

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

October 13, 2010 at 3:35pm

---

## Blast From the Past: More Ratz!

by Michael Sean Winters

Distinctly Catholic

This from then-Cardinal Ratzinger's book with Habermas. Food for thought for anyone who tries to think John Courtney Murray, still less Mario Cuomo, solved it all.

And yet it seems to me that one question remains unanswered. Since total consensus among men is very hard to achieve, the process of forming a democratic will relies necessarily either on an act of delegation or else on a majority decision; depending on the importance of the question at issue, the proportion of the majority that is required may differ. But, majorities, too, can be blind or unjust, as history teaches us very plainly. When a majority (even if it is an utterly preponderant majority) oppresses a religious or a racial minority by means of unjust laws, can we still speak in this instance of justice or, indeed, of law? In other words, the majority principle always leaves open the question of the ethical foundations of the law.

The Holy Father spoke to this issue during his speech at Westminster Hall. It remains an enormous quandry.

---

Source URL (retrieved on 05/21/2018 - 6:18am): <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/blast-past-more-ratzi>

### Links:

[1] <https://www.ncronline.org/forward/join?clickSource=end-article>

[2] <https://www.ncronline.org/node/160616>