

Addenda

A monthly e-mail newsletter from **MARS HILL AUDIO**

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" 'Liberating' the individual is the only end our civilization collectively knows; we barely perceive that other understandings of common life have existed, and continue to exist, even in our own multicultural midst."

--Eric Miller, "Alone in the Academy," *First Things*, February 2004

New on our desks: The Worm in the Brain

A new report from the National Endowment for the Arts supplies statistics that demonstrate that the number of readers in America is declining. The report is introduced in an article from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* titled "[Literary Reading Is Declining Faster Than Before, Arts Endowment's New Report Says](#)." As the article explains, the report portrays a steep decline in "literary reading" (described as the reading of any type of fiction, poetry, and plays) over the past two decades; it also describes some reactions to the report's findings. ([Read more](#) about this report on our "New on our desks" page.)

New MARS HILL AUDIO *Conversation*: "Texts, Sex, and Sanctity"

The interview with [Robert Gagnon](#) on *Journal* 68 contained so much provocative and insightful material that we have decided to turn it into **MARS HILL AUDIO *Conversation* 20**, called "Texts, Sex, and Sanctity: Robert Gagnon on Homosexuality & the Bible." While some scholars find in the Biblical texts an "ethic of love" that transcends prohibitions on various sexual practices, Dr. Gagnon, in his book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, demonstrates quite the opposite: that scripture is unequivocally opposed to sexual impurity, including same-sex intercourse. In addition to refuting the more common arguments in favor of overturning two millennia of orthodox Christian teaching, Dr. Gagnon also discusses the meaning, purposes, and mysteries of marriage.

This *Conversation* includes a reading of "[The Episcopalian Preference](#)," an article by Philip Turner from the November 2003 issue of *First Things*. In this essay Turner traces the conflict in the Episcopal Church over the consecration of an openly homosexual bishop to a 1966 incident in which a bishop's claim that "the Church's classical way of stating what is represented by the doctrine of the Trinity is . . . not essential to the Christian faith" was not considered grounds for a heresy trial. This failure to exercise church discipline thus opened the door to four decades of theological and moral mischief.

The script introducing Ken Myers's discussion with Robert Gagnon has been converted into an essay called "[Same-Sex Marriage in Cultural Perspective](#)." It is available on our [Printable Files](#) page under "Essays, articles, and monographs." You may find other resources on [homosexuality](#) on our web pages, as well as on Robert Gagnon's website (www.robagnon.net).

"Texts, Sex, and Sanctity" (*Conversation* 20) is available on cassette (\$7) or CD (\$9). It may be ordered [online](#), by telephone at **1.800.331.6407**, or in writing (see the order form at the end of this e-mail).

Transcripts of MARS HILL AUDIO *Journal* Interviews

Many of you have asked us to provide transcripts of the interviews featured on the **MARS HILL AUDIO *Journal***, and we are sympathetic to these requests. But the bottom line for us is that this is a very time-consuming task and we simply haven't the manpower to accomplish it. And perhaps it is a good exercise do the transcribing yourself, just as it is good for one to take notes at a lecture.

However, thanks to the Matthew's House Project, transcripts of selected **MARS HILL AUDIO *Journal*** interviews are being made available online. So far, these four are available: [Eric O. Jacobsen](#), on urban churches and taking the concrete realities of community seriously, [Allan Carlson](#), on the family in American culture and in government policy, [Esther Lightcap Meek](#), on belief, doubt, certainty, authority, and the knowledge of God, and [John Shelton Lawrence](#) on how John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Superman, and the governor of California all embody a great American myth.

To find out about other **MARS HILL AUDIO *Journal*** transcripts as well as peruse the interesting writings on the Matthew's House Project web pages, see <http://www.themattthewshouseproject.com>.

How Would Jesus Call?

A few years ago Ken Myers penned a column for the *Dallas Morning News* entitled "How Would Jesus Call?" in which he encouraged resistance to the dehumanizing rudeness that seems to characterize much cell-phone usage, and challenged us to establish cell phone practices that respect the presence of other people. From time to time we get requests for reprints of this column, so we have now made it available online in both [HTML](#) and [PDF](#) formats. May your cell phone usage never be the same.

Myers Family Returns from Byzantium

Between June 13 and July 9, Ken Myers and his family participated in a tour of Turkey, Greece, and Venice, visiting churches, monasteries, ancient ruins, and other sites. The tour was organized with the goal of encouraging better understanding of the interaction between the early Church and classical culture and of the confrontation between late Byzantine Christianity and the rise of Islam. While on his trip, Ken sent back e-mail "travelogues" (complete with pictures). These have been converted to PDF files and are available [online](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the page and see "Travelogue of Byzantium" under "Other").

Classical Christian School Conference

The [CIRCE Institute](#) and [Westminster Academy](#) of Memphis are co-sponsoring an upcoming conference for Christian school teachers and leaders called "A Celebration of Justice," to be held July 29-31 in Memphis. The purpose of this conference is to help the participant "Learn to establish justice in your school, home, or soul by participating in open forums, or colloquies, while gaining insights and developing skills through workshops and plenary sessions." Sessions include Fitzsimmons Allison on "The Cruelty of Heresy" and [John Hodges](#) on "How Music Prepares the Soul for Virtue."

For more information, including a registration form, see www.classicalteachertraining.org or call 704.321.2929.

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