

Book Reviews

The Spirit of Celibacy by Johann Adam Möhler, translated by Cyprian Blamires, edited by Dieter Hattrup and Emery de Gaal (*Chicago: Hillenbrandbooks, 2007*), xxviii + 166 pp.

BETTER KNOWN for his 1825 *Unity in the Church* and his 1832 *Symbolics*, Johann Adam Möhler (1796–1838) has long been regarded as one of the most important Catholic theologians in the nineteenth century. With this largely forgotten text, translated into English for the first time, those interested in Möhler will have a resource that gives them a richer picture of the theology and ecclesiology of perhaps the greatest theologian of the Tübingen School.

Without understanding the wider context of *The Spirit of Celibacy* one easily misreads it. The first third of the nineteenth century was tranquil neither for the German people nor for the Catholic Church. Napoleonic invasions and the subsequent agreements between Church and state truncated the rights of Catholics in places like Württemberg. Möhler's 1825 *Unity* placed him squarely outside both the Gallican and the scholastic camp. His position gained him the suspicion of Cologne's archbishop, which ended up costing him a coveted appointment in Bonn. Several Tübingen colleagues, whom Rome had desired to serve as bishops, were vetoed by local governments for being "too Roman." By 1828, Möhler, whose attitude had been more geared toward *aggiornamento*, foresaw a looming crisis between the Church and a culture increasingly unwilling to think within the framework of Christian categories. In this light one must read Möhler's vociferous defense of celibacy.

The *Denkschrift* to which Möhler responded was a poorly argued call for the abolition of mandatory celibacy issued by a group of professors in nearby Freiburg. Möhler's response consisted of a two-part article that he published in the ultramontane *Der Katholik* out of Mainz. The choice of publication led to intrigue, for almost every other article by Möhler appeared in the *theologische Quartalschrift*, the literary organ of the Catholic faculty in Tübingen. Möhler's motives are unknown, but noted

Tübingen scholar Rudolf Reinhardt has seized on this fact as central to his argument that Möhler quite deliberately sought to shove the faculty in a conservative, Roman direction. The editors of *The Spirit of Celibacy* certainly read Möhler as a champion of all things Roman.

After an introduction decrying the lack of faith exhibited by his opponents, Möhler treats both the New Testament (the evangelical council of Matthew 19:12 and Paul's exaltation of celibacy in 1 Corinthians 7) and early Church teachings on celibacy and priesthood. What most irks Möhler are the factual errors and hermeneutical bludgeoning routinely employed by his opponents, who fail to see the theological importance of celibacy both for biblical and early Christianity.

Möhler points to evidence of mandatory celibacy in the earlier religious expression in India, Greece, and "even in the deepest Germanic North" (33). Möhler lays it on a bit thick when he writes, "The seeds of a celibate priesthood clearly go back to pre-heathen days and belong to a time when feelings were purer, views clearer, and generally the heart was more open to the acceptance of the divine" (34). The Jewish prohibition of priestly intercourse around the time of sacrifice demonstrates a theology that sees holiness as involving a separation from certain elements of worldliness. Möhler then argues that Christianity deftly steered between the Gnostics, who forbade all sexuality, and a line of thought that saw no value in the eschatological witness of virginity.

Against his opponents, who consistently betray an ignorance of early Christian texts, Möhler demonstrates clearly that the early Christian Church, while not forbidding married clergy, called for celibate priests to remain so, and for married clergy to abstain from intercourse with their wives. It was only when the Roman Empire "succumbed to the invasions of the uncouth Nordic tribes" that celibacy was abandoned by large numbers of priests until the Gregorian reforms in the eleventh century.

The final chapter on the theology of the priesthood (66–96) contains both the most essentially "Möhlerian" sections of the text and the most illuminating arguments. Ever the Romantic, Möhler stresses the spiritual fatherhood that Catholic priests, unlike Protestant pastors, exercise over their flock. Möhler also faces down arguments that celibacy discourages the most talented from entering, in this case the aristocracy. Möhler is happy to let them go, for "only a small number of such persons would actually devote themselves to the service of the Church" (74) and "most of the families of the ruling classes live lives that are too unspiritual, lives given over to externals and appearances" (75). The same willingness to accept a "remnant" Church that has characterized some of Pope Benedict's prophetic statements animates Möhler's argument as well.

Most compelling of all is the political argument with which he concludes the essay. Möhler states, "Celibacy does of course provide unmistakable evidence of the non-unity of Church and State" (86). Although he assures the reader of his approval of peaceful relations between throne and altar, Möhler points out that a celibate clergy remains a politically dangerous entity because it points to the other-worldly. Moreover, because of the freedom of the celibate, he alone, and not his family, is subject to the violence of the state, and thus less cowed by it. Möhler predicts the problem of a clergy too closely entangled with the state and bemoans Protestantism's tendency to "wholly agree with the states in which they have become predominant" (91). Behind the *Denkschrift's* argument, says Möhler, is the Gallican desire "to make the Church more dependent on the state and to diminish the influence of the Pope" (93). This deserves highlighting, not only because it sheds light on the context of Möhler's polemics, but also because it shows how a fidelity to Rome provided the most reliable basis for maintaining critical distance from the state.

Here we turn our attention to the substance of Möhler's argument to the translation and apparatus. Blamires' translation captures both the spirit and the letter of Möhler's text. He follows the 1992 German edition by Hatstrup. As a translation, it exceeds in fluidity the recent effort by Peter Erb (*Unity*) and in accuracy the nineteenth-century work of James Robinson (*Symbolics*). This makes all the more lamentable the inclusion of Hatstrup's afterword from the 1992 German edition.

In response to a heated text from an earlier time, a measured editorial assessment is usually in order. Instead Hatstrup, forgetting Möhler's qualified debt to the Enlightenment, as well as any sense of proportion, compares its moral fabric to that of National Socialism (107). Hatstrup groups the Tübingen professors who, in the 1992 issue of the *Quartalschrift*, revisited the question of mandatory celibacy, with "the Blood and Soil ideologists of 1938" (108). Hatstrup's Möhler is the ideal priest and theologian, but among his teachers there was "contempt for everything spiritual and Catholic" (113). Perhaps Hatstrup would be surprised to learn that Möhler's colleagues and students complained that he so infrequently celebrated mass. Hatstrup, for all of his claims to orthodoxy, has an essentially Manichean view in which the forces of light and darkness are opposed diametrically. Thus any disagreement concerning the current rule, which not even Möhler sees as a necessity, must stem from an absence of faith or an embrace of an anti-Christian worldview. It is to the detriment for those who laud Möhler that this most recent translation is appended by vitriol so at odds with Möhler's moving tribute to love in *Unity in the Church*.

What, then, of the question of celibacy? Catholic arguments about a celibate priesthood must begin with the claim that celibacy and virginity have a necessary role in the Church as disciplines that witness to an eschatological hope. Especially in a crudely materialistic culture, celibacy is an urgent witness to the reality that the Christian kingdom is not of this world. The Gregorian reforms did not eradicate a millennium of happily married clergy for reasons related only to material concerns about property (as is commonly told), but sought to correct and recover a deeper patristic and biblical understanding of the connection between priesthood and asceticism. Despite all of these truths, it remains the case now more than ever that the charism of celibacy, which is supposed to function as a witness, increasingly is viewed as part of a package deal for those called to priesthood. Moreover, the empirical fact that so many priests fail to remain chaste or celibate, while most immediately caused by insufficient discipline and prayer, remains seared in the consciousness of believer and non-believer alike.

Should the Catholic Church, then, consider whether optional celibacy for diocesan priests, as practiced in the Eastern Rite, might more visibly demonstrate the eschatological witness of the call to celibacy? Would not a clearer demonstration that celibacy is freely chosen provide a greater witness to a culture increasingly adrift from the saving faith of Christ? This reviewer does not see how raising such a question demonstrates a lack of love for the Church or faith in the gospel. Although *The Spirit of Celibacy* does not get to the root of the question, it remains a valuable resource for those interested in a deeper understanding of celibacy. In addition, it gives readers another resource for understanding nineteenth-century German Catholicism and perhaps that century's greatest theologian. N V

Grant Kaplan

Saint Louis University

Saint Louis, Missouri

History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture according to Origen by Henri de Lubac, translated by Anne Englund Nash with Greek and Latin translation by Juvenal Merriell of the Oratory (*San Francisco: Ignatius, 2007*), 507 pp. (French original: *Histoire et esprit: L'Intelligence de l'Écriture d'après Origène* [Paris: Éditions Mouton, 1950].)

WHEN THIS BOOK was first published in 1950, it received an extended review by the Catholic Old Testament scholar John L. McKenzie, S.J.¹ McKenzie had sufficient intelligence to recognize that de Lubac, in this

¹ In *Theological Studies* 12 (1951): 365–81.

inductive study of Origen's exegesis based mostly on the homilies on the Hexateuch, had done more than any other writer to clarify Origen's terminology and practice. McKenzie went so far as to say that future discussions of Origen should take de Lubac's exposition of Origen as their point of departure. The present writer agrees that this is what *should* have happened, even though, in American Origen scholarship at least, it did not. In some circles, de Lubac was dismissed (along with Daniélou and Crouzel) as "Catholic apologists for Origen." To the present day, discussions of Origen's interpretation of Scripture still tend to focus on his theory (found in *Peri Archon*, book 4) rather than his practice. Therefore, the appearance of de Lubac's study in English translation is all the more welcome.

However, for all his recognition of the superiority of de Lubac's comprehensive and inductive study, McKenzie still objected to de Lubac's core proposal. For de Lubac had urged modern Catholic exegetes to remain faithful to the fundamental hermeneutical principles of Origen and of the Church Fathers in general, since Origen's spiritual exegesis is altogether inspired by the Christian mystery. McKenzie saw no point in this, since to him higher criticism of the Bible proved that the Christian principles, even though they were grounded in the New Testament's own interpretation of the Old Testament, were invalid. McKenzie therefore demurred at de Lubac's suggestion that modern scholars have something to learn from Origen's humility, and that they should even make a real effort to unite their modern "historical sense" to that profound "sense of history" which Origen's spiritual exegesis could draw from the text.

McKenzie himself had little sympathy for Origen's approach to interpretation and would remain an opponent of the recovery of patristic exegesis for the remaining four decades of his career. McKenzie was convinced that there was no intrinsic or organic connection between Origen's homiletical exegesis and the original meaning of the Bible. McKenzie eventually reached the position that the Old Testament was completely comprehensible on its own and did not need the New Testament as a key that unlocks its meaning. De Lubac's initial reviewer would later write: "There is no messianism in the New Testament which is derived from the Old Testament."² And further: "The Old Testament in no way predicts or leads one to expect the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth nor the saving act which the disciples of Jesus proclaimed as accomplished in him."³ It might be said that de Lubac's first English language reviewer was, or at least became, the anti-Origen. Whereas for

² J. L. McKenzie, *A Theology of the Old Testament* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1976), 278.

³ *Ibid.*, 279.

Origen every detail of the Old Testament bears a Christological meaning that the Spirit-filled interpreter might be capable of uncovering, if God deems him worthy, for McKenzie, on the other hand, the method of higher criticism has proven that there is not a single line in the Old Testament that points in any way toward the New Testament fulfillment. The Old Testament is a self-contained book that does not need light from elsewhere to illumine it. It is no wonder McKenzie was hostile to Origen's Christian reading of the Old Testament and to de Lubac's defense of it! McKenzie also dismissed St. Paul as an interpreter of the Old Testament.⁴

Thus McKenzie represents a mixed reception of de Lubac's work. On the positive side, even as a non-specialist, he was able to recognize the depth and competence of de Lubac's Origen scholarship. He agreed that de Lubac had succeeded in demonstrating that *Contra Celsum* and *Peri Archon* do not exhibit the principles of Origen's exegesis and, therefore, that the standard procedure contained in manuals for treating Origen's exegesis should be abandoned. But on the negative side, McKenzie's commitment to rationalistic historicism led him to reject categorically de Lubac's proposals for making Origen's spiritual exegesis relevant for the modern period. Eventually, McKenzie would come to repudiate the entire New Testament mode of interpreting the Old Testament. In my view it was somewhat unfortunate that the reception of (the French edition of) de Lubac's magisterial study of Origen in the English speaking world was largely determined by a review from a Catholic Old Testament scholar with rationalist and Marcionite tendencies.

In the fifty-seven years since the French edition of de Lubac's book appeared, McKenzie's objections to de Lubac have won the day in Catholic Old Testament scholarship, at least on the American scene. Today it is mainly Protestant scholars, led by Thomas Oden, who are now endeavoring to recover the patristic exegesis of the Bible.⁵ McKenzie's objections seem to have prevailed over his own recognition of the incomparable superiority of de Lubac's study over all other attempts to understand Origen's interpretive principles. In America, Origen studies fell heavily under the influence of Joseph Trigg, whose monograph on Origen reproduces the very positions exposed by de Lubac as bankrupt and devoid of any real familiarity with Origen's writings.⁶

⁴ For a study of McKenzie's own scholarship, see Guillermo V. Villegas, *The Old Testament as a Christian Book: A Study of Three Catholic Biblical Scholars: Pierre Grelot, John L. McKenzie, Luis Alonso Schökel* (Manilla: Divine Word Publications, 1988).

⁵ See the series *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (InterVarsity Press).

⁶ Trigg's main work is *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983). Henri Crouzel, in "The Literature on Origen

As one for whom Origen of Alexandria has been somewhat of a scholarly focus, I would judge the appearance of de Lubac's work in its first English translation as a happy and indeed epoch-making event. We should immediately recall that Hans Urs von Balthasar translated this work into German. I will identify what I regard as some of the great strengths of de Lubac's study.

First, he lays a foundation for understanding Origen by discussing how Jesus, St. Paul, St. John, and the author of Hebrews—that is to say, how the New Testament authors themselves—practice the interpretation of Scripture. These are the interpreters who directly inspired Origen's whole program. Too many modern students of Origen's "method" of exegesis skip over any consideration of the New Testament patterns of interpretation. The tendency is to try to depict Origen as a Hellenizer, as an imitator of Porphyry's Neo-Platonic allegorizing of Homer, or of Philo. While such influences are obviously present in Origen's writings, they are not fundamental. Modern scholars too often forget about St. Paul and the author of Hebrews. In Origen's eyes the author of Hebrews was the greatest exegete of all. By clarifying the New Testament patterns of interpretation, de Lubac embeds Origen in the New Testament itself and shows that Origen's spiritual exegesis is wholly Christian and wholly traditional (49). At the beginning of this work, de Lubac tells us that his inductive study of Origen's writings led him to see that the main principle of Origen's exegesis was not really a matter solely of exegesis. "It was a whole manner of thinking, a whole world view . . . a whole interpretation of Christianity of which Origen . . . was less the author than the witness" (11).

Secondly, in assessing secondary works on Origen, de Lubac shows that few scholars have had the patience to move beyond Origen's "theory" for exegesis, described in book 4 of *Peri Archon*, and to examine how Origen actually conducts his exegesis of Scripture. De Lubac recommends observing Origen "at work" in order to determine his exegetical principles. This does not seem too much to ask of an Origen scholar. De Lubac then proceeds to do this in breathtaking detail. De Lubac belonged to an older generation of Catholic theological scholarship in which translations were quite unnecessary, since Greek and Latin texts were completely at the scholars' fingertips. He shows how it came about that Origen's works *Peri Archon* and *Contra Celsum* have caused such serious misunderstandings of Origen's hermeneutics. The latter work contains *ad hominem* remarks by Origen where he argues that the

1970–1988," *Theological Studies* 49 (1988): 505, writes of Trigg's book: "His return to the systematic Origen of the beginning of this century and his inability to comprehend the spiritual and allegorical exegete seem anachronistic."

allegorization of the biblical narratives is no more unreasonable than the allegorization, or rationalization, of the Greek myths, which was fashionable in the erudite Greek world of his day. Many scholars have extrapolated from these remarks and wrongly concluded that Origen's exegetical principles were derived from Neo-Platonic allegorization of Homer. As we have already discussed above, de Lubac shows that, in spite of the widespread scholarly misunderstanding of Origen's *ad hominem* remarks here, these statements simply do not become principles which are found in Origen's exegesis (33–42). The same applies to Origen's theoretical hermeneutical principles found in *Peri Archon*, book 4.

De Lubac insists that scholars should observe Origen at work in his actual exegesis (as opposed to his theoretical discussions) to determine the principles of his hermeneutics. What makes the modern misapprehension of Origen on this point all the more tragic is that in the very book *Contra Celsum*, and in all his other works, Origen refuses to treat the Bible, or any part of it, like a Platonic myth. Origen's exegesis does not imperil, let alone reject, the primacy of the literal sense of the Bible. On the contrary, Origen defends historical Christianity against the attacks of Gnosticism, down to the very details concerning the dimensions of Noah's ark.⁷ In a word, de Lubac shows that in spite of the spontaneous reactions of many modern scholars, it must not be concluded from the fact that Origen allegorizes a story that he does not believe in the historicity of the literal account, which is perfectly compatible with the quest for a spiritual meaning. In this connection the present writer finds it difficult to disagree with de Lubac's repeated observation: Origen is rarely read.

Further, I have also learned from de Lubac not to fear the charge of "moralism" that is often leveled against Origen's theology. Protestant writers, beginning with Luther, have often made this charge.⁸ It is true that Origen's theology is constantly oriented toward morality, and that he does not cease to exhort his listeners to engage in spiritual combat against the devil, a combat that was initiated at baptism (212). Unlike Luther, Origen insists that Christian salvation is more than hiding oneself from God's wrath underneath the protective wings of Christ. But de Lubac reminds us that St. Paul's theology has precisely the same Origenian emphases, as the reader of 1 Corinthians can notice (209). In other words, Origen does not sever morality from religion, any more than St. Paul did. A general strength of de Lubac's patristic scholarship is the way he

⁷ Cf. Origen, *Hom in Gn* 2.1.

⁸ See my discussion of Luther and Melanchthon in chapter 6 of my book *Origen and the History of Justification: The Legacy of Origen's Commentary on Romans* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008).

combines an intensive knowledge of Scripture with his expertise in the writings of the Fathers.

Finally, de Lubac is one of the few scholars I have run across who has noticed that Origen's exegesis of St. Paul (his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*) differs from his Old Testament exegesis (the homilies on the Hexateuch).⁹ The latter are, of course, heavily allegorical, since Origen aims to bring out the Christian meaning of the letter of the Old Testament. The former, in contrast, aims primarily at the apprehension of the "letter" of Paul's argument, since Paul's doctrine in Romans is itself a theology (263). (McKenzie completely bypassed de Lubac's observation in this connection, which confirms my suspicion that the actual writings of Origen were a closed book to him.) Seldom do studies of patristic exegesis make valuable distinctions like this, between the allegorical interpretations of the Old Testament text and the more literal exposition of St. Paul's epistles. Yet such a distinction needs to be made. The implication is that the Pauline exegesis of the Fathers has the most to offer the modern exegete, with his almost exclusive interest in the literal level of meaning, since the Fathers tended to stay on this level in their interpretation of St. Paul. In spite of this reality, modern Catholic exegetes ignore the Pauline exegesis of the Fathers just as blatantly as they avoid their Old Testament exegesis. If they only knew what they were missing!¹⁰

The sixteenth century Catholic humanist Beatus Rhenanus once described Erasmus of Rotterdam in a letter to Ulrich Zwingli in these words: "It seems to me that [Pope] Leo X does not properly understand how great Erasmus is; he thinks perhaps that he is just one of us. Erasmus is not to be measured by common standards; he has risen far above the summit of human greatness."¹¹ Forgive me for saying it, but such a depiction describes my feelings for the patristic scholarship of Henri de Lubac. The

⁹ See Thomas P. Scheck, trans., *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2 volumes, Fathers of the Church, 103 and 104 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001–2).

¹⁰ Cf. Jeremy Cohen, "The Mystery of Israel's Salvation: Romans 11:25–26 in Patristic and Medieval Exegesis," *Harvard Theological Review* 98:3 (2005): 247–81. The author claims that Origen's exegesis of Romans is far more extensive and detailed than that of Origen's successors, John Chrysostom, Ambrosiaster, Pelagius, Augustine, Gregory the Great. The author finds that Origen does a better job than his Christian successors of preserving the ambiguities of Paul's texts. Cohen rightly notes that most other extant patristic commentaries on Romans "pale in comparison with Origen's—in the depth of their exposition of chapters 9–11, in the level of their commitment to grapple with the exegetical problems inherent in the text, and in the extent of their engagement with the issue of Israel's salvation," 263.

¹¹ Cited by P. S. Allen, *Erasmus: Lectures and Wayfaring Sketches* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), 13.

depth of his knowledge of the Greek and Latin exegetical tradition has not been matched since Erasmus himself. Yet de Lubac's familiarity with that tradition did not render him uncritical of its methodological weaknesses. He was quite ready to reproach Origen's exegetical practices. Therefore de Lubac cannot be fairly labeled an "apologist for Origen," though he was most certainly an expert on Origen. And as a competent guide to patristic and medieval exegesis, de Lubac was a giant. "He was not just one of us. He cannot be measured by common standards; he has risen far above the summit of human greatness." De Lubac's *History and Spirit* deserved a more sympathetic hearing when this book first appeared fifty seven years ago. He deserves to be heard even more now in the twenty-first century, by those who have walked through the wreckage of the McKenzian approach to biblical interpretation. Above all, let Origen scholars rejoice: the classic study of Origen's exegesis has been turned into English! N.V

Thomas P. Scheck
Ave Maria University
Ave Maria, FL

Magisterium: Teacher and Guardian of the Faith by Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J. (Naples, FL: Sapientia Press, 2007), vii +209 pp.

IN THE PREFACE of this book, Cardinal Dulles mentions a difficulty that professors and students of theology have faced for years: the lack of a clear, concise, and up-to-date manual on the subject of the Magisterium. Since the pontificate of Pope John Paul II the need for such a manual has been especially felt. For the last several decades, the Church's teaching office has promulgated numerous important documents, some of which have addressed and clarified points that have been a matter of some dispute among theologians and pastors. The 1989 Profession of Faith, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* (1994), and *Ad Tuendam Fidem* (1998) immediately come to mind. The principal aims of this book on the Magisterium, according to Cardinal Dulles are "to explain the rationale for such an organ in the Church, to access the biblical grounding for its claims, to present a survey of its historical development, and to expound the functioning of the Magisterium in the contemporary Church, including the much debated question of infallibility" (p. vii). All of this is done with the intention of including the interventions and instructions issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under its prefect Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, and the teaching of Pope John Paul II.

Remarkably, Dulles accomplishes these aims in eight chapters in only 113 pages. Written in a very accessible style, the book addresses the

following areas: the nature and function of the Magisterium, the Magisterium in the New Testament, historical development, hierarchical and non-hierarchical teachers, organs of the Magisterium, infallibility, the response due to the Magisterium, and reception. Dulles manages to synthesize a tremendous amount of material into a well organized and succinct presentation. In chapter after chapter he goes right to the heart of the matter, identifying and explaining the central points of the subject he examines. The book may leave some readers wishing that he had written about this or that point in more detail, but he chose wisely for a disciplined focus. Taking up certain points in great detail would distract from the central purpose of the book.

In explaining the nature and function of the Magisterium, Dulles reminds us that we must first look to Jesus Christ in whom we find united and fulfilled the three offices of priest, prophet (teacher), and king. Jesus, before his ascension, conferred a participation in the function of these offices on the Church and its apostolic leaders. The apostles and those who succeeded them have power and authority to teach the nations the gospel, to sanctify the faith through sacramental worship, and to govern the Church. Drawing on the work of Robert Sokolowski, Dulles argues that teaching holds a certain primacy. Just as faith opens up the whole area of Christian life and provides the space where hope and charity can occur so, in an analogous fashion, teaching sets up the space in which sanctification and governance can take their place, making clear what they truly are.

Dulles is very alive to contemporary misgivings about the very idea of a Magisterium. After stating that the word "Magisterium" refers not only to the function of official Church teaching but also to the body of authorized teachers who carry out this function, Dulles addresses a common objection to the idea of a Magisterium common among persons in contemporary liberal democratic societies. Many believe that they have the right and responsibility to make up their own mind about what to believe in religious matters. The issue here is one of freedom. Dulles's response is twofold. First, he shows that the authority of the Magisterium is very closely connected to the structure of Christian faith itself, which involves the free personal self-surrender to the divinely revealed word of God. We do not have knowledge of this word from our own powers of reason and discovery. Anyone who wants to know the word of God must receive it directly or indirectly from persons to whom Christ chose to entrust it. It was the twelve apostles whom Jesus chose for this function. Therefore one cannot make a personal self-surrender to the word of God apart from accepting the authority of the apostles from which we ascertain

the word of God in the first place. This point helps Dulles to answer the objection to the Magisterium in the name of personal freedom. Freedom is ordered to the truth. It is given so that we might hold fast to the truth and live according to it. The truth of salvation is given to us by way of revelation which comes down to us by witnesses and teachers authorized by Christ. Therefore to withhold our assent to the authority of their testimony would be a misuse of freedom itself. The authority of authorized teachers is not a threat to freedom but helps to make a free act of faith possible in the first place. It stands to reason that if Christ gives humanity a revelation of divine things then he surely provided organs of transmission for insuring its conservation and purity. Here we see the limits of the Church's teaching office as well. As a reliable organ of transmission the Magisterium does not have the power to impose a version of the truth all its own or announce new revelations. The Magisterium can only propose what it has received so that persons might freely surrender to the word of God. So the Magisterium, Dulles wants to say, far from restricting the human freedom of persons who are searching for religious truth, is an aid to freedom because it directs freedom to the fullness of the truth of revelation that is handed down from the apostles.

Chapters 2 and 3 examine the historical development of the Magisterium. These chapters amount to a clear alternative to an approach which supposes that Jesus had no plan for the constitution of his Church. Dulles eschews the position, adopted by some Catholic theologians, which holds that the guidance of the Holy Spirit led the developing Church to recognize the bishops as the successors to the apostles in teaching authority. Following the lead of *Lumen Gentium* (§§18, 20, 22), Dulles insists that the teaching office of the apostles and their successors has a firm historical connection to Christ. He understands the action of the Holy Spirit as being at the service of Christ's intention for the institutional structure of the Church. The Magisterium is rooted above all in Jesus as divine teacher who instructed his apostles "to teach all nations." It was according to the intention of Jesus that the authority to teach in his name be handed on to successors in order to complete the work of evangelization. Books of the New Testament attest to a clear teaching function of the apostles and the leaders they appointed. The epistles of Paul show that the teaching activity of the apostles involved not only proclamation but also fairly advanced doctrine as well. It is apparent, Dulles argues, that in the New Testament battling against heresy and errors was a major activity of the apostolic Magisterium in the first century. From its very beginnings the Church was faced with a need for an authority in order to sustain a faithful proclamation and correct interpretation of the gospel message. In the time of the

Fathers of the Church the concern for orthodoxy remained particularly intense. The teaching of the bishops, who guarded the faith as received from the apostles, was a remedy against heresy. Without their judgments as to what belonged to the Christian faith and what lies beyond it, the purity of the gospel message would have been lost. This is a reality that remains true with every age.

Dulles gives a short overview in chapter 3 of the historical development of the Magisterium from the time of the Fathers up to Vatican I. What informs his entire historical presentation is the conviction that the teaching authority of Jesus and the teaching mandate he gave to the Twelve lives on today sacramentally in the episcopacy. Moreover, Dulles writes in such a way that the consequences of this truth for a proper understanding of Church councils shine forth. Although there is representation in a council, it is not like that of a parliament in which representation rests on the will of the people. Representation in a Church council rests on the sacrament of the apostolic office. A bishop must represent the faith of the whole Church, which originates in the apostolic testimony to Christ. A Church council always involves the act of making present—albeit according to the needs of the times—what the Church received from the beginning.

In chapter 4 Dulles points out that the term “Magisterium” was not always understood in the precise and modern sense as the power of the bishops and the pope to teach officially in the name of Christ and to make binding judgments on matters of faith. Prior to the nineteenth century, the term “Magisterium” was applied more broadly than in the modern sense. Some theologians, for example, made a distinction between a magisterium of the professorial chair and a magisterium of the pastoral chair connected to the governing power in the Church. In the nineteenth century, canonists connected the concept of the Magisterium as an exercise of hierarchical authority to the powers of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling. Understood in this sense it became commonplace to speak of *the* Magisterium. Once the term “Magisterium” was understood to be an exercise of the hierarchical authority of the pope and bishops to teach, sanctify, and rule in the name of Christ, then it became clear that theologians and other teachers in the Church do not have a magisterial status.

Chapter 5 discusses how different organs of the Magisterium teach with varying degrees of authority. To understand the Magisterium properly, it is crucial to be aware of the identity and variety of its bearers. Dulles gives a helpful overview of teachings that emanate from the college of bishops, the pope as the head of the college, the dicasteries of the Holy See, bishops in groups, and individual bishops.

"The Scope of the Magisterium: Infallibility" is the topic of the sixth chapter. Here, in particular, Dulles displays his remarkable ability for synthesis as he weaves a tremendous amount of material into a short, compact exposition of a complex subject. Before he discusses infallibility, he spells out the functions of the Magisterium: (1) to proclaim the apostolic faith and to translate it for a new historical situation, (2) a negative function whereby the bishops and the pope defend the faith against errors. Dulles argues that in condemning misinterpretations the Magisterium gives a precise interpretation to the doctrinal tradition. In this way doctrine develops: (3) the Magisterium clarifies the faith in the face of new questions. At times in this process there emerge up-to-then-unnoticed implications of the faith. Only after discussing these functions does Dulles explain the infallibility of the Church as a whole, the subject and exercise of infallibility, the universal Magisterium of the bishops, and the papal Magisterium: ordinary and extraordinary. Dulles gives a careful presentation of the important distinction between primary and secondary objects of infallibility that readers will find helpful for understanding the teachings of Vatican I and II on infallibility, as well as recent interventions of the Magisterium.

In chapter 7 Dulles observes that after Vatican II there was a period of confusion with regard to what Church doctrines were binding, on what basis, and in what measure. The 1989 Profession of Faith and *Ad tuendam fidem* (1998) are the remedies to the confusion. On the basis of these two important documents, Dulles provides the reader with an expert discussion of the responses owed to the Magisterium. A section with a short exploration on the problem of dissent rounds out the chapter. Dulles believes that dissent has always been a problem in the Church and that in recent years it has become more widespread. He argues that people who live in a democratic society often have a hard time seeing the distinctiveness of the Church as a community of faith where membership is dependent upon sharing the same beliefs.

The last chapter of the book deals with the topic of reception. First, Dulles examines how the Magisterium, which is a servant of the Word, is itself receptive, before he addresses receptivity and Church councils, receptivity as interpretation, and ecumenical dialogue and reception. Nine appendices of key Church documents on the subject of the Magisterium complement the book. Cardinal Dulles has given us something that will be the standard handbook on the Magisterium for years to come. **N V**

Lawrence J. Welch

Kenrick School of Theology
St. Louis, MO

Form and Being: Studies in Thomistic Metaphysics by Lawrence Dewan, O.P. (*Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2006*), xv + 265 pp.

OVER THE PAST several years Lawrence Dewan has proven himself to be one of the preeminent authorities on the metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas. In a multitude of articles, he has addressed virtually every aspect of Aquinas's metaphysical thought. Yet the influence of this remarkable body of work has been somewhat limited due to the fact that these articles have appeared in a wide range of periodicals, many of which are very hard to obtain. Accordingly, The Catholic University of America Press has done scholars a great service by publishing this collection of articles by Dewan.

The present volume is the first of three that Dewan has in the works. This book focuses on the relation between form and being. The promised collections will address the doctrine of the act of being and natural theology. In addition, it is worth mentioning that a further collection of Dewan's articles on ethics has been recently published by Fordham University Press.

The unifying leitmotif of this volume is the role of form in ontological analysis. In many ways this has been the distinctive aspect in Dewan's reading of St. Thomas. Thomistic studies, especially in North America, have, of course, been dominated by the focus on *esse* promoted so strongly by Gilson, Owens, and others. In fact, Dewan was himself trained in this tradition and retains the central focus on *esse*. However, he is much more careful situate *esse* in the context of other aspects of metaphysical attention, such as form, essence, and substance. This awareness of the full breadth of Aquinas's metaphysics is what is so unique and valuable in Dewan's work.

The first four articles in the book address the nature of metaphysics as a discipline. In "What is Metaphysics?" Dewan explores the tension between the objectivity and certainty of metaphysics and its difficulty for human beings to acquire. The second paper "What Does It Mean to Study Being as 'Being'?" discusses the subject matter proper to metaphysics. Here Dewan argues that there is a need to begin with sensible material things, but that metaphysics also rises to the existence of a higher mode of being, namely God. So there is a hierarchy uncovered within the field of metaphysics including both perishable and imperishable beings. The next two papers deal with the "seed" of metaphysics, and the knowledge that is a precondition for metaphysics. This provides the basis for his critique of the River Forest School, which argues that it is necessary to prove the existence of God prior to engaging in metaphysics. While they

argue that without this knowledge philosophy of nature would be the highest science, Dewan provides an alternative reading of the same texts to show that philosophy of nature is itself rooted in metaphysics, and that Aristotle understood the Pre-Socratic philosophers to be metaphysicians.

The next three articles focus on specific problems of causality, analogy, and substance. The work on causality addresses Owens's reading of Thomas and applies Aquinas's teaching to Hume's famous critique of causality. In addressing analogy, Dewan provides a compelling critique of Ralph McInerny's influential work on the subject. Dewan notes that analogy is treated by both the logician and metaphysician, but in different ways, and that McInerny's treatment is not attentive to this difference. The paper on substance shows the relevance Aquinas's doctrine of substance to contemporary debates about evolution, a topic Dewan has recently revisited in his Aquinas Lecture, *St. Thomas and Form as Something Divine in Things* (Marquette University Press, 2007).

The last six papers in the volume focus more explicitly on the role of form in metaphysics. These include a study of Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, books 7 and 8. Dewan highlights the fact that Thomas holds that metaphysical demonstrations function primarily through the formal cause. He also explores how this is based upon metaphysical practice and an awareness of the role of substantial form in metaphysical method. Three of these papers are devoted to demonstrating what I would say is perhaps most distinctive and illuminating in Dewan's reading of Thomas, the view that form as a cause is a principle of *esse*. These include a critique of Owens's well-known position that *esse* is an accident of the created thing, a study of the relation between form and being in Aquinas's demonstration of the soul's incorruptibility, and a presentation of Dewan's very unique interpretation of the renowned distinction between being and essence.

In "Nature as a Metaphysical Object" Dewan turns his attention to essence and form as a principle of operation, with special attention given to the human soul as a prime example of how substantial form is a source of power and operation. The final article moves from form to the particular subsisting thing and offers a study of the principle of individuation, which takes to task Owens's view that being is the principle of individuation in all things. In contrast, Dewan argues that individuality is found diversely and analogously in material beings, separate substances, and God.

Certainly, no brief summary such as this can do justice to the richness and care with which Dewan presents St. Thomas's thought. Yet the range and depth of the treatment he offers is clear. Those who wish to come to terms with the full breadth of Aquinas's metaphysics are very much in

Dewan's debt, and will undoubtedly read and re-read this work for years to come. **N·V**

J. L. A. West
Newman Theological College
Edmonton, Canada

