Book Reviews

The Historical Jesus and the Temple: Memory, Methodology, and the Gospel of Matthew by Michael Patrick Barber. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. xi + 350 pp. $110.00.

In *The Historical Jesus and the Temple*, Michael Patrick Barber considers Jesus's attitude toward the Jerusalem temple through an analysis of the Gospel of Matthew's preservation and interpretation of Jesus traditions on this topic.

As set forth in chapter 1, a central premise of Barber's project is his claim that Matthew's interpretation of Jesus traditions as regards the temple puts us in contact with the views of the historical Jesus on the matter (2). Barber notes that Jesus has often been interpreted in some circles of New Testament scholarship as being anti-temple and anti-cult, a conclusion that has been shaped by Protestant theological influences (5). This scholarly picture of an anti-temple Jesus stands at odds with the presentation of Jesus in Matthew, where he, for instance, acknowledges the holiness of the temple, the place of God's dwelling among his people (Matt 23:19–21). The Matthean presentation, Barber rightly acknowledges, is a much more historically plausible picture of Jesus as a first-century Jew than the anti-temple and anti-cult figure given in sectors of modern New Testament scholarship. Barber then locates the Gospel of Matthew within the highly diverse phenomenon of first-century Judaism, where conflicts between rival groups (such as that between Matthew and his local synagogue) were not uncommon (9–12). Acknowledging that earlier sources are not always the most historically preferable (13), Barber points to instances where Matthew redacts Mark in a more Jewish direction. Thus, Matthew's presentation of Jesus may be more

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reflective of the perspectives of the historical Jesus. Hence, Barber argues that the presentation of Jesus in "Matthew might help us to better understand Jesus's Jewishness" (15).

In chapter 2, Barber articulates his method, which is much informed by the works of Dale Allison and E.P. Sanders. Barber contrasts his historical approach to the criteria of authenticity that figured into much historical Jesus research in the second half of the twentieth century (e.g., John P. Meier's *A Marginal Jew* series). Building upon critiques of these criteria and the effort to get at an unadulterated and uninterpreted Jesus (27–28), Barber adopts what he (citing Brant Pitre) calls a "triple-context approach" (35). Drawing on Dale Allison, Barber summarizes this triple approach as following a basic rhythm: "(1) recognize *coherent patterns via recurrent attestation* [i.e., what kinds of things about Jesus regarding a given matter are broadly remembered and given in a range of New Testament sources] . . . (2) examine *how such elements fit within the ancient Jewish world* as well as to (3) consider *their relationship to the effects of Jesus*" (35). With this approach, Barber does not seek to argue for the historicity of individual bits of tradition (e.g., as would be the case were one to use the criteria of authenticity) but for the historical probability of a general picture that emerges from across witnesses.

Chapter 3 examines the general matter of Jesus's relationship to the Jerusalem temple. Barber first documents a large pattern of data, culled from the Gospels, that present Jesus as being positive toward the temple and its rites (45–47). Jesus's own positive attitude toward the temple is at home within first-century Judaism and helps to account for the enduring use of temple and cultic imagery by subsequent New Testament Christians (e.g., Paul). Barber then tracks Jesus's repeated acknowledgment of the temple's holiness in Matthew's narrative, arguing that such a perspective does not contradict the more general eschatological vision of Jesus.

Chapter 4 takes up Jesus's prophetic announcement of the destruction of the temple. Following his triple-context approach, Barber adduces a general pattern of evidence that

points to Jesus's prophesying the end of the Jerusalem temple. Citing evidence from Josephus and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Barber shows that Jesus was not the only Jew in antiquity to hold such views. Turning to Matthew, Barber explicates Jesus's action in the Jerusalem temple in light of Jeremiah's similar prophetic threat against the temple and argues that, in Matthew, the destruction of the temple follows upon the Jewish leadership's rejection of Jesus (106, 110). Very important for Barber is that for Jesus (as for Jeremiah before him), the announcement of the temple's coming destruction does not entail that the temple and its cult are illegitimate or defunct (100, 109).

Chapter 5 explores the interrelationships between Jesus's identity as the Davidic messiah and his claims of authority vis-à-vis the temple. Barber notes that David, with Moses, "was understood as a kind of co-founder of Israel's worship" (115), for not only did he first plan to build a temple, but (according to 1–2 Chr) he installed priests, composed hymns, and performed priestly actions in his own right (116–117). Barber then cites a variety of Jesus's words and actions by which he (obliquely) claimed to be the Davidic messiah, or the one-to-be-enthroned-as-the-messianic-king (135; following Allison). The early Christians certainly held this to be true, and for his part, Matthew accents Jesus's identity as Davidic messiah-king. These Davidic associations serve to position Jesus as having a distinctive standing and authority as regards the temple.

Chapter 6 continues the examination of Jesus's associations with David in Matthew but with special attention to the new temple that Jesus builds. Barber argues that in Matthew, Jesus identifies his Church as this new "Temple-Community" (161; phrase from 177) by applying temple imagery to the community of his disciples (162–65). As would be the case with any temple in antiquity, Jesus's ecclesial temple has a priestly leadership structure. Here, Barber unpacks the priestly dimensions of Jesus's installing Peter as a new Shebna (cf. Isa 22)

following his confession in Matthew 16 as well as other priestly prerogatives and roles that Jesus assigns to his disciples.

Chapter 7 extends this examination of Jesus's appropriation of temple and cultic topoi as regards his mission and the Church. Barber provides a lengthy treatment of the Last Supper, wherein he draws out the cultic dimensions of the accounts as well as the sacrificial character of Jesus's death that the accounts affirm. He then considers other related matters, such as Jesus's reference to Psalm 118 after the parable of the wicked tenants, a hierarchy within his circle of disciples (redolent of Exod 24), and Jesus's "contagious holiness" (216) evidenced in his healings and exorcisms. Jesus's practice of extending temple and cultic images squares with other examples of this practice in Second Temple witnesses, where things like martyrdom and community life and practice are similarly presented in cultic terms.

Barber then closes the study by summarizing his major conclusions and including an appendix dedicated to Matthew's location in first-century Judaism.

Barber's study is a welcome one, and he achieves what he sets out to do. He offers a compelling, historically probable account of Jesus as a first-century Jew who affirmed the holiness of the Jerusalem temple, claimed authority over it as the Davidic messiah, prophesied its end, and built a new eschatological temple-community. Barber's argumentation is learned and well-grounded in ancient sources and pertinent secondary scholarship, and his prose exposition is admirably clear. As mentioned by Dale Allison in his foreword, Barber also makes a methodological contribution considering the early interpretive memories of Jesus (in this case, Matthew's) as putting us in contact with the historical reality of Jesus on a given topic (ix–x). In a sense, Barber's triple-context approach is the inverse of the criterion of dissimilarity, for it focuses on the similarities between generally attested claims about Jesus, the location of those claims in his Jewish context, and the effects that those claims (may have) produced in early Christianity. By focusing on the general picture, rather than

individual bits of tradition, this approach is well-positioned to deliver historically plausible, though modest, results.

On this same note, I wonder whether Barber, given how he sets up his mode of proceeding, at times goes beyond this focus on the general picture and claims too much about individual bits of tradition. For instance, Barber (referencing Pitre) suggests that Jesus hierarchically structured his circles of disciples (e.g., Peter; Peter, James, and John; the Twelve; the Seventy[-Two] disciples) to correspond to the groups of elders and authority figures in Exodus 24 (214–15). Such a proposal is admittedly intriguing and certainly possible. But given the triple-context concern for general, recurring trends in the sources, might this be claiming too much about particular points—at least as regards the Seventy(-Two), who only appear in Luke? On a more substantive note, the place of Jesus's resurrection as regarding his role as the builder of a new eschatological temple-community could, I think, be brought out more strongly. When treating the parable of the wicked tenants and the accompanying reference to Psalm 118, Barber makes a passing reference to the place of the risen Jesus as the foundation stone of the new temple-community via quotations of Arland Hultgren and Morna Hooker (177). But most of Barber's attention is given over to identifying the Church as the eschatological temple-community that Jesus builds. The place of the risen Jesus himself vis-à-vis the Church (e.g., Matt 18:20; 28:19–20; John 2:19–22) is a sub-topic that could be examined in more depth.

Both methodologically and substantively, Barber has thus made a fine contribution to the study of Jesus as a historical figure by examining how Matthew remembered and interpreted traditions about Jesus and the temple.

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Augustine's Theology of the Resurrection by Augustine M. Reisenauer, OP. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. xvi + 275 pp. $110.

In his book, *Augustine's Theology of the Resurrection*, Augustine Reisenauer aims to address the overall lack of scholarly attention paid to Augustine's view of the most distinctive doctrine of the Christian faith: the resurrection of Christ and the corresponding resurrection of all humanity. Beyond previous treatments of the topic (e.g., Gerald O'Collins's), Reisenauer especially wishes to address Augustine's understanding of spiritual resurrection and its relationship to bodily resurrection, as well as the general resurrection in addition to the resurrection of Christ.

The book is divided into four parts of three chapters each. I briefly summarize the contents below.

Part 1 is concerned with the early Augustine. It gives a brief patristic background to Augustine (i.e., Tertullian, Ambrose, and Gregory of Nyssa). It also discusses Augustine's earliest works on the resurrected body, in which he speculates that the resurrected body is a return to paradise or that it is an angelic body.

Part 2 discusses Augustine's mature doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Against the Manichees, Augustine develops an understanding of the lasting significance of Christ's true resurrected human flesh. This part also covers ways the risen Christ is encountered (historically by the disciples and today by believers, with the focus on the latter). The last chapter of this section is an excursus on book 4 of *De trinitate*. Book 4 argues that Christ's single resurrection effects our double (spiritual and physical) resurrection.

Part 3 is dedicated to Augustine's concept of spiritual resurrection. Reisenauer argues that Augustine picks up the scriptural language of sin as a spiritual death and that his idea of spiritual resurrection is not an overly "spiritualized" version of—nor an abstraction from—physical resurrection but rather is linked with it. The idea of spiritual resurrection (rather than

merely self-improvement, etc.) also ensures a vision of moral reform based on grace. The second chapter in this section deals with *Confessions*, arguing that Augustine's understanding of spiritual resurrection is profoundly informed by his own experience. Lastly, this part discusses Augustine's view of death and his pastoral reflections on it. Although death is an evil for Augustine, he argues that the martyrs died out of hope of resurrection rather than hatred of the body (like, e.g., Platonists). Burial practices of average Christians reflect the same hope.

The subject of part 4 is the resurrection of human flesh. It discusses Augustine's defense of the event of the general resurrection against the pagans, including the desirability of physical resurrection. It then expounds Augustine's view of the resurrection of the damned to punishment and the resurrection of the saints to blessedness. These discussions include Augustine's speculation on the quality of the resurrected body in these two states.

This book's strengths lie in its chronological treatment of Augustine's views on the resurrection, which will serve scholars looking to be attentive to the changes in his thought, and in the fact that it covers more topics than other scholarship has done. The author laudably pays close attention to the varied ways in which Augustine speaks of human resurrection, especially of spiritual resurrection, which is quite a common theme both in Augustine's theological works and in his preaching. It also commendably includes his homilies and pastoral writings in the conversation, which are all too often overlooked in favor of the more famous theological treatises. This attention makes his survey well-rounded.

The book's main weakness (aside from overwrought writing), however, is in some ways on the other side of the same coin as its strengths. In many places, the book is wider than it is deep, summarizing various ideas about the resurrection found in Augustine without connecting the dots to other aspects of his thought or even between chapters. The large number of divisions and subheadings is a symptom of this

choppy treatment of topics. One is left wondering what the main thesis or conclusion of the book might be.

As one example, the idea of physical/spiritual resurrection in *De trinitate* 4 should have been much more integrated with the other parts on spiritual and physical resurrection. *De trinitate* is in this respect a rare look under the theological hood of how Augustine conceives of these two types of resurrection working through Christ in believers, and it would have been illuminating (for instance) to see if Christ's resurrection can be said to work by way of sacrament and example in other Augustinian contexts. In the same vein, some subjects are dealt with so cursorily that they would have been better left out or in footnotes (for example, the summary of the patristic tradition before Augustine). In terms of the broader horizon one might have expected from a book like this, discussion of the Church and the sacraments were notably scarce, even though the general resurrection is closely related to Augustine's concept of the *totus Christus*. The lack of depth was also evidenced in an almost complete absence of interaction with other scholarship, even in footnotes (which made reference to other scholars but without any attempt to engage them either positively or negatively). Although I greatly prefer books that take primary sources as the main point of departure, this book's usefulness for thinking through questions in Augustine and his reception will be limited by the way scholarship is almost completely passed over.

On the whole, this book will serve scholars of Augustine looking for an overview of the various ways in which he discusses the resurrection and where in his corpus he is concerned to do so. It will also help others to trace the overall shape of the development of Augustine's thought on resurrection, and therefore also his view of the body more generally speaking.

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Incomprehensible Certainty: Metaphysics and Hermeneutics of the Image by Thomas Pfau.
Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2022.
xxv + 785 pp. $80.

In *Incomprehensible Certainty* (IC), Thomas Pfau makes good on a promise made in the last sentence of his equally voluminous (and equally consequential) *Minding the Modern* (MM, 2013) to show how the post-Romantic heirs of S.T. Coleridge advanced his crucial but incomplete attempt to invest the modern individual with metaphysical significance by way of a theologically intensified Platonism.[1] MM says, in its final word, that the "heirs" of Coleridge—he already names Ruskin and Hopkins there, the two major figures of a *traditio minor* that accomplishes the most for the metaphysical status of the image in their aesthetics and poetics, respectively—"proceeded to rethink the human in emphatically objective terms" by "embarking on a rehabilitation of the image" as an unsurpassable locus of ontological and epistemological value.[2] Of course, IC—as much as MM—is *fully*, though not *merely*, a historical study. It *argues for* the recovery of the image by articulating the modern turn to an "objective" and personalistic aesthetics from Goethe to Rilke as a (fledgling?) renewal of the ancient, mainstream, and traditional Neoplatonic program of hierarchical vision, participatory ontology, and mystical ascent from within the death throes of a modernity (ours) erected as a replacement for such a program. For it is the recognition of the death of modernity within the dearth of the image (thought of, in our time, as an obfuscation rather than a window to truth) that creates the conditions for making such a rehabilitation both intelligible and viable, and hence, compelling.

1. Thomas Pfau, *Minding the Modern: Human Agency, Intellectual Traditions and Responsible Knowledge* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 618.

2. Pfau, 618.

IC is structured in two parts of four chapters each. The second part, titled "The Image in the Era of Naturalism and the Persistence of Metaphysics," elaborates the path of iconic rehabilitation just named. The reader of MM will not be surprised that this part—after a chapter ("The Symbolic Image") on Goethe's reconciliation of form and evolution for transcendent, indeed *transcending* vision that "sees" the organized world as symbolic tracings, let me say, of archetypal reality—centers especially on Ruskin ("The Forensic Image") and Hopkins ("The Sacramental Image") in chapters 6 and 7, respectively. Roughly like the role Coleridge plays in MM, Hopkins is, in a way, the hero of IC. For Hopkins, in his poetry and partial theoretical justification of it, a real breakthrough is accomplished from within modernity, at least for a moment,[3] that truly perceives the analogical antinomy of a world that in and as itself is a cipher of heavenly vision. The final chapter ("The Epiphanic Image") names Husserl, Cézanne, and Rilke as figures in whose various domains the appearances are seen as irreducibly excessive sites of meaning, significance, and value that possess an objectivity that stands beyond but also grounds linguistic articulation and conceptual grasp. Just as in Hopkins (and Coleridge earlier), if not more so, each of these figures displays a fundamental incompleteness: Husserl is "quasi-iconoclast" when his thinking drifts into an "operational independence" of image and phantasy from the logos of philosophy (649) and, same thing, a restriction of image-consciousness to the merely intuitive (667); and Rilke (after Cézanne), despite his perception of the "saturation" and "epiphanic" character of experience, is profoundly restricted by a "resignation" to the fragmentary and strictly "qualified" nature of our experience of being's splendor (691, 723). Pfau is, in the end, willing to resign himself (and all of us) to this incompleteness out of fidelity, first, to our historicity and

3. See the last three pages of the chapter, where Pfau discusses the "shadow side of apophaticism" that burst forth in Hopkins's late dark sonnets.

mortality, as well as, perhaps, to the *hope* for what lies, in the last analysis, beyond our control.[4] His final word in this volume speaks directly to us and indirectly gestures toward an unsaid other horizon: “For those taking themselves to inhabit a terminally postmetaphysical age, Rilke’s qualified retention of image and vision may well prove the only way to carry on without relinquishing art (and by extension, hope), or, conversely, acquiescing in art’s instrumentalization and consequent trivialization for political ends” (723).

The first part (“Image Theory as Metaphysics and Theology: The Emergence of a Tradition”), focused on major aspects of the Western tradition from Plato to Nicholas of Cusa, establishes the rich historical backdrop that contextualizes the mottled and incomplete modern program of image rehabilitation undertaken in the second part and becomes the aesthetic measure by which the reader can assess its progress. Chapter 1 first shows how Plato, beyond the *Republic*, articulates a theory of the cosmos with image at the center, perceiving the visible in its essential connection to the higher, invisible cosmos of intelligible, divine reality. It then shows how Plato’s late rehabilitation of perceptual experience forms the living core of Plotinus’s thought (100–26). The following chapters, 2–4, investigate the Christian tradition’s expansive development of the image as participatory analog of the divine archetype born out of fidelity to the Incarnation of God that redounds all the more loudly onto Plato’s original intuition than was possible in Plotinus, transplanting it (so to speak) into new soil, and new flourishing. The second chapter (“Theology and Philosophy of the Byzantine Icon”) argues that in this tradition, as already partially seen in Plato and Plotinus, the image becomes the *necessary medium*, *sine qua non*, for the appearing of transcendence to the embodied intellect. In the third chapter, the “eschatological implications” (219) that

4. Hope, I would like to say, is a fundamentally important word in this book, as it is for Plato’s Socrates (see, e.g., *Phaedo* 114c) and for Christian faith.

structure the relation of archetype and image are considered as they are articulated in the thought of Augustine, Bonaventure, and Lady Julian of Norwich. Since modernity may be understood as suffering an "eschatological void" (303) through the loss of a Christian *mythos*—partially enacted by means of its growing "self-assertive" refusal of a "last word" to which we are subject—this chapter could be the most important in the volume.[5] For the silence that speaks the loudest, at least to me, through the second half of the text is the peculiar eschatological vision of Christianity, for which "temporal," "perceptual," "finite," and "material" constraints endemic to its "specific image concept" imbue "the productions of time" with ultimate, "teleological significance," making the world through which we see (and ourselves in our seeing) *perceivable in our fullest truth* as being on the threshold of eternity (222). Of course, this "significance" is first and fully expressed, in the raw data (so to speak) of revelation, in Scripture's image-laden narrative terms: the universal apocalyptic ambition of God to bring about, through collaboration with his privileged creature-partner, humanity, a total renewal of creation. Of this, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the governing image. (See Pfau's second line of this chapter, 220–21). It may be that the work of aesthetic rehabilitation is, in the light of the end, an act of religious fidelity that itself only makes final sense in this mytho-eschatological vision of real plenitude that grounds it. (All of this shouts in silence through the second half of the book; see my final comments below.) Finally, as the telos of history is traditionally understood as consummate vision, the fourth chapter delineates Nicholas of Cusa's "mystical image" theory that nests matter in spirit, sensible visibility in intellectual visibility, and intellectual visibility in a paradoxically apophatic trans-visibility as a Neoplatonic hierarchy of progressive consummation that reconciles the

5. This sentence, of course, means to gesture to Blumenberg's conceptualization of modernity as *Selbstbehauptung* and Jean-Yves Lacoste's understanding of nihilism as the "impossibility of a last word."

distinction and unity of—though this is not explicitly explored in the chapter—an ultimately Trinitarian ontology.

It is important, of course, to read a book in the order the author has presented it. Here, the order is chronological, with the first half of the book representing ancient, or ancient-medieval (Plato to Cusa) eras, and the second half the modern era (or at least a piece of it, the "era of naturalism," from Goethe to Rilke, 397). If we were to imagine Pfau's switching these parts, with the modern first, we could comprehend, I think, something valuable, an essential element of Pfau's deeper argument. The halting advances of these modern lights could be extended by full-scale resourcing (I should like to say *ressourcing*) of the remarkably potent Christian-Neoplatonic mystical and eschatological philosophy-theology of the image. As it is given, however, the shape of the book puts the onus of assessment wholly on the reader. There is no conclusion, and unlike MM, no direct forecasting of a work to come that may continue the operation. This reminds me at least of the classically Platonic move made by Severinus Boethius in his *Consolation of Philosophy*, wherein, recall, Lady Philosophy's final monologue abruptly stops short—like looking up to see the sudden end of a path (or life)—urgently demanding of Boethius (and the reader, for Boethius is "everyman") the conversion, from within philosophy, into the wider milieu of religious immersion that places man at the edge of death and time before the living God who is, if no less than the principle of reason par excellence, also (thank God) infinitely more. For Pfau, like Boethius, this placing, or rather, *awakening to* this place, is perhaps the whole work of intellectual activity in its pursuit of the definitive truth about ourselves. Here, in the second half of IC, in the wake of early industrialism with Hopkins and of the First World War with Rilke, "the aesthetic and intellectual balancing act" that analogical vision requires to truly "invest visible phenomena with revelatory power" can be sustained, says Pfau, "only for so long" in imaginative writing

(640). In modernity there is, clearly, a high degree of ambivalence and shadow that Boethius in his time, in the virgin morning hours of the Christian era, did not have to wrestle with. I perceive, between the lines, a tragic hermeneutical impossibility that Pfau is asking the reader to face: the conditions of our thought are given by our historical place and time. And from within Western civilization as it now subsists (a "terminally postmetaphysical age"!), these conditions preclude anything but a partial, temporary, fragmented perception of the divine meaning—the truth—of things. Only a better and different configuration of the world's latent possibilities would permit us to see the truth of things more fully.

Historically, IC ends in the early twentieth century before the Second World War. It would seem that, if there were to be a subsequent volume in this sequence, Pfau would have to neutralize totally, at least in himself, the *Streit der Fakultäten*, and go full theology mode, studying the ways (for example) that the three "B"s of modern theology in the twentieth century, Barth, Balthasar, and Bulgakov—Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox, respectively—opened from out of the Romantic and phenomenological traditions especially an advancement of understanding that would permit at least the protological perception of the world as *creation*, the manifestation of divine glory, and, *precisely as such*, harboring a near-unfathomable secret within its striving for an elusive fullness that can perhaps be best thought of through the image of an ultimate nuptial embrace with God, which would, in the due course of its new, unleashed temporality reconciled with eternity, give birth to the "world without end."

Must I say that this book is essential reading? If nearly every page is a deep draught of invigoratingly cold water, the chapters are a polar plunge. And the entire work, if I may, is a swirling ride down a rushing winter river. Prosaically, IC is a work of wholly successful scholarly art of the highest order. The book is a significant intervention in our time and well

worth, in intellectual returns, any amount of time and effort the reader puts into it. Color images of icons, paintings, and sculpture pepper the book from end to end.

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Engaging the Church Fathers in Nineteenth-Century Catholicism: The Patristic Legacy of the Scuola Romana by Joseph Carola, SJ. Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2023. xiii + 518 pp. $69.99.

When John Henry Newman arrived in Rome in the 1840s—his second visit to the Eternal City, but his first as a Catholic—he was shocked and displeased to learn that Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas were out of favor in the capital of Christendom. Rather than uniformly neo-Thomist or neo-scholastic, the leading theologians in Rome preferred a kind of patristic eclecticism: "odds and ends—whatever seems to them best—like St. Clement's [of Alexandria] Stromata," according to one of Newman's contacts, a Jesuit at Propaganda Fide (202). Whatever tension and friction Newman felt with the Catholic theological establishment should therefore not be chalked up to the Englishman's lack of Thomistic training. It was due to the fact that Newman had not been trained as a dogmatic Catholic theologian at all.

As Joseph Carola notes in his groundbreaking new study *Engaging the Church Fathers in Nineteenth-Century Catholicism*, Newman's observations on the low standing of Aristotle and Aquinas "simply stupefy those who erroneously presume that Neo-scholasticism reigned in the Roman College" (202n227) in the mid-nineteenth century. Contemporary Catholics can nevertheless be excused for finding Newman's remarks "difficult to understand" (see, for example, Michael Walsh's comment, cited in ibid.). This presumption is based

on a powerfully ingrained myth of Thomist dominance that can be leveraged for either traditionalist or progressive ends. Carola's painstakingly detailed monograph explodes this myth, giving us something far more interesting and inspiring in its place.

The myth of a neo-scholastic dominance, stretching back far longer than Leo XIII's extensive efforts to impose Thomistic hegemony with the encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (1879), is a vague but persistent and powerful one. More traditional Catholics sometimes assume such a narrative and celebrate it. The era between the councils of Trent and Vatican II becomes the age of Suárez and Garrigou-Lagrange, in which the orthodoxy and clarity of Tridentine neo-scholasticism was challenged only by some hapless "isms" (Jansenism, Gallicanism, Quietism, etc.) destined for anathema. This feeds the narrative that the twentieth-century *nouvelle théologie* and ressourcement projects—inseparable as they are with the texts and event of the Second Vatican Council—mark a break or rupture with centuries of (orthodox) Catholic uniformity and stability.

Equal and opposite reactions are all too common in contemporary Catholicism. Catholics who are enthusiastic about Vatican II often buy into a nearly identical narrative about the past, though with the value judgments reversed. In this understanding, an arid (dare I say "rigid") and extrabiblical neo-scholasticism reigned from the Counter-Reformation until the light of *aggiornamento* brought the Scriptures and the Fathers back. Commonly repeated fictions, such as the myth that Aquinas's *Summa* was placed on the altar next to the Gospels before sessions of the Council of Trent, implicitly support both versions of this false narrative. General theological ignorance (or apathy) regarding the period from roughly Cardinal Bellarmine's death (1621) to Newman's conversion (1845) or Vatican I (1870) is no help either.

Thankfully, some excellent recent English-language studies have contributed to disabusing us of this myth, like Valfredo Maria Rossi's *Carlo Passaglia on Church and Virgin* (2020), which elucidates the eclectic patristic methodology

of arguably the greatest nineteenth-century Italian theologian. In *Engaging the Church Fathers in Nineteenth-Century Catholicism*, the American Jesuit Joseph Carola, a colleague of Rossi at the Gregorian University in Rome, has authored a comprehensive study of seven of the most significant nineteenth-century Catholic theologians. The Italians and Germans of the "Roman School" are at the center, and Carola's explication of their loosely shared theological method and approach to contemporary problems is the meat of this hefty tome.

Carola begins with a fascinating introduction that could serve as a stand-alone text for orienting readers to the *Scuola Romana* and the historiography regarding these great thinkers and their methodology. Included is a sophisticated discussion "Identifying the Nineteenth Century" as an epoch to be thematized and studied. Carola is clearly at ease with the painstaking work of reading, digesting, synthesizing, and explaining lengthy tomes in Latin, German, and Italian. True to the best intellectual tradition of his Society, however, Carola peppers the text with references to literature, art, culture, and history. It gives great color to a potentially sluggish academic journey to pause and reflect on the window into the nineteenth century provided by the literature of Dostoevsky, or the efforts of Garibaldi (citing Hobsbawm on p. 12: "that frustrated Fidel Castro of the mid-nineteenth century"), or the completion of the neo-Gothic wonder in Cologne. We accompany Carola on a journey that requires serious heavy lifting in historical theology, but a humanity and personality emerges from the pages. We even learn, in the epilogue, of the late and hapless deep fryer in the Gregorian University's kitchens, whose conflagration nearly consumed this book in manuscript.

Carola's seven chapters are organized around seven Catholic theologians of the nineteenth century. The first two figures, Johann Adam Möhler (1796–1838) and Newman (1801–1890), have been recognized by many as forerunners of the Second Vatican Council. Neither Möhler nor Newman was a member

of the Roman School, but they are central to any account of that School's origins and importance (respectively). Following Walter Kasper and Yves Congar, Carola sees Möhler as a kind of theological founding father for the Roman School. While the seven theologians are considered roughly chronologically, the web of intellectual relationships and friendships provides a rough roadmap for the book's structure. Citing Congar, "Möhler genuit [begot] Passaglia; Passaglia genuit Schrader; Passaglia et Schrader genuerunt Scheeben et Franzelin."

The importance of Möhler and his confreres in the Tübingen School for nineteenth-century Catholic theological scholarship and for ecclesiology as a distinct and enriching discipline is well known. The place of Newman in this ecclesial and intellectual galaxy, however, is often misunderstood. Along with the recent work of C. Michael Shea, Carola's study helps us correct the record on the now-saint, who may become the first English-speaking Doctor of the Church. Contra the eminent Owen Chadwick, Newman was not an inexplicable meteor, decades ahead of his time, whose theological genius and idiosyncrasy were simply bewildering to his contemporaries. Newman certainly was a genius, and a highly original thinker. But studying Newman in the context of his peers (especially in Rome) allows us to place his contributions within a tapestry of voices around the Catholic world, all trying to work out the same problems, albeit in different contexts. This contextualization of Newman, in my view, makes him *more* important for the history and progress of Catholic theology, not less.

One of many possible examples: the Roman School theologians (along with Möhler and Drey in Tübingen) were aware that theories of doctrinal development were necessary responses to the *fact* that Catholicism had changed over the centuries—and in some ways dramatically. The Roman School theologians, along with Newman, took seriously the growth in historical consciousness, the desires of an increasingly bold papal magisterium, and the demands of an apologetic

rear-guard action against Protestants and secularists outside the Church and the harried remnants of Gallicanism and Jansenism within. One could also consider the rich discussions of *consensus* in the Church, whether among the present body of the faithful, or in the past among the Church Fathers. Likewise, the problem of patristic silence on certain Catholic doctrines up to a particular century (e.g., the Immaculate Conception and papal infallibility) pushed Newman and the Roman School to employ the Vincentian Canon *negatively* rather than *positively* (as did the Anglican Oxford Movement). That is, testing whether a belief was held "everywhere, always, and by all" could disqualify an idea as heretical, but explicit patristic testimony was not necessarily *required* to establish a belief as dogmatic. The consequent void could be filled not just by a theory of development but by concrete liturgical, devotional, and archaeological evidence.

The following chapters thoroughly explicate the thought of five major Roman School figures on these and many other questions and problems: Giovanni Perrone, SJ (1794–1876), Carlo Passaglia (1812–1887), Clemens Schrader, SJ (1820–1875), Johann Baptist Franzelin, SJ (1816–1886), and Matthias Scheeben (1835–1888). The biographical sketches that begin each chapter were, at least for this reviewer, some of the most interesting and important material in the book. The major works of each author are summarized, analyzed, and put in conversation with one another and with the issues and context of the day. This is a great benefit not just to scholars but to educators. These Latin and Italian texts are, for the most part, not translated into English. Students without these languages can now delve into some of the most important theological and ecclesiastical texts in the era of the proclamation of the Immaculate Conception, the *Risorgimento*, the *Syllabus of Errors*, and the First Vatican Council.

A text of such length is bound to produce some minor quibbles. Carola routinely uses the term "hermeneutic of

continuity" to describe the theological concerns and projects of his protagonists (with "hermeneutic of discontinuity" as a negative foil). There is an important point being conveyed here, as all of these authors are deeply concerned with the fidelity of the contemporary Church with the past, especially the patristic and apostolic ages and the great *monumenta* of the faith. But this explicitly postconciliar language, which is often employed polemically today, does not seem to be ideal in a study like Carola's (likewise with his use of "culture of death"). The issues and questions involved sweep across centuries and are just too complicated for this kind of slogan. As Carola's study in fact beautifully illuminates, development includes continuity *and* discontinuity, and sometimes a position that might look to zealous believers at the time like betrayal and lukewarmness (such as Passaglia's opposition to the papal temporal power, for which he paid dearly), turns out in light of future developments to appear prophetic.

Engaging the Church Fathers in Nineteenth-Century Catholicism is an impressive and important achievement. It is challenging and assumes a good deal of prior knowledge but would not be above the head of motivated seminarians and undergraduates, or lay readers who have some background in historical or systematic theology. Scholars and graduate students should consult *Engaging the Church Fathers* as a launching point into the study of any of the above-named figures and their extensive (and largely untranslated) bodies of work. I will certainly be using selections in courses I teach in order to illuminate such diverse topics and figures as Passaglia, Newman, Scheeben, Vatican I, ecclesiology, Mariology (especially the proclamation of the Immaculate Conception), the history of dogma, patristic scholarship, the *sensus fidelium*, and the challenges (and promises) of historical consciousness and historical criticism. A happy problem I had while reading this book was determining which chapter to select for a session on the nineteenth century for my ecclesiology students

next semester: from Möhler (chapter 1) to Scheeben (chapter 7), I kept thinking I had definitively found the right one, only to convince myself that, no, this next chapter was even richer and more thought-provoking than the last.

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The Splendor of the Church in Mary: Henri de Lubac, Vatican II, and Marian Ressourcement by Sr. Theresa Marie Chau Nguyen, OP. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2023. xxii + 246 pp. $75.00.

In a subtle riposte to Jacques Maritain, Henri de Lubac once noted the importance of uniting things in order to properly distinguish them.[6] Although precision is a virtue in theology, and confusion a vice, *isolating* the subject of one's inquiry invites its own errors. This has long been a danger for Catholic Mariology in particular—namely, the tendency to focus on what makes our Blessed Mother unique and to disregard what unites her with the rest of us in the Body of Christ. Such a tendency not only limits our sense of Mary's significance (what, after all, could we possibly have in common with the Immaculate Conception?); it can just as easily distort our understanding of the Church she is meant to exemplify. As Sr. Theresa Marie Chau Nguyen, OP, shows in her excellent study *The Splendor of the Church in Mary: Henri de Lubac, Vatican II, and Marian Ressourcement*, certain fathers of the Second Vatican Council foresaw this danger. And in *Lumen Gentium*, they took steps to ensure that the council's teaching on Mary remains bound up with its teaching on the Church.

6. Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, trans. Lancelot Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1947), 328.

Yet Nguyen's main point is that this outcome would have been inconceivable apart from de Lubac's ressourcement in the decades before the council.

The book developed out of Nguyen's doctoral dissertation at the Catholic University of America under Paul McPartlan, and as she explains in the introduction, the occasion for her study is the puzzling fact that Mary's centrality in the teaching of *Lumen Gentium* is poorly represented in subsequent Catholic ecclesiology. Nguyen's thesis, then, is that de Lubac's arguments about Mary and the Church provide us with a "compass" to navigate the "ideological forests" of postconciliar thinking (xv–xvi). The introduction briefly summarizes the history of Marian devotion, ressourcement movements in the twentieth century, and de Lubac's contributions to them. It also describes the book's aims: (1) to explain de Lubac's account of the Church's Marian dimension; (2) to justify her choice of de Lubac as a guide for receiving the council's teaching; and (3) to utilize de Lubac's Marian insights to resolve some of the thorniest questions in contemporary ecclesiology.

Part 1 is devoted to Nguyen's first aim, and she certainly achieves it. Chapter 1 summarizes the major themes and highlights of de Lubac's scholarly career, with which many readers are likely to be familiar (e.g., his influence on the "Fourvière school," the breakthrough of *Catholicisme*, the *Surnaturel* controversy, his rehabilitation, etc.). Nguyen enriches this summary by drawing our attention to the often-subtle Marian aspects of his writings. Chapter 2 carries this analysis further by focusing on the final chapter of de Lubac's *Méditation sur l'Église* (1953), his most direct discussion of Mariology. Here, we find de Lubac's recovery of two patristic themes: the motherhood and virginity (or bridal purity) of the Church. His point, as Nguyen shows, is not that these descriptions of the Church establish a metaphorical parallel with Mary. They reveal instead an "ontological bond," in virtue of which Mary's motherhood is "extended" in the Church and the Church in turn finds its personification in her (44–46). De Lubac thus offers a corrective to those who insist on isolating Mariology

from ecclesiology. For him, Marian affirmations remain unintelligible apart from affirmations about the Church (and vice-versa): "Our Lady is the individual member of the Church who contains, in seed, the perfection of the whole Body which is the Church" (50).

In chapters 3 and 4, Nguyen turns her attention to the sources of de Lubac's Mariological convictions. Chapter 3 focuses on the link between Mary and the Church in de Lubac's treatment of scriptural exegesis, especially the Song of Songs. She traces the history of patristic and medieval interpretations that de Lubac draws upon in *Méditation sur l'Église*, noting where and when a Marian exegesis of the Song emerges in the tradition. Though rare among exegetes today, this interpretation seems to have furnished de Lubac with the "first among [his] privileged explanations" (76) of the Church's "Marian form" (71). Likewise, de Lubac here finds warrant for seeing Mary as the fulfillment of Scripture's anagogical sense: in what God has already accomplished in her, both the Church and the individual Christian find the "rhythm" and "orientation" of their own destiny. Nguyen shows that the prospect of isolating Mary from the Church would never have occurred to the exegetes in this tradition.

Chapter 4 examines how de Lubac reinforced this perspective with insights from some of his contemporaries; principally, Teilhard de Chardin and Jules Monchanin. Both help de Lubac address an apparent problem: How can we conceive of Mary as a universal "type" of the Church without betraying her historical particularity? Here, Teilhard's notion of the "concrete universal," which he takes from Maurice Blondel, does most of the explanatory work. For de Lubac, applying this notion to Mary allows her to remain a "concrete being," with a personal and historical character (99–100), but because, according to Teilhard, what is most personal is what unites one most intimately with others, Mary's "created personhood" can be "universalized" as the "perfect model" of the Church, without compromising her particularity (89). Nguyen then notes how de Lubac further clarifies this notion by contrasting it with

depictions of Kannon (Kuan-yin), a Mary-like figure, in his writings on Amida Buddhism.

In part 2, Nguyen addresses the second of the book's aims and turns her attention to developments during and after the Second Vatican Council. In chapter 5, she does readers an immense service by providing a thorough account of the Marian debates between the council fathers—the details of which have remained, for the most part, "siloed in postconciliar theology" (111). Nguyen explains how and why various bishops and *periti* came to favor either a "Christotypical" approach (emphasizing Mary's unique status apart from the Church) or an "ecclesiotypical" approach (emphasizing her essential relationship with the Church). She explains particularly well the rationale of those who, like de Lubac, deemed it necessary to address the council's Marian teaching within its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. Here, however, the extent of de Lubac's influence is difficult to assess. Back in chapter 1, Nguyen stated that it is "evident" and "quite certain" that de Lubac "exerted a significant influence on the development of [*Lumen Gentium*]" (32–33), citing Karl Neufeld's judgment that the council fathers were inspired by de Lubac's *Méditation sur l'Église*. These strong claims clash somewhat with the fact that, even in his work on the Preparatory Theological Commission, de Lubac had no direct involvement in the conciliar debates. And despite structural similarities between *Méditation* and the Dogmatic Constitution, there is little evidence that representatives of the "ecclesiotypical" approach drew their inspiration directly from the concluding chapter of de Lubac's book. Nguyen's more qualified descriptions here in chapter 5—that his views are "reflected in" and "resonate with" the conciliar teaching—appear to be more measured.

Chapter 6 then traces the fate of the council's teaching in the postconciliar period. Here, Nguyen makes good on her aim of showing de Lubac's importance for the council's reception. She argues persuasively that the apparent collapse of Mariology and Marian devotion in the decade following the council did not signal a genuine disregard for Mary's importance. It

stemmed rather from a "purging" of the "artifice and excesses" (139) in the preconciliar Marian movement and the gradual rediscovery of Mary's proper place within the concrete life of the Church. Within ecclesiology, however, this rediscovery was slow to catch on, and Mary's centrality was too often ignored. This is where de Lubac proves to be a reliable guide: because he argues that the Church's sacramental character is only intelligible in light of Mary's mediation, he provides an "interpretive key" (142) for understanding why the Marian question is not a mere addendum but belongs within the ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* as its culmination (148–49). So, too, should we regard it as the culmination of any ecclesiology faithful to the council.

Finally, in chapters 7 and 8, Nguyen addresses her third and final aim: How can de Lubac's Marian perspective resolve the ecclesiological disputes we face today? Chapter 7 examines a question that emerges from the reforms of Vatican II: what is the proper relationship between the universal Church and particular churches? Nguyen's contention is that competing perspectives on this question—represented by the famous debate between Joseph Ratzinger and Walter Kasper—are harmonized *avant la lettre* in de Lubac's reflections on Mary. In other words, Mary exemplifies the communion between the local and universal churches (181). Just as Mary unites particularity and universality as a "concrete universal," so too does the Jerusalem Church at Pentecost assume "the dimension of a universal" as Christianity grew to incorporate other communities (180). Chapter 8 then addresses the question of the personhood or subjectivity of the Body of Christ. Put another way, how should we understand the unique personal relation to God that one inhabits as a member of the Church? A number of twentieth-century theologians describe this ecclesial personhood as "spousal," and therefore Marian in nature. Yet for Nguyen, de Lubac's approach helps explain *how and why* Mary is more than an ideal analogue for the individual Christian. Her "universalized personality" (197) "informs the

subjectivity of the Church": all Christians share—in virtue of *being* Christian—in her receptivity of grace and holiness (204).

Overall, *The Splendor of the Church in Mary* is a lucid and compelling work of Catholic theology. It makes a much-needed contribution to the scholarly niche devoted to understanding de Lubac's legacy: it is the most erudite and comprehensive study of his views on Mary that I have read. It will also prove to be an indispensable resource for those seeking to understand the Marian debates of Vatican II. But more than this, as Nguyen's closing coda shows (206–13), her book has the potential to enrich the Church's thinking about a host of questions in dire need of fresh solutions (ecclesial reform, ecumenical dialogue, the role of women in the Church, etc.). In this regard, Nguyen's work showcases the best of what the ressourcement theologians have to teach us: that the wisdom of our forebears in the faith remains a vital resource for overcoming the greatest challenges to the Church in our age.

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The Liturgical Cosmos: The World Through the Lens of the Liturgy by David W. Fagerberg. Steubenville, OH, Emmaus Academic, 2023. xi + 263 pp. $34.95.

A book written by David Fagerberg is always a miniature course in liturgical theology. The Desert Father Evagrius famously reminds us that "a theologian is one who prays, and one who prays is a theologian." Fagerberg has adapted the saying of Evagrius with his assertion that a liturgist is one who worships, and one who worships is a liturgist. In the classroom and through his writings, Fagerberg invites his students and readers to become liturgists by entering into liturgical theology and viewing the world *through* the liturgy.

The preposition "through" is one of the interpretive keys to unlock the thesis of Fagerberg's most recent collection of essays, *The Liturgical Cosmos*. Throughout his oeuvre, one encounters the proposition of our need to go beyond looking "at" the liturgy in an upper-level undergraduate or graduate theology course on the liturgy. If we want to progress toward a deeper understanding of the divine economy of salvation, Fagerberg demonstrates that we must look at the world "through" the liturgy. The raison d'etre of liturgical theology goes beyond merely understanding "the massive reality that undergirds our ceremonies and services, which turns out to be the same reality that beckons us to deification and refreshes our world. This reality is beyond our rational comprehension and requires an experiential knowledge that is characteristic of liturgical theology" (xii). The present collection of essays represents a kaleidoscope that brings together the themes that he has developed as a fruit of his contemplation of engaging the world through the lens of the sacred liturgy.

From his time as a doctoral student to his present life as a professor emeritus at the University of Notre Dame, Fagerberg offers five discoveries that serve as a foundation upon which to appreciate his work. First, he provides a "thicker" definition of the liturgy, which begins with the Blessed Trinity and ends in our deification: "*Liturgy is the perichoresis of the Trinity kenotically extended to invite our synergist ascent into deification*" (xv). The primacy of the liturgy as the *opus Dei* is renewed by Fagerberg as essential for the liturgy to serve as the *lex orandi* that establishes the *lex credendi*. Second, drawing upon the wisdom of Eastern Orthodoxy, Fagerberg underscores asceticism as an essential part of theology and a prerequisite for participating fruitfully in *leitourgia*. Third, the liturgy properly understood does not take us away from the world; it helps us to see the world as it was intended to be when created and amplifies our need to consecrate the world back to God: "Liturgical theology does not look only at the ritual, it looks through liturgy to the reality in and behind the ritual, the reality caused by the ritual, the reality we celebrate ritually

and live regularly" (xviii). Fourth, the journey of asceticism culminates in liturgical mysticism, which Fagerberg defines as "the Trinitarian mystery mediated by sacramental liturgy and hypostasized as personal liturgy" (xviii).

The final thickening element that Fagerberg underscores is the notion that dogma (*lex credendi*) can be examined and understood in light of the liturgy (*lex orandi)*. Fagerberg calls this fifth capstone "liturgical dogmatics," which is derived from his primary assertion that the liturgy is the *theologia prima*. In Fagerberg's view, "the primacy of liturgical theology means that we derive doctrine and dogma, piety and ethics, from the life of the Church at liturgy, not from out of our own scholarly heads" (182–183). These five insights outlined above represent Fagerberg's key works: *Theologia Prima: What is Liturgical Theology?* (2004), *On Liturgical Asceticism* (2013), *Consecrating the World: On Mundane Liturgical Theology* (2016), *Liturgical Mysticism* (2019), and *Liturgical Dogmatics: How Catholic Beliefs Flow from Liturgical Prayer* (2021). *Liturgical Cosmos* could be read either as an introduction to Fagerberg's work or as a summary of all of his insights into liturgical theology.

As with all of his works, Fagerberg is able to draw upon an array of sources from the early monastic and patristic era: Evagrius, John Climacus, Maximus the Confessor, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and Irenaeus. His comfort with both the Western and Eastern tradition explains the ease with which he engages modern Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox theologians: Joseph Ratzinger, Paul Evdokimov, Louis Bouyer, Yves Congar, Vladimir Solovyov, Henri de Lubac, H. Tristram Engelhardt, Karl Rahner, and Alexander Schmemann. The greatest strength in this work and all of Fagerberg's work is his ability to bring together theology, the spiritual life, the moral life, and the celebration of the liturgy (the *theologia prima*) based on his engagement with writers from both the East and the West.

There are so many spiritual and theological insights within all of Fagerberg's works. One of the most salient points

is his desire that all Christians become liturgists through their participation in the Pasch of Christ: "To be a liturgist, one must have died, be dead, and be constantly dying to this world. The eschatological liturgy that will save the world comes to the world from without, because nothing within this dead world can give the Body of Christ its life" (104). This is what it means to see the world *through* the liturgy. Authentic participation in the liturgy compels the faithful disciple (a true liturgist) to engage the world with a mission-driven faith, hope, and charity. The Church is called to be an icon of Christ's love, which can be a source of transformation for the world whereby "knowledge turns into love, grace turns into works, self overcomes self to become *caritas*, doctrine yields mysticism, the passions become a merciful heart, hope is hypostasized as faith, and love is hypostasized as mercy" (220). As with all of his works, Fagerberg is able to reveal masterfully the path of the liturgy, which begins with the love of the Trinity, and show how it can reach its end in the deification of the person willing to enter into the liturgy via the life of ascesis and mysticism.

The weakness of Fagerberg's work is highlighted by Fagerberg himself: it tends to be repetitive, and it is at times difficult to distinguish between the thought of Fagerberg and the various authors whom he quotes directly or alludes to in the course of his writing (xx–xxi). The work also lacks an index, which would be helpful for a reader who wants to engage Fagerberg's work or his sources at a more critical level. Fagerberg would perhaps argue that these are strengths of his work as he tries to lead his readers away from academic liturgical theology into the lived experience of the liturgy itself. In my view, this book belongs in every introductory course to liturgical theology at the undergraduate and graduate level. The book should be read, contemplated, and discussed in Eastern Orthodox and Catholic seminaries. Fagerberg's work should be read alongside the works of such luminaries as Joseph Ratzinger, Jean Corbon, and Alexander Schmemann.

Fagerberg's *The Liturgical Cosmos* is not a book to read to look at the development of the liturgy. However, it is one of *the*

books to read in order to understand how to look at the Church and the world *through* the Christological and eschatological lens of the sacred liturgy. Fagerberg, as a faithful student of his mentor Aidan Kavanaugh, has demonstrated that the liturgy is "*doing the world with the correct hypothesis*" (262). The hypothesis has been revealed by God, and Fagerberg masterfully highlights how we have been made adopted sons and daughters of God through the Holy Spirit in order to celebrate and live the liturgy each and every day until God becomes "all in all" (1 Cor 15:28).

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