

# Biography of cardinal is 'two books in one'

By Father Richard P. McBrien  
Syndicated Columnist

One reviewer has suggested that Eugene Kennedy's new biography of Cardinal Bernardin is really two books in one. The first is a highly laudatory book about Cardinal Bernardin and the second is a sharply derogatory book about Father Andrew Greeley, *Cardinal Bernardin: Easing Conflicts and Battling for the Soul of American Catholicism*, (Chicago: Bonus Books, 1989).

The reviewer may have it half-right. There may be two books in one here, but Father Greeley is only a part of the Bernar-

din story and not a story in himself. If there is a "second book," it is a narrative description and analysis of post-Vatican II U.S. Catholicism, in which Cardinal Bernardin has played such a leading role.

What Eugene Kennedy does in this "second book" is to continue to make the case for a progressive — what he calls "Culture Two" — Catholicism less tied to traditional institutional forms.

It is an approach that he has been developing in such earlier books as *Tomorrow's Catholics*, *Yesterday's Church: The Two Cultures of American Catholicism* (New York: Harper & Row,

1988), and *Re-Imagining American Catholicism: The American Bishops and Their Pastoral Letters* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985).

A second reviewer has proposed that if Cardinal Bernardin were running for pope, this would be his campaign biography. There may be more accuracy in that observation.

Eugene Kennedy's sympathy for his subject is clear throughout. He obviously respects and admires Cardinal Bernardin, and considers the cardinal's vision and exercise of pastoral leadership to be exactly what the Catholic Church needs and de-



ESSAYS IN THEOLOGY

serves at this moment in its history.

If our biographer has discovered any substantial flaws in his subject, they certainly aren't made very obvious to the reader. Whatever criticisms one finds here are subtly and indirectly stated.

A third review launches an attack from the right. The reviewer, in this instance, is also bitingly personal in his remarks about Kennedy and his literary talents, but that would not surprise anyone familiar with the reviewer's usual polemical style.

This third reviewer and his neo-conservative friends inside and outside the Catholic Church have been profoundly unhappy with the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letters on peace and the economy. Indeed, they have been displeased with the general course taken by U.S. Catholicism in these post-Vatican II years.

The emergence of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops as an active teaching body has been a particularly obnoxious development for them.

One major reason is evident: the bishops' teachings — at least on matters of social justice, human rights, and peace — are to the left of their own.

The reviewer's distress with Kennedy's sympathetic biography has a lot to do, therefore, with the reviewer's own agenda and interests.

But it would have been impossible for Eugene Kennedy to have written a sympathetic biography of Cardinal Bernardin without also writing sympathetically about all that the cardinal has stood for and embodied, particularly his role in the NCCB.

"Bernardin's story is far from over," Kennedy writes, "but, perhaps more than that of any of his colleagues, his will continue to parallel and to reflect the larger narrative of American Catholicism."

This new biography should be of interest, therefore, not only to the Catholics of Chicago, but to anyone concerned about the future direction of Catholicism in the United States.

## Kingdom of Israel splits in two just as prophet Ahijah predicted

By Cindy Bassett  
Courier Columnist

"Jeroboam! Jeroboam! A message has just arrived for you from Israel," the servant called to the young man working in the field.

For some time now, Jeroboam had been living in exile in Egypt. Many of the people in Israel had become dissatisfied with King Solomon. Jeroboam was the leader of those who had sought to overthrow him. When King Solomon learned of the plot, he issued an order for the death of Jeroboam.

"Is it good news?" the servant asked when Jeroboam finished reading the letter.

"King Solomon is dead," answered Jeroboam. "He did not die by the sword," he added, seeing the servant's questioning look. "His son, Rehoboam, has already been proclaimed his successor by some of the people."

"What will you do now?"  
"I will return to my own country, but not to declare my allegiance to a new king so easily," Jeroboam said. "Representatives from the 12 tribes of Israel have called an assembly. They will ask Solomon's son what can be expected from him as king."

Rehoboam seemed surprised when he heard from some of the people that they were not happy under King Solomon.

"Look around you and see the great city of Jerusalem. My father was a master builder," he said.

"What about the shrines he built to the false gods of his foreign wives?" Jeroboam asked pointedly. "He set a bad example and many of our own people began worshipping these pagan gods, too."

Before Rehoboam could reply, another from the crowd stood and voiced a complaint. "King Solomon may well have been a master builder, but he forced us to work long and hard on his projects."

"And after we paid all those taxes to support his lavish kingdom, we had no money left for ourselves," someone else added.

Rehoboam listened to their grievances and then he asked, "What is it that you want from me?"

Jeroboam spoke for the entire assembly. "If you will treat us fairly and not place such severe burdens on us, then we will be your loyal subjects."

Rehoboam did not respond to these demands at once. He was a crafty fellow and he liked power and wealth just as his father had. "Come back here in three days. Then I will have an answer for you."

First, Rehoboam sought advice in the matter from King Solomon's oldest and most trusted advisors. "What the people



THE BIBLE CORNER

have said is entirely true," they told him. "Better to lighten their work and taxes and rule in peace than to have an uprising."

Rehoboam's friends offered different advice. "You must be even stricter than your father was or you will lose control," they said. "Tell them if they are not obedient to your commands, then they will be beaten."

In three days, Rehoboam returned as he had promised. His decision was issued in a single statement to the people. "If you refuse to obey my laws and work on the building projects and pay the taxes set forth by my father, then I shall increase your burdens."

"Then we do not want you as our king!" the people all cried together. "Down with King David's family!"

In the end, only the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin decided to remain loyal to King Rehoboam. The remaining 10 tribes proclaimed Jeroboam as their king.

The kingdom of Israel was split in two just as the prophet, Ahijah, predicted when he tore Jeroboam's cloak into 12 pieces.

Scripture Reference: 1 Kings Chapter 12:1-24.

Meditation: Rehoboam sought counsel from advisors, but he never consulted God for advice on his life.

THE IRISH ROVERS

25 Years

Silver Anniversary

SATURDAY DEC. 2ND 8:00 P.M.  
AUDITORIUM THEATRE  
TICKETS: \$16.50-\$14.50 ALL SEATS RESERVED  
PLUS NOMINAL SERVICE CHARGE  
ON SALE NOW AT

CAVAGES RECORD STORES LOCATED IN  
MARKETPLACE AND GREECE TOWNE MALLS

HOUSE OF GUITARS • VINYL JUNGLE  
CHARGE BY PHONE: 716-847-1888


"Presented by Pate and Associates"

LOCK STOCK & BARREL GIFTS

FASTA W MALL  
MARKETPLACE MALL


Select "Holy Family" Figures Now.

Meet Emanuele Fontanini here on his only northeast U.S. appearance. Share the beauty and love of his inspirational collectible creche figures during his visit direct from Bagni di Lucca, Italy.



WHEN:  
Saturday, December 2nd

WHERE:  
Marketplace Mall Store  
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Eastview Mall Store  
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.



by Roman  
Creche sets \$60 and up  
Individual 5 1/4" figures \$7.00 each.

Mr. Fontanini will personally sign your purchase of his family's well known hand-finished, hand-painted heirlooms of tomorrow. Items for signature include stables, plates, musicals and sculptures. Effective today, all purchases will be authorized for Emanuele Fontanini's signature on December 2nd.

SPECIAL  
Just \$7.99 each (including shipping and handling) for the limited edition of the Holy Family figures. A limited edition of 1000 figures available at \$99.00 each.

Lock, Stock & Barrel Gifts

EASTVIEW MALL  
Near McCurdy's  
223-2720

MARKETPLACE MALL  
Next to Sibley's  
424-6592

