A farewell & two welcomes


We were saddened to get the news in December—too late to include a notice in our January issue—that The Weekly Standard was closing. We will not speculate on the reasons for its shuttering. Rather, we note that for more than twenty years TWS offered a welcome forum for a wide range of conservative opinion. Bravo for that. Many New Criterion writers also contributed, at least occasionally, to its pages. If we must say vale to The Weekly Standard, however, it is a pleasure to say ave to the U.S. debut of the Catholic Herald, the storied English publication that has been a mainstay of Catholic news and opinion—as well as lower-case “c” catholic writing on politics, culture, and the arts—for more than one hundred years. For the first 126 years of its existence—from 1888 until 2014—the Herald was a newspaper. It attracted the best of the Catholic literary fraternity, including J. R. R. Tolkien, Evelyn Waugh, G. K. Chesterton, and Graham Greene, all of whom contributed to its pages. Reborn in 2014 as a weekly magazine, it has continued to be an important voice, heeded as much in the United States, where it enjoyed a large readership, as in its native United Kingdom.

With the debut of a U.S. edition, the Herald is sure to find many new readers and intervene in an effective and intelligent way in the many controversies that have beleaguered the Catholic establishment in the United States, as well as other matters. In an editorial statement announcing its American initiative, the editors note that the Herald “will challenge the dangerous polarization of Catholicism into ‘liberal’ and ‘conservative’ factions. Instead, it will explore the riches of orthodox Catholicism—drawing inspiration from the mischievous words of Evelyn Waugh, who, reporting for the Herald from a Eucharistic Congress in Budapest, reassured Catholics that ‘we are normal—it is the irreligious who are freaks.’” To subscribe, follow this link: catholicherald.co.uk/subscribe.

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Fans of that other English weekly, The Spectator, also have reason to celebrate. Several months ago, there was another British literary invasion. The Spectator—which opened its doors in 1828, even earlier than the Catholic Herald—has also started a U.S. edition. For the moment, it is a web-only
venture, but within the next few months it will start to publish a monthly print edition as well. We are pleased to welcome its distinctive brand of crisp, independent commentary to the mix of critical opinion on these shores. Most of The New Criterion’s editors, and many of its writers, have been contributing to Spectator USA, than which a more robust endorsement is difficult to imagine. You will find it online at spectator.us.