects and even fosters it while sustaining it with brotherly and discreet counsel. The Holy See, in fact, has always regarded as a valid norm of government in the church the one which our predecessor Gregory the Great stated in the following words: "If the jurisdiction of each individual bishop is not preserved, would not We, the guardian of the ecclesiastical order, merely be sowing confusion?"²¹

Continuing with canon 364, we see that a legate is "to foster close relations with the conference of bishops by offering it assistance in every way." Again, especially since the Council, the delegates have stressed that they are at the service of the conference of bishops, and have rejoiced in the warm spirit of cooperation existing between the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the apostolic delegation/nunciature. As Pio Laghi would often remark in his addresses to the November general bishops' meeting, he was gratefully aware that only in America was the papal representative invited to attend the entire conference proceedings. In his new study of the Conference, Thomas Reese documents some of the cordial interchange between the two entities.²²

Now comes the fourth and very important duty: "To transmit or propose the names of candidates to the Apostolic See in reference to the naming of bishops..." To use New Jersey language, here is the real "clout" of the nuncio - he is the one who sends the ternus, the list of three names prepared for an episcopal vacancy, to Rome. However, one could hardly presume this to be an arbitrary, unilateral power, since church law and precedent is clear about the process, with checks and balances throughout. Thus, the delegate must consult the bishops in the vacant see's province, the officers of the episcopal conference, and any other person close to the scene; then in Rome, his report is scrupulously examined by the cardinals of the Congregation for Bishops (or in the case of Eastern Rites, the Congregation for Oriental Churches) and is only then presented to the Holy Father.²³

In conclusion, the canon notes that delegates have certain faculties which spare a diocesan bishop the inconvenience of having to approach the Holy See, which were quite helpful to our prelates prior to the Council's largesse in returning to the local bishops many of the canonical powers through the years reserved to the Apostolic See. The canon also remarks that the delegate is to promote peace, ecumenism and the full liberty of the Church.

The last four representatives have also been aware of their pastoral duties, mindful of the exhortation Paul VI made to the pontifical legates of Asia:

"The role of Nuncios is also evolving. Until now, the Nuncio was little more than the Pope's representative to governments and churches. His activity with regard to the churches was above all of a hierarchical and administrative nature; in a certain sense he remained a stranger to the local church.

"Today, the Nuncio must place a more pronounced pastoral accent on his work. He too is at the service of the Kingdom of God as it goes forward in the land."²⁴

So, while a papal legate indeed exercises much of his mission in a style by nature confidential, subtle, discreet, indirect, and behind-the-scenes, he is also the representative of the Successor of St. Peter, and takes this duty seriously. From the time of Satolli, then, all 11 have traveled extensively, spoken often, and happily presided at endless installations, ceremonies and jubilees. From personal experience I can attest that, in the case of the last two representatives, about one-fourth of their time is spent "on the road."

To illustrate just what the delegates do, I offer two episodes of papal representatives in action. The first, while hardly earthshaking, demonstrates the behind-the-scenes service the man on Massachusetts Avenue can provide his brother bishops here. I refer to the subtle yet substantial contribution of Archbishop Amleto Cicognani to the revision work which led to the New American Bible.²⁵

The text of Sacred Scripture used throughout most of our American Catholic history was the venerable Duoi-Rheims version. While admiring its poetic majesty, pastors and catechists would often complain that its antiquated wording was cumbersome, resulting in a reluctance among people to use it. The dream for a revision remained distant, however, until the chairman of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD), Edwin O'Hara, the Bishop of Great Falls, found himself a passenger on the same train as the apostolic delegate. During their pleasant ride, Cicognani casually mentioned that he thought the time was ripe for the rewording of two important documents, the version of the Bible used in America, and the Baltimore Catechism. This gentle prompting was all the hyperkinetic O'Hara needed and, by the end of the next year, encouraged by the persuasion of Cicognani, O'Hara had consulted dozens of scholars, learning that they agreed with the delegate's call for a revision of the Challoner text of the Duoi-Rheims Bible, but needed organization and authority.

So, in January 1936, 15 respected American Catholic professors of scripture met at The Catholic University of America and decided to undertake a revision of the New Testament. O'Hara wisely kept in touch with the benevolent Cicognani, with the latter suggesting that the Holy See be briefed on the effort. Although explicit permission from Rome was not required, Cicognani recommended that it would be prudent to clear it with the Pontifical Biblical Commission, and the necessary papers were thus sent through his office. Sure enough, in July 1936, Monsignor J. B. Frey, the commission's secretary, communicated approval.

As they progressed, the eager scholars decided to move as well to the Old Testament, and longed to use manuscripts more ancient than the Clementine edition of the Vulgate. When O'Hara discussed this with the delegate, Cicognani displayed a caution natural to a papal representative, and persuaded him to check with Rome before adopting this more radical approach. To everyone's surprise, the Holy See responded by encouraging the revisers to go on indeed to the Old Testament, and to depend on more authentic texts when available.

Infighting developed, unfortunately, the most serious caused by a contentious Dominican, Charles Callan, the feisty editor of *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*. Callan wanted to direct the whole work, but was turned down by O'Hara. The bishop had asked the editor's brother Dominican, John T. McNicholas, Archbishop of Cincinnati, about Callan, only to be told the editor was a "schemer." Rebuffed, Callan published an article claiming that some of the new translation was proxima heresi, thus casting a shadow over the project. The plot thickened when, in 1938, Callan was appointed the only American member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, thus placing in danger the whole enterprise.

Fears were realized when, on April 17, 1942, Eugene Cardinal Tisserant, president of the Commission, wrote O'Hara, castigating the revision for straying too far from the Duoi-Rheims version, mandating that Callan should be the supervisor, and claiming that previous correspondence from the Holy See was only meant as encouragement, not approbation.²⁶

Needless to say, the entire project was now in jeopardy. In trouble, O'Hara again went to Cicognani, whom he found most supportive. The delegate, who had before helped with prompting and persuasion, now rendered valuable protection, urging O'Hara to lose no time in sending a strong rejoinder to Rome. Cicognani noted that he would dispatch this firm defense through the diplomatic pouch, and would add his own cover letter backing the project.

It worked. On October 14, 1942, Tisserant wrote Cicognani, completely reversing his earlier letter. The revision was saved, and even strengthened. Callan would not surrender though, launching a series of articles calling the CCD revision inferior and heretical. The scholars were prepared for a lengthy fight, and O'Hara had a careful defense prepared for publication in the *Ecclesiastical Review*, but first submitted it to his patron, Cicognani. The delegate had seen enough, giving O'Hara prudential advice that the squabbling stop, "in the interest of peace and charity." And so it did.

The project eventually produced what was initially called the Confraternity version, now the New American Bible, a work of major significance in the church, plus the forming of the Catholic Biblical Association and the publication of *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*. Not to exaggerate the role of the apostolic delegate in all of this, but one wonders if it could have succeeded without him, and I offer this narrative as a simple example of what the delegate can do. Notice the modus operandi: behind-the-scenes, out of the limelight, interacting with the bishops rather than priests or laity, serving as a liaison with Rome. First, he prompted the idea, then persuaded O'Hara to go to work on it, suggested they seek permission from the proper dicastery in Rome, then provided protection when the project was threatened, and, finally, served as peacemaker when controversy had gone public. Prompting, persuasion, permission, protection, prudent counsel, peacemaking - this is how papal representatives in our country have worked this past century.

To be fair, I must mention that the activities of another papal representative in this same area were not interpreted as positively, namely, those of Cicognani's successor, Egidio Vagnozzi, who wanted to curtail biblical advances in America. Allying himself with Monsignor Joseph C. Fenton, professor of theology at the Catholic University of America, and editor of *The American Ecclesiastical Review*, who in turn was in constant contact with the secretary of the Holy Office, Alfred Cardinal Ottaviani, Vagnozzi felt that the biblicists were dangerously close to Modernism in questioning the historical accuracy of the Bible. Especially did he hound Edward Siegman, a Precious Blood priest, professor of scripture at The Catholic University, writing his provincial to complain about his views, and eventually persuading the rector of the University not to renew his contract.

In a well-publicized address at Marquette University, Vagnozzi also cautioned against biblical advances, and tried as well to get Cardinal Spellman and Archbishop Patrick O'Boyle of Washington to withdraw the imprimatur on certain books. Siegman spoke for many of his colleagues when he wrote his provincial, "The delegate is a big disappointment ... and quite rash in using hearsay information ... most ... will assume he speaks for Rome no matter what

irresponsible nonsense he spouts forth." If Cicognani used prompting, persuasion, protection and peacemaking, his successor relied here on policing and prosecution!" 27

The second example is more political, showing the Holy See's unique posture as promoter of international peace and justice, and has to do with President Lyndon Johnson and the eighth apostolic delegate, Archbishop Luigi Raimondi. In early 1968, L.B.J. was so consumed with getting the North Vietnamese to the negotiating table that he stunned the world by announcing, on March 31, that he would not run for reelection. The dramatic gesture worked, for, on April 3, North Vietnam indicated a willingness to talk. But then, with hopes so high, Hanoi stalled, arguing all month over where to meet. In the words of Joseph Califano, the president's top domestic adviser, who calls himself the administration's "designated Catholic," "To the world, it seemed they would never agree and the bloodshed would go on forever. That's when L.B.J. played his papal card."28

Johnson had carefully cultivated Pope Paul VI, having met him at the Waldorf Towers in New York during the first visit of a pope to America in 1965. In addition, he had later received at the ranch Monsignor Paul Marcinkus, who was carrying a personal letter from the Holy Father urging a cease-fire and bombing halt. Just before Christmas 1967, the president met a stem Paul VI at the Vatican, where he was lectured by the pontiff about the horror of continued bombing.

With all this as background, and with the one chance for peace apparently slipping away due to squabbling over location, Johnson ordered Califano to contact the apostolic delegate, Archbishop Luigi Raimondi, immediately, and, through him, to ask if the pope would offer the Vatican as a neutral location for the peace talks. The next day, April 27, 1968, Raimondi called Califano, reporting that His Holiness was indeed prepared to welcome both parties to the Vatican, and was inquiring as to when he should make the offer, and whether it should be public or confidential.

As soon as Johnson received this response, he instructed Califano to call the apostolic delegate with his reply: the sooner the invitation is extended, the better. Califano dutifully delivered the message. The next day, a Sunday, the impatient president called Califano, who told him that there was no word yet from the apostolic delegation, to which L.B.J. replied, "Call the delegate, and get an answer!" Califano personally went to Massachusetts Avenue at 9:30 that evening, explaining to Raimondi that the White House was waiting up for news, but returned home when the delegate reminded him it was 3:30 in the morning in the Eternal City! Still, Johnson called Califano at 11:30 p.m. wanting to know why there was no movement, ordering him to stop at the delegation on the way to the White House early next morning. But still no response!

Finally, on Tuesday, Raimondi asked for a secret meeting in the oval office, and hand delivered to the chief executive a cable from Paul VI formally offering the Vatican for the meeting, noting that the same invitation at that moment was being delivered confidentially to North Vietnam through diplomatic channels.

Pleased and very moved by the papal initiative, Johnson asked for time to prepare his response. At 7:45 the next morning, May 1, Califano delivered to the delegate the American government's official acceptance of the pope's invitation. The shrewd president knew of course that Hanoi was on the spot. Although the communists would be uncomfortable meeting at the Vatican, they had to give some response, since they knew the sly Johnson would hardly let the papal offer remain a secret if they turned it down, thus hurting them in the all-important court of world opinion.

Let Califano conclude: "At about 1 a.m. on May 3, less than 48 hours after I had delivered the president's response to the apostolic delegate, Walt Rostow awakened L.B.J. to report that 'Hanoi has suggested we meet in Paris on May 10 or a few days later.'"29

Do you see what happened here? The president's overture through the Holy See forced North Vietnam to the peace table. Notice again how the apostolic delegate worked behind-the-scenes. If Califano had not revealed this whole plot in his fine article last year in America, only hidden archives would hold the story of the part the apostolic delegation played in this historic step to world peace. And there are dozens of such stories.

Which brings us to our last point. An apostolic delegate is the representative of the Holy See to the church, an apostolic nuncio to the church and the government, of a given nation. Satolli and nine of his successors were delegates but, in April 1984, the Holy See and the United States government established formal diplomatic relations, with William Wilson becoming Ambassador of the United States to the Holy See, and Archbishop Pio Laghi, delegate here since 1980, the first Apostolic Pro-Nuncio (with the prefix "pro" indicating he is not the dean of the diplomatic corps, an honor accorded the papal nuncio by the Congress of Vienna).

It is fair to say that this development fulfilled a two-century hope of the Holy See since from the beginning, as we have seen, Rome wanted stable, personal representation here. However, I disagree with those who imply that the Holy See has aggressively sought these formal ties, maneuvering, especially in this century, to do anything to have a nuncio in Washington. Such is simply not the Vatican's style, its praxis being much more gentle, rarely initiating steps leading to diplomatic exchanges.³⁰ In other words, the Holy See waits for the nation to make the first move. As the Justice Department Brief defending the appointment of Wilson expresses it, "To the extent that the views of the Holy See command respect and attention on the world scene, it is imperative that the positions and interests of the United States be communicated and understood before the views of the Holy See are formulated and aired to the world."³¹

Do not conclude that there was never any contact between the central government of the Catholic Church and that of the United States prior to 1984. The Holy See, when eager to advise the United States of particular concerns, would often confide in a prominent American ecclesiastic, most often the Archbishop of Baltimore until 1921, and, especially during the reign of Francis Spellman, the Archbishop of New York. Cardinal Rampolla, secretary of state to Leo XIII, would urge John Ireland to do all he could to calm America on the eve of the Spanish-American War; Benedict XV would ask Cardinal

Gibbons to relay papal plans for peace to Woodrow Wilson during World War I; and Gibbons, Francis Kelly of the Extension Society, and the Paulist John Burke, general secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, would all be charged by the Vatican with expressing solicitude for the persecuted Church in Mexico to the American president.

From the other side, Franklin Roosevelt would ask his friend, George Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago, to complain to the Vatican about the rantings of the controversial radio priest, Charles Coughlin, and Roosevelt, Truman and Johnson would at times call upon the ever-ready Cardinal Spellman to bring some concern to Rome.

Actually, President Reagan's decision was not without precedent, since George Washington had appointed a consul to the Holy See in 1797, a mission upgraded to a legation by President Polk in 1848. However, from the time of the absorption of the Papal States by Italy in 1867 until 1939, there was no United States representative to the Holy See. Although it is reported that the Secretary of State to His Holiness, Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli, broached the topic of diplomatic relations during his visit with President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Hyde Park in November 1936, and that F.D.R. was indeed open to such, it was as his personal envoy, not as an ambassador, that Roosevelt dispatched Myron Taylor on Christmas Eve, 1939. The pope and the president enjoyed a fruitful correspondence during the war years, and effectively cooperated in peace plans and post-war relief." 32

It was Taylor's resignation in 1950 that opened the next chapter, with Harry Truman moving in 1951 to formalize relations between the Holy See and the United States. Since Truman's only prejudice was against Republicans, maybe he was somewhat naive in underestimating the anti-Catholic vehemence such a move would unleash. In a letter to Joseph Kennedy, which was shared with the Archbishop of New York, Francis Cardinal Spellman - who had been working for the establishment of diplomatic relations since the mid-thirties - and Archbishop Cicognani, President Truman revealed that he was initiating steps to bring about the exchange of ambassadors." 32

Interestingly enough, just like 60 years prior, not all bishops shared Spellman's enthusiasm for such a development. What Gerald Fogarty calls the "midwest triangle" of Archbishop Karl Alter of Cincinnati, also the chair of the administrative board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Edward Cardinal Mooney of Detroit, and Archbishop Samuel Stritch of Chicago, worried about public outcry and undue curial interference in American Catholic life should diplomatic relations be formalized."34

On October 20, 1951, Truman nominated General Mark Clark as the first United States Ambassador to the Vatican. Such a crescendo of criticism, led by Paul Blanshard of the Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, erupted that Clark withdrew his nomination in January. As one might imagine, this whole incident soured Vatican-American cooperation, as is clear in an unusually chilly letter from the Substitute Secretary of State, Monsignor Giovanni Battista Montini, to Cardinal Spellman. Speaking of diplomatic relations between the two entities, the future Pope Paul VI wrote:

"...the Holy See has remained indifferent in this matter and has never exerted any pressure [However], the Holy See cannot remain indifferent to the unreasonable attitude of non-Catholics in the United States... There have been repeated, vulgar, bitter and entirely unjustified attacks on the Holy See I cannot conceal from Your Eminence that it is felt here that such attacks did not arouse an adequate reaction on the part of the Catholic community in the United States. 35

Truman's failure postponed the cause. Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter and Reagan resumed Roosevelt's practice of dispatching personal envoys until Ronald Reagan successfully re-established diplomatic ties in 1984. Undoubtedly, the immense prestige of Pope John Paul II, and the obvious influence of the Holy See in world affairs, muted criticism. Actually, according to the first apostolic pro-nuncio, Archbishop Pio Laghi, not much changed dramatically when his rank was elevated. In an address shortly after the exchange of the credential letters, Laghi observed that his major duty would still be religious, with "only a small portion of my day taken up by matters that pertain to my diplomatic position with the government."36 With characteristic humor, he added that the only difference was that now he would enter the White House by the front door, not the back, and would wear a better suit.

When it comes to the diplomatic activity of the Holy See, one finds two extreme views. The first holds that the Vatican has monumental influence in world affairs, always involved in machinations and Machiavellian intrigue to enhance the Church's position in every country. This seems the implication of the *Time* Magazine cover story by Carl Bernstein of February 24, 1992, alleging clandestine negotiations between Ronald Reagan and John Paul II to bring down communism in Poland. The other equally erroneous view considers the Holy See a naive, impractical, pious participant in the world arena, whose only claim to diplomatic prerogatives is its sovereignty over the 108 acres known as Vatican City State. Both opinions are exaggerated and false.

Offering his assessment of United States - Vatican relations three years after this diplomatic exchange, Thomas Reese concluded: "The participants on both sides clearly believe that diplomatic relations have been a success. For the United States it has provided a listening post and an opportunity to influence the actions of the Holy See, a significant player in international affairs. For the Vatican, it has also been a channel of information and an opportunity to influence the most significant player in international affairs."37

So, it has been 100 years since Leo XIII "cheerfully sent one" to represent him and his successors to this country. What is the verdict on this century of papal representation? From the Holy See's point of view, the establishment of the pontifical mission in Washington has been very successful. Since the earliest days of the new republic, due to distance, the novel political arrangement, the American penchant for freedom, and the unreliability of communication, Rome has been eager for stable, personal representation, and Satolli's arrival a century ago was just what they had in mind. The developing influence of the United States in world affairs made such a mission all the more important, so that the exchange of ambassador and nuncio in 1984 proved most satisfactory. The Holy See has, in general, been well-served in its 11 delegates, who have fulfilled their mission of supplying data to the Vatican,

submitting the names of episcopal candidates, settling controversies, facilitating communications between the nation's hierarchy and the Apostolic See, and pastorally representing the successor of St. Peter as the center of unity for the church on earth.

The wish of Leo XIII, as expressed in the letter of the Prefect of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide, Cardinal Ledochowski, to the American hierarchy, announcing Satolli's appointment, has certainly been fulfilled: "It is the desire of the Sovereign Pontiff that the church in the United States be not deprived of those bonds of more intimate union with the center of Apostolic Truth..."³⁸

From the side of Catholics in this country, I conclude that this century of papal representation has also been of benefit, although I realize many would object. The feared upsurge of anti-Catholicism never did materialize, and the relative ease with which full diplomatic relations were restored eight years ago, suggests we have overcome some overt bigotry. Yes, the case could be made that the establishment of the delegation gave Rome tighter control over episcopal appointments, assuring the promotion of men whose allegiance to the Holy See was unwavering but, let's face it, whether you consider that a vice or a virtue depends ... Besides, with the improved communications of the last century, Rome's vigilance over such appointments would have increased. Anyway, they always have had the final word, and have usually shown a genuine sensitivity for the recommendations of this country's bishops.

Nor has the original apprehension that the coming of a delegate would encroach upon the hierarchy's authority come to pass. If anything, the service of the delegate/ nuncio as a liaison between the bishops and the Vatican has enhanced episcopal rule. It is clear as well that, 10 decades after the establishment of the apostolic delegation, our bishops, while loyal to Rome, are hardly mindless sycophants, with even the more Gallican-minded prelates admitting that Rome listens to and respects their views.

On the diplomatic level, even Paul Blanshard, were he alive, would have to acknowledge the Holy See's impact on world events, and to admit that it was probably in America's own self-interest to have exchanged ambassadors. After all, it was not a curial cardinal, but Mikael Gorbachev who observed that the current pontiff is largely responsible for the dramatic changes in the geopolitical atmosphere of today.

Do you think, in their most exaggerated fantasies, John Carroll, John Ireland, James Gibbons or Francis Spellman ever believed that the day would come when the apostolic pro-nuncio to the United States would stand in the oval office and say to the President, as Agostino Cacciavillan said to George Bush two years ago,

"I should like to mention here the positive contribution made by the Catholic Church in America ... the equality and solidarity among peoples and the promotion of the sacred value of human life... I am confident that American Catholics, faithfully responding to the demands of the gospel, will continue to devote themselves assiduously in working with their brothers and sisters of every race and creed in this land towards the attainment of genuine progress and a civilization of trust and love. "

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