

BOOK REVIEWS

What is Theology? Foundational and Moral. By Edmond J. Dunn. Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publications, 1998. Pages, 263. Paper, \$14.95.

In the catalogue of the college where I teach there is a course entitled "Introduction to Christian Theology." I have often mused about the kind of text I would use in the teaching of such a course. Now that I have read Edmond Dunn's excellent book, *What is Theology?*, I have found exactly the right one.

Dunn organizes his book around two basic questions: (1) What do we believe, and why? and (2) What as Christians are we to do and be? In answering the first question Dunn provides us with a useful working definition of theology: "Theology is our attempt to express in clear and concise language what we presume to be the self-disclosure of God in person, nature, history, everyday experience and, for Christians, in an ultimate way in Jesus of Nazareth" (31-32). Then, within a theological method he describes as correlative, he explores the nature of revelation and faith, the roles of Scripture and tradition, as well as the identity and mission of the Church. This section concludes with a fascinating chapter on the quest for church unity, with a particularly provocative interpretation of what it means for a church to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

The second section of the text probes the dynamics of the Christian moral life within the context of a Christian anthropology. Thus Dunn takes the reader through discussions of the nature of moral theology, various approaches to moral decision-making (he opts for the priority of what he terms the relational/responsible-oriented model), and the contemporary attention given to the human person—free, graced, and capable of a fundamental option. He offers useful presentations of the limits of freedom and the process of moral development, the latter reflecting the influence of Kohlberg and the distinction between premoral and moral values. In this section he does not shy away from addressing issues at the center of much controversy such as proportionalism and dissent from church teaching, as well as masturbation, birth control, and civil disobedience.

In addition to the topics addressed, this book has much to recommend itself. First, the author's writing style is lucid and engaging. Second, it is evident that the author has been deeply influenced by the college students he has taught. His examples and illustrations clearly reflect his desire to engage a classroom or audience of young adults. Third, the work is professedly ecumenical. In treating issues that divide the churches, such as the use of Scripture, various ecclesial polities, and the nature of the eucharistic presence, Dunn does a very good job of highlighting the commonalities and sensitively dealing with differences. Fourth, the author has folded into the text a series of what he calls "foci." These deal with questions which are often provoked by the topic under consideration. Examples include the nature of the resurrected body of Jesus, the difference between doctrine and dogma, the nature of the infancy narratives, the meaning of the creation story, and the Mormons.

Dunn pulls no punches as to where he is situated theologically. His references and quotes include the following: Rahner, Küng, McBrien, Curran, McCormick, Patrick, O'Connell, and Tracy. If this is a constellation of thinkers you find congenial, you will find this book very useful. If not, then you should look elsewhere for an introduction to Christian theology.

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Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture. By Marva J. Dawn. Foreward by Martin E. Marty. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995. Pages, xi + 316. Paper, \$18.00.

Marva Dawn holds a Ph.D. in Christian ethics and the Scriptures from the University of Notre Dame. In this present work Dawn, the author of eight previous books, draws from twenty years of experience as worship leader, preacher, and musician in many churches and denominations to address current issues in both public worship and Christian culture.

In a culture that "dumbs down everything," the search for new ways and means to bring back those who have given up on public worship has resulted in numerous unfavorable situations which are addressed in the book. Changing patterns of worship and/or offering worship services tend toward the shallow, thus creating "smaller faiths." This is not the solution. Furthermore, the traditional versus contemporary "worship wars" created by these predicaments are preventing true worship from taking place. Because these "worship wars" occur principally in the liturgical churches of the United States, they are the intended audience, though the author's words are applicable to every denomination in many countries.

The text is intended to lead the reader to a more thorough understanding of culture and worship. Toward that end a set of standards is presented whereby the various unfavorable influences in our culture might be judged, and some specific practical recommendations are offered. The book is organized into five parts, each of which contains a varying number of chapters: Our culture *and* the Church's Worship, The Culture *surrounding* our worship, The Culture *of* Worship, The Culture *in* our Worship, and Worship *for the sake of* the Culture. Each chapter contains extensive quotes from some excellent sources which are used to give further emphasis to the topic under consideration. A bibliography of the works cited is also included.

The first sections of the book are quite lengthy and contain a consideration of the many negative aspects surrounding our culture. Although they are rather difficult to get through, they lay the foundation for the final sections which deal with worship itself. Sections four and five contain many useful suggestions and are worth the efforts put into the early part of the book. Topics such as the true meaning of worship, its importance in the life of the worshipper, the necessity for preparing well, the importance of preaching and the use of silence are addressed and useful advice is offered. The author's musical expertise

comes through in a lengthy section devoted to music. In search of criteria whereby leaders can determine how matters of style fit into the selection process, Thomas Gieschen's selection grid is included which analyzes text, style, propriety, and worth of different pieces.

In the foreword to the text, Martin Marty refers to the work as a kind of "manual of worship" intended to assist the assembly to understand what is wrong and to encourage leaders to do better (ix). Liturgists and musicians alike would profit from this pastorally oriented text. The author's genuine, convincing, impassioned account of the meaning of worship and its importance in the life of the worshipper should enable the fulfillment of her hope that it will lead to asking "better questions."

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For Our Salvation: Two Approaches to the Work of Christ. By Geoffrey Wainwright. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1997. Pages, xii + 186. Paper, \$18.00.

In this work Wainwright, the Robert Earl Cushman Professor of Theology at Duke Divinity School, brings together in two major parts two sets of lectures whose original audience was theological students, pastors and interested laity. Wainwright's goal is to present two approaches to the saving work of Christ that are firmly grounded in the scriptures, the tradition, especially liturgical, and the practice of the Church "catholic and evangelical." While sensitive to the need to correlate the Scriptures and tradition to contemporary questions and needs, he believes that the greater need is for a reimmersion in Scripture and tradition. He unabashedly states that behind both approaches to the saving work of Christ in this book stands the Nicene Creed.

The first part of the book keys off of John 1:14: "The Word became flesh." Deeply appreciative of "the corporeal character of Christ and his gospel" and as antignostic as Irenaeus, whom he cites frequently, Wainwright moves beyond an exclusive christological to an ecclesial-sacramental understanding of this statement. God's saving presence and address to us (the Word), found fully in the historical enfleshment of Jesus, continues to come to the Church by material means. Hence he dedicates three chapters to ways the salvation of Christ encounters us through the five senses. In these very earthly chapters, strongly rooted in the Scriptures and steeped in the tradition, Wainwright offers a very rich, sacramental anthropology, showing how all the human senses are addressed through the various aspects (words, actions, gestures, material elements) of the liturgy. The salvation of God in Christ encounters us in very "fleshy" ways, or in the words of Tertullian: "the flesh is the hinge of salvation"; not only Christ's flesh; our flesh also. Catholics will resonate with these pages in which he also frequently points out not only the doxological and eucharistical dimension of sacramental worship but also its praxiological and

ethical dimensions. In an emerging postmodern world in which men and women claim to throw off the shackles of the isolated and alienated spiritual subject of Plato and Descartes and express a desire to reclaim their materiality and relationality, including their relationality to the cosmos itself, Wainwright's reclamation from the tradition of the materiality and hence sacramentality of salvation should play well.

In the second part Wainwright attends to another theme related to salvation, the threefold office of Christ as prophet, priest and king. Here again he reclaims the foundations in the Scriptures and tradition for this theme which was revived especially by Calvin as a schema within which to treat the salvific work of Christ. Moving beyond Calvin, Wainwright addresses each office or function in its five-fold usage: christological, baptismal, soteriological, ministerial, and ecclesiological, at all times indicating both the ecumenical base and future ecumenical potential of the three-fold office. In his discussion of each office Wainwright attempts to correlate that office with some aspect of the contemporary human condition: the prophetic office addresses the crisis of knowledge and meaning; the priestly deals with human alienation and estrangement; the royal responds to questions of power and authority. He nicely shows how the three-fold office is itself reflected in the structure of the Eucharist and in the format of the liturgical year. It also unites doxology and dogma and can be of great value for the Church both in its self-understanding and practice in both its internal life and its mission to the world. Not surprisingly, Wainwright ends with "the end," i.e., how the three-fold office is geared toward ultimate salvation.

This book and the immense erudition of its author do not need my recommendation. One cannot but be impressed by Wainwright's profound knowledge of the "great tradition," which he mines as a valuable theological source for today. Above all I am profoundly inspired by the ecumenical pathos of the author who chairs the international dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church. This pathos runs throughout the book as he frequently cites multiple Protestant, Roman and Orthodox sources and draws out possible ecumenical challenges and implications from his themes.

Two minor reservations. First, though Wainwright is aware of the need to correlate the Christian past with today's quite different worlds or cultures, his admitted emphasis upon continuity with the tradition at times leaves his attempts to "respeak" the tradition to today's many worlds somewhat lacking. Second, why no subject and author index?

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Could You Ever Come Back to the Catholic Church? By Lorene Hanley Duquin. Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1997. Pages, x + 203. Paper, \$9.95.

Lorene Hanley Duquin has experience as an alienated Catholic, has ministered to alienated Catholics in the Diocese of Buffalo and has a vibrant faith despite the tensions in the Church. Bishop Mansell of Buffalo writes in his Afterward: "Lorene Duquin is as positive and affirmative as anyone can be this

side of the Eternal Banquet. She goes all the way with realism and arrives at a point beyond." Her realism is refreshing and honest.

In 1982 Paulist Fr. Alvin Illig boggled many minds with the Gallup statistic that "fifteen million Roman Catholics in the United States feel alienated from the Church and *forty percent have a strong desire to return to the Church.*" He asked: Are we becoming an elitist Church with no room for fringe people who often make up the unchurched and inactive? Are we forgetting that the Church is for saints and sinners?

From 1985 to 1990 I was involved in ministry to alienated Catholics in New York City. Within five years over four thousand people responded to our newspaper ads, and many participated in group sessions. I researched various programs, gathered relevant articles, and read dozens of books by the experts. All my resources and notes were collected in three huge loose-leaf binders. All the necessary ingredients for a comprehensive book on ministry to alienated Catholics in America had been gathered. I was wrong. Lorene Duquin's work is the best I have read to date, and I have shredded my three volumes of precious materials.

Lorene Duquin kindly sent me a copy of her book which I read with delight and genuine gratitude in one sitting. She has captured the feelings and hopes of many alienated Catholics whom Gallup claims have "*a strong desire to return to the Church.*" Sound theology and common sense characterize her description of human freedom and the sanctity of individual conscience. Her compassionate treatment of the most sensitive areas which confront the alienated are honestly and squarely faced. Complicated issues such as divorced and remarried Catholic, annulments, internal forum, gays and lesbians, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, etc., will capture even the most cynical of readers.

A wide net is cast and no one is excluded from the love of Christ and the Church. The very chapter titles are captivating, each offering a ray of hope. The "Chapter Notes" are especially helpful, adding a positive touch and tone to each chapter. Anyone interested in organizing a parish program or diocesan outreach to alienated Catholics will profit from this very readable work. It can be placed confidently into the hands of anyone who feels alienated from or by the Church. Ms. Duquin reaches out to those who cannot displace whatever stirring there is to come back home. She invites them to "hook back with their tradition." Alienated Catholics will find this practical and compassionate book helpful on their faith journey back home to God, to Christ and to their truest selves.

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The Healer's Calling: A Spirituality for Physicians and Other Health Care Professionals. By Daniel P. Sulmasy. New York: Paulist Press, 1997. Pages, iii + 131. Paper, \$11.95.

Daniel Sulmasy, O.F.M., M.D., is a well-known participant in current medical-ethical debate. He enjoys a distinctive vantage point in this debate, that of Franciscan friar and practicing medical internist, that places him in rare company.

His credibility derives in good measure from his position as a practicing physician in the tumultuous hodgepodge that is healthcare today. In this book he offers the reader a road map to spirituality in healthcare. That is, he attempts to provide a concrete example (his) of how God can be found in the work that we do. Most of the anecdotes are, naturally, oriented toward physician-patient or nurse-patient relationships, but the lessons and arguments are equally useful to anyone who cares for a sick one.

The book contains eight essays, each of which could stand alone as a talk or the subject of a group discussion. These essays range in topics from musings on the health benefits of spirituality to the role of faith in the practice of medicine, and the place each may take in doctor-patient interactions. In exploring these topics he gives validity to the physician/nurse as human and discredits the image of the superhuman physician. In fact, Sulmasy makes the point that the relationship between a doctor and patient speaks to the humanity of each party. By embracing and nourishing their own spirituality, health care providers can present a much richer version of themselves to attend to their patients. In so doing, they will have a broader armamentarium with which to deal with their patients' ailments.

Sulmasy sets out a careful discussion of suffering as part and parcel of the human experience. He draws a parallel between enduring suffering and every person's search for the transcendent: "Suffering is the experience that human beings have of knowing themselves as finite creatures who have been given the gift of a freedom that orients them to the infinite." He does not attempt to explain why one suffers, but rather he constructs a framework in which one could distill meaning from the experience.

This is a timely collection of essays. Its common thread is that spirituality (read as having a relationship with God, in Sulmasy's case) has a legitimate central role in caring for and treating patients. Sulmasy makes the case that the joyful practice of medicine has as its predicate a practitioner with a deep self-knowledge and awareness of a higher purpose. I find his arguments compelling. They speak to the physician with a voice that is genuine. The vernacular is that of the doctor "in the trenches." The anecdotes are easily recognizable. They remind physicians that we are not merely automatons who dispense cutting-edge technology to "health care consumers." For these reasons I would recommend this book to any of my colleagues who desire to explore further why it is that we do what we do.

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That All May Be One: Hierarchy and Participation in the Church. By

Terence L. Nichols. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997. Pages, viii + 355. Paper, \$29.95.

A pervasive concern for the unity of the Christian churches drives this book. If church order, particularly a Petrine ministry, has been a stumbling block to unity for so many centuries, then a renewed approach to church structure

within the Roman Church, one founded upon wide-ranging participation and consensus, could be Rome's single contribution to a reconciled Christianity. To achieve this end, a deeply participatory hierarchical structure, which avoids the twin pitfalls of monarchical domination and egalitarianism, is proposed for the Catholic Church.

Intending his book for a wide audience, Nichols, an assistant professor of systematic theology at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, asserts in chapter 1 that the most serious problem with modern Catholicism is a misunderstanding about the nature of hierarchy. Defenders and opponents alike misconstrue it for domination. Hence, Nichols distinguishes two models: first, a command hierarchy which stresses personal inequality, authority of force, and servile obedience, and second, a participative, integrative model where equality of persons, hierarchy of function or office, authority of virtue, and filial obedience are the operative traits. He then relates these two models of social or ecclesial hierarchy to the hierarchy of being or ontological hierarchy, namely, participation in created being and in the life of God; he affirms important interrelationships between these two orders. Distortions and misunderstanding in one realm cause negative repercussions in the other. Indeed the two are usually interconnected and legitimize each other. Nichols attempts to sketch out major interactive moments of these correlative hierarchies from biblical times to the Second Vatican Council. He criticizes roundly both dominative as well as egalitarian tendencies in light of what he sees as a more participatory and consensual kind of structure reflected in the scientific model of the holon proposed by Arthur Koestler in 1971. Every organism consists of levels of interacting units or holons which comprise wholes containing parts. These holons exert an ascending as well as descending causal influence within the complex structure of the organism. From the resulting arrangement of holons (a holarchy) emerges an integrated, diverse, and participatory reality. As analogously understood, holarchy becomes for Nichols a key insight for a renewed Catholic leadership structure and for a reunited Christianity. "I will maintain that holarchy, as universal in nature, reflects a divinely intended principle of order in creation which is applicable to society and the Church" (17).

In his survey of the emergence and development of hierarchy, he accepts episcopal structure as divinely intended and has high praise for the consensual governance of the Church exemplified especially in the first seven ecumenical councils. With a decided sympathy for the Eastern tradition he traces the claims of the bishops of Rome to a certain primacy of authority, while he underlines the lapses of at least two early occupants of that see. From the Gregorian Reform to the High Middle Ages, from Ockhamism, Conciliarism, the Reformation, and the Tridentine Reform to Gallicanism, Ultramontanism, Vatican I, and the renewal of Vatican II, Nichols analyzes the dominative and egalitarian swings of ecclesial structure and the obstacles impeding authentic participation and consensus.

In the last three chapters, Nichols explicates the scientific, metaphysical, and theological principles that underlie his project. He places central importance upon a hierarchy of being (Aquinas as interpreted by Norris Clarke) that promotes the fullest participation and diversity from the proton to the triune God. Trinitarian doctrine serves as the ground as well as the crown of this ontologi-

cal hierarchy, for divine life models participation and is shared in history through the sacramental mediations of the incarnation, the mystical body of Christ, and seven sacraments. If the Catholic Church is to survive its present crisis, it must eschew both authoritarian and egalitarian structures in favor of that social participation and subsidiarity so long advanced in papal social teaching. On behalf of this participatory approach, he also presents persuasive data from recent sociological, anthropological, and managerial studies that promote shared decision-making, small group function, and consensus building.

The Church as communion represents Nichols' final theological argument for an authentically participative Roman Catholicism. Distinguishing in the Church four kinds of communion (not exactly parallel to Vatican II's understanding), he demonstrates how this rich concept could have beneficent consequences for the *sensus fidelium*, the parish, the local church, episcopal conferences, and the exercise of papal primacy, and how it could encourage a truly elective process for priests, bishops, and pope. However, Nichols is soberly aware of the difficulties. "The greatest obstacle to the realization of the Church as communion is the conception of hierarchy as command. It is this notion which is largely responsible for the polarization now affecting the Catholic Church" (327). Hence, Roman Catholicism's greatest contribution to its own vitality and also to the ecumenical movement is a searching examination of conscience, particularly regarding its exercise and appreciation of hierarchy in general and of papal power.

As such this book is a theoretical and foundational study; it offers significant rationale for structural reform of leadership and governance on all levels of the Roman Church. Its pastoral implications are enormous. However, no ready-made solutions or action plans for immediate pastoral implementation may be found here. Sustained ecumenical focus, interdisciplinary attention, historical perspective, and a metaphysically informed theological method recommend this work, along with its sizeable bibliography and index. But more convincing evidence would strengthen the theological section, where argumentation tends to be abstract and therefore open to divergent interpretations. Detailed discussion of Vatican II's theology of baptism, of its teaching on episcopal collegiality, and analysis of canonical studies on shared decision and on the separation of the power of orders and of jurisdiction could help significantly. Furthermore, a crucial source needs consultation—the works of Alexandre Faivre on early church hierarchy. Proofreading lapses are excessive, over twenty of them. However, this remains a bold, persuasive, and faithful book, calling for what so many feel is so painfully absent in Roman Church hierarchy, namely, the full range of the Spirit's dulcet voice.

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All Saints. By Robert Ellsberg. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997. Pages, viii + 576. Hardcover, \$39.95.

Ranging across recorded history, Robert Ellsberg has selected stories of people who represent the very best of our race. Concisely and accurately, he

presents individuals who make us proud to be human. He lays bare the secret buried in our human clay—we are all creatures of conflict. In the procession of struggling brothers and sisters he marches before us, we find the whole mixed bag of human ills. Each person has his or her unique problem; all fight to retain that most precious of God’s gifts of personal integrity. Ellsberg’s people are Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, atheists, Muslims, and agnostics. They often fight in the dark. When the light shines, its source is often Christ and the gospel. For some the Light never comes. They struggle and die driven by their need to remain honest and true to whatever or whomever guides them. Some are deeply flawed, others towers of strength. Some cowards, others heroes. We readily recognize them; we see their like almost every day. Although not canonized, they merit inclusion in Ellsberg’s calendar because as the author informs us in his excellent introduction, they could not rest until they lived their humanity to its fullest.

Because Robert Ellsberg is a communicator (editor-in-chief, Orbis Books) he knows his readers as creatures of the instant information age. We revel in the sound bite, vibrate to the ten-second commercial, feel our pulse race against the ticking stopwatch prominently displayed with news segments like the “New York Minute” (four TV stories in sixty seconds). The very brevity of Ellsberg’s sketches meets our needs yet leaves us thirsting to know more of our heroes’ interior struggles. The book’s careful packaging of a daily story in a few paragraphs reminds us only too painfully that our nervous age has little time to read full-length religious biography and no time to walk step-by-step with a fellow human on the path to holiness. Ellsberg can only show us the bare outlines of his heroes’ and heroines’ struggles. He isolates brilliantly the central issue of each subject’s life, but the book’s format does not permit us to measure the pain dimension, probe the corridors of fear and failure, or glory in triumph’s peace and joy.

Ellsberg kindly leaves references for further reading as a footnote concluding each sketch. A brief quotation from each hero at the story’s beginning gives us a glance into the person’s heart and mind. Ellsberg’s stories are not the stuff of traditional hagiography. No St. Patrick stands in ice water reciting psalms throughout the night. No St. Joseph Cupertino clings like a spent party balloon to the refectory ceiling. Instead we have Dorothy Day, peacenik, patron of the homeless, unwed mother, and newspaper publisher. We have Cornelia Conolly whose story is so bizarre as to be almost unbelievable. No surprise, we have Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Who is my favorite? Marc Sangnier, the French Apostle of Peace of the twenties and thirties who demonstrated heroic faithfulness to the Church.

On dark winter mornings, when my little flock gathers in our country church for Mass, I often read or relate stories from *All Saints* to the faithful few. In the hush, time and space collapse and one easily experiences the communion of saints. Ellsberg puts flesh on that beautiful doctrine. He helps us stand beside Peter hanging upside down on his cross in first-century Rome; hear the gallant Trappist, Christian de Chergé, forgive his Islamic murderers in 1996 as they slit the throats of his six fellow monks and himself in the Algerian mountains; hear Rose Hawthorne as the last century closed, comfort a dying cancer patient in a lower East side New York tenement. His heroes encourage us, prod us, and

sometimes shame us as we plod along our pilgrim way, filled with gratitude to the Lord for the great gift of being human.

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The Death Penalty: An Historical and Theological Survey. By James J. Megivern. New York: Paulist Press, 1997. Pages, xiii + 641. Hardcover, \$29.95.

This large book is written from the perspective of a committed opponent of capital punishment. Megivern is a professor at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. He demonstrates wide research and admirable moral passion through the course of the volume. Capital punishment is a much-debated issue in American society. The U.S. bishops have come to a position of opposition to the death penalty, and a particular strength of the volume is the author's detailed narrative telling how the episcopal teaching came to be.

But capital punishment is an interesting example of non-reception of a church teaching by the general Catholic population in this country. Megivern does not really help readers understand why this is so. First, he is too much the opponent of capital punishment to present a sympathetic treatment of the opposing viewpoint. More importantly, and this is the major limitation of the book, the author does not really present an analytic argument or a synthetic presentation of the capital punishment debate. Rather, the key word in the subtitle of the volume is "survey." Megivern is content to pile quote on quote in his compilation of views held by various, but largely Christian, writers. What the reader gets is a wealth of primary source material but a weaker analytic treatment of the tradition.

Particularly weak is Megivern's treatment of the biblical material which is unfortunate since many supporters of capital punishment cite biblical texts in support of their position. It is not that I disagree with Megivern's ultimate conclusion about the use of the Bible in moral argument, but more that I was disappointed in the rather brief treatment of Scripture in a book that is over six hundred pages. Roughly the last half of the book is the story of how American Catholics have wrestled with the death penalty. The documentary trail which the author pursues is impressive and the telling of the recent debates among the American episcopacy is the real contribution of this volume.

Megivern's book is a useful gathering of data from the tradition and that is to be appreciated. But more than gathering data is needed and the weak aspect of the volume is the framing of a philosophical or theological ethic for the sorting out and defending of a particular viewpoint. The book is an historical survey of what theologians and philosophers have said but it is not itself a theological or philosophical argument.

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Relating to People of Other Religions: What Every Christian Needs to Know.

By M. Thomas Thangaraj. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997. Pages, 112. Paper.

Thomas Thangaraj is associate professor of world Christianity at the Chandler School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia. In a warm and engaging manner, he presents to Christians the motives, paths, and basic confidence about relating to people of other faiths. His approach is autobiographical, anecdotal, biblical, and practical; the result is an easily read book that communicates effectively. Because of his lengthy personal involvement in interfaith dialogue, Thangaraj has a positive approach to the followers of other religious traditions. His chapters often begin by narrating a personal encounter: "Ganga [my new neighbor] and I are fellow pilgrims on the journey of faith" (7); "Ganga and I have had long conversations . . . [and we] discover many similarities; but we know we are very different . . ." (75, 87). This narrative style brings the reader directly into the heart of the question in a personal, concrete way.

Recognizing the fact that in today's global community "Christians will be increasingly drawn into interaction and conversation with other religious communities in our mission to serve humanity," Thangaraj explores several "different modes of relationship between Christians and others" (18). Six of the book's nine chapters explore various possible stances of a Christian vis-à-vis other religionists. Creative chapter titles capture these positions: "We Know and They Know Not" (chapter 3) [an exclusivist view]; "We Perhaps Know; They Perhaps Know; Who Knows?" (chapter 4) [a skeptical or relativist view]; "We and They Together Need to Know More!" (chapter 8) [an inclusivist view]. Although Thangaraj does not use the nomenclature found within the bracketed words, he explores those issues and attitudes; the mode of exploration is narrative, experiential, and attitudinal. The reader will find the approach engaging and insightful.

Some recurrent themes are played throughout the work: the God of the Bible "does not fail to celebrate plurality" (20) and "revels in the multiplicity of peoples, cultures and religions" (24); balanced judgment is needed in evaluating the missionary enterprise because for many believers (Thangaraj's own ancestors) the gospel "liberated them and helped them to affirm and assert their own self-worth and dignity" (47); dialogue includes "every act, word, and thought carried out together with others in a spirit of mutuality" (92); it is "an exercise in humility and love" (95).

The book does not romanticize other religions; the author is not compromising of his Christian faith. The thoughts of theologians (e.g., Panikkar, Rahner, etc.) are used for the insight they offer. The Bible is frequently quoted to affirm a positive and open approach to other believers. A study guide with practical suggestions for each chapter concludes the work.

This is a helpful book; it could become a basic resource for a short course on interfaith dialogue. It is easily understood, but never proposes simplistic solutions to complex problems. In a word, Thangaraj has followed the advice found in 1 Pet 3:15-16a; he has witnessed to his Christian faith and hope "with gentleness and reverence."

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The International Bible Commentary: A Catholic and Ecumenical Commentary for the Twenty-First Century. Editor William R. Farmer; Associate Editors Sean McEvenue, Armando J. Levoratti, and David L Dungan; Map Editor André LaCocque. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998. Pages lii + 1918. Hardcover, \$99.95.

Among recent one-volume commentaries on the Bible we have the generally excellent *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (1990), and the older *New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* (1969). The question that comes to mind with the present hefty work is: why another such commentary? The answer becomes clear from a perusal of the contents. It is unlike any other that I am aware of. First, among its many unique features, 118 Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant scholars from thirty-two countries on six continents contributed the general articles and the commentaries on the individual books of the OT and NT from the perspectives of their national readerships so that the spirit of their cultures can be experienced (xxxi). Second, 20 percent of the authors are women, and the same percentage are Protestant. Third, this commentary is being published in English, Spanish, French, Italian, and Polish. Fourth, the commentary intends to be "Catholic" (= Roman Catholic) and catholic (= universal, international, ecumenical) so that "on those issues where definite Catholic teachings would be treated, the official Catholic view is clearly presented" but there is also "a fair account of the main directions of the ecumenical spectrum" (xvi). Fifth, and most distinctively, though the authors employ the historical-critical method, they emphasize the pastoral dimensions of the biblical texts.

The first part of the volume (1–332) begins with two introductory articles, "The Power of the Word of God" and "How to Interpret the Bible" (1–35) by Armando J. Levoratti (Argentina); in these two superb essays, which I would make required reading for everyone interested in the Bible, the author makes frequent reference to "The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," a seminal document issued by the Pontifical Biblical Commission (1993). There follow four major sections with many subdivisions: (1) "Insights into the History of Biblical Interpretation," (2) "Unleashing the Power of the Bible," (3) "How Did We Get Our Bible?," and (4) "Selected Pastoral Concerns." Many of these are self-contained essays worth reading in their own right. In the first section, for instance, "Patristic Exegesis of the Books of the Bible" by David L. Balás (Hungary/United States) and Jeffrey Bingham (United States), presents a splendid overview (64–115), with detailed bibliographies of editions and patristic studies on the several books of the OT and NT; scholars will find this essay especially useful. In the last section, Mercy Amba Oduyoye from Ghana wrote a fascinating essay, "Family: An African Perspective," a perspective most western readers know little of. "The Bible and Ecology" by Daniel G. Defebaugh and David L. Dungan (United States) demonstrates convincingly that "the Bible has much to say about our present environmental predicament" (314).

The commentary of each book is divided into two major parts: First Reading, a rapid reading, with the commentary as a help for the reader, to see the book as a whole because the general idea or context is necessary in order to understand the individual verses and parts; and Second Reading, a slow reading,

taking in a little at a time so that the reader may savor its contents and grasp better “the shattering presence of God” in the lives of the inspired author. Thus, one can undertake a thoughtful study of the Bible as a whole or of individual books by following this effective method—a major contribution indeed.

A new commentary like this one takes time to appreciate. As one would expect with so many contributors, the articles and commentaries are not of uniform quality or consistency. In an otherwise good commentary on Exodus, for example, John F. Craghan (United States) deals rather briefly and generally with the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:1-17); but in the commentary on Deuteronomy Yuichi Osumi (Japan) provides a fine explanation of each individual commandment (Deut 5:6-21).

A few contributions deserve special mention without slighting any of the rest. In the masterful commentary on John’s Gospel, Teresa Okure (Nigeria) explains the episode in Cana (John 2:1-12) with keen intuition and feminine insight. Mary “serves as a midwife who helps a reluctant expectant mother to push and give birth.” When Jesus objects that his hour has not yet come, “by her undaunted yet silent faith his mother initiates the event that . . . leads to that hour. God, in this instance, upheld the rights of the mother over her son (cf. Sir 3:2b)” (1464). R. J. Raja (India) enhances his detailed comments on Judith by offering three charts that highlight the intertextuality between the story of Judith and the story of David in 1 Samuel 17; texts of Judith and texts of Exodus; and Sarah and Judith. Intertextuality, which features prominently in the volume, “is the experience of hearing echoes of one text in another, the discovery (or rediscovery, because the ancients knew it intuitively) that no text is ever truly autonomous; no text is ever produced and read apart from other texts” (xxviii). The commentaries on 1–2 Samuel and on 1–2 Kings by Antony Campbell and Mark O’Brien (Australia) can serve as an outstanding sample of what to expect in this volume: clear sprightly writing on all the major themes and expert guidance for understanding the biblical text. Curiously, some of the articles and commentaries contain no bibliographies; most do, however.

Each major section of the Bible (e.g., Pentateuch, Deuteronomistic History, Gospels) receives one or more introductory articles. “Wisdom: A Way of Thinking about God” by Sean McEvenue (Canada) is a gem that should be read before one begins a study of the individual Wisdom books. Even the scholar will find this article worth reading.

The volume lacks a general index, a significant drawback in a work of this kind. Instead, it has a “Pastoral Guide for the Use of the Bible in Preaching”—an alphabetical listing of persons, ideas, and things, followed by definitions and the biblical citation(s) featuring the same. There is an index to the sixteen maps at the end of the volume.

In sum, I recommend this new commentary to clergy and laity alike who are looking for more than a quick explanation of difficult biblical passages. Those who purchase the volume will conclude that it is one of the best buys they have ever made.

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Clashing Symbols, An Introduction to Faith and Culture. By Michael Paul Gallagher, S.J. New York: Paulist Press, 1998. Pages 170. Paper, \$11.95.

Starting with a clarifying analysis of the concept “culture,” Michael Gallagher, teaching theology for half a year at the Gregorian University in Rome and for the rest of the year active in the field of faith and culture in Europe and the United States, situates the topic of his book: “Throughout most of human history, cultures have been rooted in religious consciousness; a central crisis of culture today comes from the split between culture and religion over the last two centuries or so” (23).

Opting for Walter J. Ong’s opinion that change should not be faced in a spirit of nostalgia but in the historical spirit, the author explains how the Second Vatican Council made this challenge a major theme. The council openly recognized this shift and the plurality of cultures in the world in its reflections on culture in *Gaudium et spes* (nn. 53–61).

The council laid down two foundational Catholic principles. Culture is linked with (1) the dignity of the person and with (2) the call of freedom to become more fully human. It indicated three consequent dimensions: humanist, empirical and local.

John Paul II, picking up this theme, would declare later (5-11-79) that it is on this issue that the destiny of the Church and of the world are at stake (47). The synthesis between culture and faith is not just a demand of culture, but also of faith. “Witnessing to Christ will mean drawing out of a culture the full meaning of its noblest intentions . . . at other times challenging that culture especially when the truth about the human person is under assault” (John Paul II, 8-10-95).

These foundational truths are compared with the developments in appreciation of “culture” by the World Council of Churches (and UNESCO). The agenda of the WCC is four-fold: (1) authentic witness within each culture, (2) gospel and identity in community, (3) local congregations in pluralistic societies, and (4) one gospel . . . diverse cultures. These valid agenda points remain, however, more or less “in house” issues. The main challenge for Christianity remains modernity, even though the debate has moved on to postmodernity.

The reconciliatory tone of the sixties (the Vatican Council years) was followed by a more critical reaction in the eighties. Some Christian authors saw the “fall-out” of the Western enlightenment—the ensuing privatization and relativization of religion, and its displacement from the center of public life to the private sphere—as a “radical falsification” of the Christian message (L. Osborn). Detached from spiritual aims and moral values, and with no sense of revelation, culture finds itself faced with an acute spiritual problem (C. Dawson).

John Paul II offered a more positive evaluation, considering that if modernity permits “a human being to express his or her maturity, spiritual, moral and cultural, in dialogue with the Creator and creation, then the Church of the Council saw itself as the ‘soul’ of modernity” (9-25-94). In this line of thought the author considers the un-anchoredness of “postmodernity” (or “late modernity”) as a potentially positive cultural mood. It can be seen as a “re-enchantment of the world that modernity tried hard to dis-enchant” (Z. Bauman). It is a new sensibility more open to religious horizons, the prophetic, the cosmological and the

mystical, than “modernity” (D. Tracy). The new spiritual searching is a surprising strand of postmodernity. Christ’s prophetic challenge is once again offered to a broken world.

In the last four more practical chapters Gallagher draws practical conclusions from this hope-filled vision discussing inculturation, cultural discernment, cultural discernment in ministry, and a spirituality of culture. The book ends with an epilogue telling some of the author’s lived experiences of the “clash of symbols,” and an anthology of quotations on culture.

In the midst of the endless “cheap” words spent on culture, modernity and postmodernity, this book stands out as a gem. It is not an easy read, but an exceptionally rewarding one.

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An Introduction to the Homily. By Robert P. Waznak, S.S. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998. Pages, xi + 147. Paper, \$13.95.

The ambitious and substantive contents of this modest little volume make it a worthy contribution toward correcting a regrettable “lack of scholarly homiletic literature in the Roman Catholic tradition” (93), even though it is not an “academic” book in the usual sense. Author Robert Waznak states in the preface that he is not writing “primarily for homileticians who seek new breakthroughs in their field but to provide ‘sound theory’ for homilists striving to improve their preaching” (ix). Based on the author’s conviction that “before we begin to demonstrate *how* to preach a homily, we need to explore *what* the homily is” (viii), the book aims at working out a clearer understanding of the function of the homily within the liturgical tradition of the Roman Catholic Church. Aimed as it is at a broad audience of students, preachers, and liturgists, the book is written to be accessible and easy to read, and it avoids the technical and the abstract.

On the other hand, the book may legitimately be called “scholarly” in the sense that it draws on the considerable academic and professional expertise of its author. Waznak is one of a very few Roman Catholics who holds academic credentials in the field of homiletics. Currently a professor at the Washington Theological Union, he has taught, written, and published widely on the subjects of preaching and communications for twenty-five years. All of this equips him in a unique way to bring to bear on his study “the work of homiletic scholars from the various Christian Churches, the insights found in normative church documents, contemporary theological, liturgical, and biblical studies, plus the lived experiences of preachers and people” (viii). The result is a treasure trove—a concise summary of vast amounts of material, both historical and contemporary, Catholic and Protestant.

The first chapter highlights the accomplishments of the Second Vatican Council in retrieving the homily as a particular genre of liturgical preaching based on patristic models. The author also articulates a contemporary under-

standing of the homily derived from church documents and the writings of many liturgists and homileticians over the past three decades. Waznak concludes that the homily is to be biblical, liturgical, kerygmatic, conversational, and prophetic, carefully spelling out his understanding of each. Non-Catholic readers will find useful his summary of the renewal of preaching in the Catholic Church since the 1960s. Catholic readers will find a helpful introduction to the so-called "New Homiletic" in Waznak's summary of key insights regarding contextual, imaginal, and narrative preaching from the writings of Fred Craddock, Richard Jensen, Eugene Lowry, David Buttrick, and other prominent Anglican and Protestant homileticians of the past three decades.

The second chapter takes up four major images of the preacher from Catholic homiletic tradition—the herald, the teacher, the interpreter, and the witness—on the grounds that "one effective way to discover what the homily is supposed to do is to examine what the homilist is called to be" (x). The third chapter examines the origins of the current Catholic Lectionary "to help understand its place in the preaching event and explore some practical solutions to its problems" (x). In the fourth and final chapters, Waznak answers "questions often asked about the homily," touching on a broad array of topics: methods for homily preparation, hints on homily endings, ideal length, preaching to children, and many more. Thus, a book of "sound theory" concludes on an eminently practical note.

The book is well organized and clear, but I did miss having a final bibliography which would gather together in one place all the numerous and diverse sources which are cited throughout. Perhaps Father Waznak might be persuaded to rectify that omission and to render inestimable service to the field of homiletics by writing a series of literature review articles. In the meantime, however, his little book has filled a big void in Catholic literature on preaching; it will serve as an interesting complement to Walter Burghardt's masterful *Preaching: The Art and the Craft. An Introduction to the Homily* certainly deserves—and will no doubt find—a wide and enthusiastic audience.

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The Evangelizing Catholic: A Practical Handbook for Reaching Out. By Frank P. DeSiano, C.S.P. New York: Paulist Press, 1998. Pages, viii + 152. Paper, \$11.95.

A fine homiletics teacher once said, "Tell people who they are and they will know what to do." It's a half-truth. In this little book, a practical handbook for Catholic evangelization, Frank DeSiano, President of the Paulist Fathers, consultant to the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Evangelization, experienced pastor, author, and lecturer to dioceses and parishes on evangelization, tells the whole truth. He knows who we are: thousands of Catholics and parishes, committed

to the Church and its life, more or less aware of what baptism means for us individually and collectively, more or less excited and enthusiastic about it, yet more often than not uncertain how to channel the excitement and enthusiasm in bringing the Church's Good News to our workplace and our world. Fr. DeSiano, in a style that is as conversational as it is theological, reminds us who we are. He begins and ends this fine "how to evangelize" manual by solidly grounding us in the theology of our baptism: called by Jesus Christ in the Church, fed by him in the Eucharist, commissioned by him to help gather all people into the grace of God's kingdom. And then, from Fr. DeSiano's storehouse of experience and insight, graciously and at times hard-hitting, he tells us how to share this faith, this identity, both as individuals and as a parish. Here is where the author is at his best.

The welcoming process of evangelization is begun, he says, "When people feel the care of Jesus in our care for them . . ." This is just as true for the individual Catholic as it is for the parish. Evangelization is begun in the human encounter, in an attitude of caring, with openness, love and respect. But it is only begun there. Witness is never enough. Proclamation must follow. And it is here DeSiano hits hard. "Catholic life," he says, "is weakest in the inviting, welcoming and proclaiming dimensions of faith." As Catholics, we overvalue the internal-organizing side of Church (maintenance) and undervalue the external-inviting side (mission). In this carefully organized and easy-to-follow guidebook, chapters 2 and 3 offer quite practical suggestions on "how to" help accomplish the mission of evangelization. There is something in these chapters for everyone: individual Catholics looking for ways to share their faith, as well as parishes beginning or continuing the evangelization challenge. There is also a special chapter set aside for the parish evangelization team. DeSiano knows that parish evangelization teams often find themselves running out of energy. His advice helps rev up, and where needed, restart parish evangelizing team engines. As a pastor myself, more than once in reading *The Evangelizing Catholic*, I wondered if Frank DeSiano has been sitting in on my staff meetings, evangelization team meetings, pastoral council meetings, and hand-wringing.

If there is any addition which might have helped the argument and the advice DeSiano gives, it's the place of parish social outreach in the evangelization process. When parishioners are engaged in social outreach, in working together as parish teams, or working together with other faith communities, their own embrace of the gospel, their own commitment to, and sense of belonging to the parish and the Church, is enriched. Any parish worth its salt must ask "What does the city need? How can we help?" It is in the awareness of belonging to a larger community and in helping to address its needs, that the parish gets off the dime, opens up its vision and its heart. Pride of partnership develops within the parish and the commitment to personal conversion and enthusiastic retelling of the Good News advances. This addition, however, in no way is meant to shortchange this finely written, soundly theological and consummately pastoral piece.

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What Are They Saying About the Trinity? By Anne Hunt. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1998. Pages, iv + 97. Paper, \$9.95.

Often in response to my saying that I teach the course on the triune God, I hear comments such as: "Are they still teaching that?" "Irrelevant." "Boring." Rahner is probably correct in saying that "should the doctrine of the Trinity have to be dropped as false, the major part of religious literature could well remain virtually unchanged." No wonder that most priests or deacons are pulling their hair out on Trinity Sunday morning fretting over what they are going to preach. The idea of a "subsistent relation" would not be one's lead suit in tying to help people make sense out of their lives. But if one has nothing to say on Trinity Sunday, then one has nothing to say at all for the doctrine of the Trinity is the doctrine of salvation (Rahner). It *is* the "Gospel" in a nutshell. One of the reasons why preachers are pulling their hair out on Sunday morning is that at least in the West, beginning with Augustine and culminating in the metaphysical tour de force of Aquinas' trinitarian theology, the doctrine of the trinity became a matter of divine psychoanalysis and mathematics. The big questions were: what and who made God "tick" and how can one be three and three be one? Whether this divine psychoanalysis and mathematics had much to say about us and our salvation is debatable. No wonder the triune God has slipped into oblivion, and preachers have little to say.

Anne Hunt, professor of theology at Yarra Theological Union in Melbourne, has written a short and very readable book on the Trinity which can provide preachers (and others) with an overview of the trinitarian theology of five contemporary Catholic theologians: Leonardo Boff, Elizabeth Johnson, Denis Edwards, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Anthony Kelly. Sensitive to new modes of consciousness, as well as new questions, issues, and pastoral concerns, all five are at pains to move beyond classical Western trinitarian theology and rearticulate the mystery of the triune God in ways which cannot only speak to or correlate with contemporary experience but also address meaningfully the human condition, including in the case of Edwards, the cosmos itself. In other words, all five in somewhat different ways have shown the doctrine of the trinity to be quite "relevant," even "exciting" because it is the story of our salvation. And that means it is the story of a saving God, a God who is much more sheer love (*ipsum amare subsistens*) than sheer being (*ipsum esse subsistens*). The ramifications of this "switch" are more than semantic.

Hunt has done an excellent job in providing in such a synthetic, accurate, and accessible way the trinitarian thinking of five important contemporary Catholic thinkers. Having read this book, the preacher on Trinity Sunday will have more than enough to say which could be not only exciting for preacher and congregation, but also might be very challenging, since each of the authors surveyed in his or her own way sees ramifications for Christian living in the doctrine of the trinity. These ramifications run from an increased mystical awe (von Balthasar) to new social and linguistic practice in society and church (Boff and Johnson).

Every book of necessity has limitations. One limitation of this book is that it does not consider any of the more "eschatological" approaches to the triune God, i.e. approaches which see that the doctrine of the triune God tells not only

the story of God as a saving God but the “history” of that God, a God who *will be* all that God can be *only in the end*, only when God fully reigns (1 Cor 15:28). These eschatological, trinitarian theologies (e.g. Moltmann, Pannenberg) also can be quite exciting, relevant, and challenging. They may also offer clues to resolve the trinitarian dilemma between East and West. Perhaps the Son and the Father in some way proceed from the Spirit! Another minor limitation. Hunt offers no critical evaluation of the five authors. Augustine with his psychological model has been criticized for “projecting” his trinity, i.e. his trinity is a human creation which looks much like the human soul with its faculties. Perhaps some “models” of the triune God today may also be the result of a type of projection, of projecting our human agenda into God. In our very valid and necessary attempts to correlate the tradition or Christian fact (Tracy) with contemporary experience and exigencies, we must always be careful not to let our exigencies dominate the theological enterprise and its outcomes, lest God end up looking much too much like ourselves or merely serving our agenda. Barth and other neo-orthodox theologians, to say nothing of the apophatic mystics, speak a cautionary voice to which we must always pay heed: let God be God!

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