

Book Reviews

Unlocking Divine Action: Contemporary Science and Thomas Aquinas by Michael J. Dodds, O.P. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012), xii + 311 pp.

AT THE BEGINNING of his book, Dodds observes that discussions about God's action, either in creating the world or in any divine action in the world, require an adequate language of causality. For as long as there has been reflection on the relationship between God and the world, when God is viewed as a transcendent source, yet an ever-present agent in the world, such reflection employs some sense or senses of what it means to be a cause. The extraordinary developments in modern and contemporary science have seemed to present new challenges for any attempt to speak of divine action. The more one views developments in cosmology and evolutionary biology, for example, as offering exhaustive accounts of nature and of the processes within nature, the more it may seem that any appeal to God, to explain either the origin of nature or its operations, is unnecessary. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Heinrich Caro, a German chemist, noted that "science has conducted God to its frontiers, thanking him for his provisional services."

Rather than eliminating appeals to a God now seen as superfluous, some theologians and philosophers have argued for a radically revised view of God, so as to find a God and divine action that would be compatible with contemporary science. As John Haught has noted, after the life and work of Charles Darwin, "any thoughts we may have about God can hardly remain the same as before." One concern for some scholars is to make sure that we understand divine action in such a way that it does not interfere with natural process, what Robert Russell of Berkeley's Centre for Theology and Science calls NIODA (non-interfering objective, divine action).

Dodds thinks that natural philosophy and metaphysics in the tradition of Thomas Aquinas offer fruitful ways to “unlock divine action”—that is, to see how one can accept the insights of contemporary science without rejecting God or altering the traditional sense of God as Creator and continual agent in the universe. In particular, he thinks that a retrieval of Thomas’s notion of cause offers the key necessary for affirming a robust understanding of divine action while also embracing what the natural sciences tell us about the world.

An understanding of causality is a complex endeavor. Following Thomas, Dodds emphasizes the analogical sense of the term. In fact, a good deal of the confusion in discussions about divine causality and the causality the natural sciences discover is the result of a failure to recognize that “cause” has many senses when applied not only to natural phenomena, but also to God. Often, when modern and contemporary thinkers speak of cause, they employ a more limited notion of the term than that found in Thomas. As “cause” came to be identified almost exclusively in terms of agent cause, traditional categories of final and formal causality were ignored or dismissed as irrelevant. Under the influence of David Hume, causality became simply a temporal sequence between events, a regularity that the observer designates as cause and effect. For Thomas, the root sense of causality concerns some kind of real dependence, and hence explanations of causality are ultimately resolved in metaphysics. On the contrary, a Humean analysis considers causality as a category in epistemology.

How we think of causal relations in nature affects how we think of God as cause. Dodds’s claim is that Thomas’s analysis of cause can overcome obstacles to thinking clearly about divine agency in a world described by contemporary science.

After initial chapters in which he gives a brief account of the Thomistic understanding of causality and how that understanding “was contracted” in the seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries (and the consequent effect of such contraction on discussions of divine agency), Dodds turns to developments in contemporary science (especially relativity theory, quantum mechanics, and evolutionary biology). He thinks that recent scientific discoveries and their philosophical interpretations offer not only a challenge to what had become a narrow, orthodox interpretation of causality, but are also an opportunity for engaging a Thomistic account of cause.

Dodds thinks, for example, that the controversies associated with explanations in evolutionary biology can contribute to “unlocking

the idea of causality inherited from modern science.” Among other topics in this regard, Dodds points to the relationship between theories of emergence and traditional notions of formal causality. As quantum mechanics points to a world of neither pure chance nor complete determinism, it opens possibilities for discussions of potentiality that were crucial for the natural philosophy of Thomas and Aristotle. The indeterminism featured in quantum mechanics might be seen as an analogue for Aristotle’s notion of the pure potentiality of prime matter.

New theories in contemporary science have had effects on the way theologians speak of divine causality. To speak of indeterminism at the level of genetic mutations has encouraged some theologians to find a kind of metaphysical space in which God can act in nature without interfering with natural processes—since there would be, in principle, no natural causes with which divine action would compete. Another conception of God’s action, panentheism, seeks to avoid the claim of divine action’s interfering with natural causes by arguing that God’s being “includes and penetrates the whole universe, so that every part of it exists in him, but that his being is more than and is not exhausted by the universe.”

Dodds is critical of the various approaches to divine action that directly employ interpretations of the theories of contemporary science. His fundamental criticism is that these accounts of divine causality, popular in many circles today, suffer from a univocal sense of cause, such that God is one cause among all other causes, different only in degree. As Dodds points out: “Implicit in the concern that God’s action not violate the laws of nature is the conviction that God could violate those laws—that the action of the Creator might somehow contradict the very creation which exists from moment to moment only through his sustaining influence” (155). Thomas’s understanding of God as cause and creatures as causes—a distinction traditionally seen in terms of primary and secondary causality—allows for a robust understanding both of the causes discovered in nature and their dependency upon the on-going causality of a transcendent primary cause.

He thinks that contemporary science encourages a new reflection on the analogous notions of causality. To speak of efficient, final, and formal causes, *per se* and *per accidens* causes, primary and secondary cause, and principal and instrumental causes, all in the tradition of Thomas, allows for a better understanding not only of our accounts of nature, but also of how to speak about divine agency, of God as Creator and continuing agent in the world. This approach is especially

valuable in discussing the “secondary causality” central to explanations in evolutionary biology. An effect, such as the coming into existence of a new species, can be greater than its immediate cause, “if that cause is also an instrument of some higher cause” (202).

Natural effects are attributed both to God and to causes in nature. The natural agent is completely the cause of its effect and so is God the complete cause. It is not a matter of partial causes. It is not that God somehow makes room for natural causes. Rather, God causes them to be the causes that they are. It is crucial to recognize that “cause” is being attributed to natural causes and to God in radically different ways, but not in ways that, finally, are unintelligible. We must remember that God as transcendent cause is of a different order from any created cause. In fact, this is so to such a degree that it is not really accurate to say that God’s causality is of a different order, since this might suggest a common ground of comparison.

Furthermore, whatever role chance and indeterminism play in nature, God is the cause of chance and indeterminism precisely as chance and indeterminism. As Dodds puts it: God acts “through the indeterminism of nature in its very indeterminism.” Or again, in referring to chance in nature, we might say that “God’s causality acts precisely through the ‘non-causality’ of chance” (219–220).

In the final chapters of his book, Dodds takes up difficult questions concerning whether it is correct to say that anything happens “by chance” from God’s point of view, how we should understand the role of miracles and petitionary prayer, and what it means for God to be providential (e.g., whether any effect falls outside God’s providence).

Throughout his analysis, Dodds emphasizes the importance of grasping what it means for God to be Creator and how we should understand the non-reciprocal relationship of creatures to the Creator. As Josef Pieper observed, the doctrine of creation is the key to Thomas’s entire intellectual project, and Dodds notes that the failure to understand causality as exercised by the Creator—the transcendent primary cause of all that exists in whatever way or ways things exist—results in most, if not all, of the difficulties in achieving an adequate sense of divine agency.

The emphasis Dodds urges on thinking clearly about cause, especially about the language of analogy, is an important corrective to much of the confusion in contemporary analyses of divine agency. To approach the question of divine action by examining what contemporary science invites us to consider about what causes there are is a good example of beginning with the philosophy of nature in order

to understand metaphysics and theology. The book is very well-documented with extensive quotations and footnotes, thus allowing the reader to turn to these sources should he or she wish. 

William E. Carroll
Blackfriars
Oxford University
Oxford, England

A Service of Love: Papal Primacy, the Eucharist and Church Unity by Paul McPartlan (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013), vii + 100 pp.

THE SENSATIONALIZING ATTENTION given by popular media to Pope Francis has certainly brought the papal office into the world spotlight in a new and unprecedented way. Many of us may wonder how long the enthusiasm will last before it descends again into boredom, scorn, and attack. Yet, the dramatic and obvious differences in “style,” for want of a better word, between the three most recent popes invite us to consider afresh the foundations and characteristics of the papal office and to reread the Church’s recent declarations about the papacy against the background of the broad sweep of doctrinal history.

McPartlan’s little book on the topic is a handy place to start. Not much longer than an extended essay, it is an immediately accessible, if unsystematic, study. The content outline suggests a historical treatment, but going in reverse: the second millennium is handled before the first. But the movement makes sense, since the entire essay appears prompted by the 2007 publication of the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue statement, *Ecclesial and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church*, otherwise known as the Ravenna document. The key thrust of the Ravenna document, echoing an emphatic shift since the Second Vatican Council, is upon the mutual interdependence of primacy and conciliarity, itself a corollary of the relation between ecclesial governance and Eucharistic communion.

As McPartlan develops it, this inter-relation profoundly qualifies the legal terminology of “jurisdiction” that, to his mind, overly dominated the ecclesiological landscape for most of the second millennium. In contrast, it is now “urgent for Catholics and Orthodox to discern once again the true characteristics of universal primacy aside from administrative and juridical considerations” (26). To this end, it is above all the Eucharist itself—its practice and theology—that can guide us. When interpreted Eucharistically and liturgically, episcopacy has less to do

with juridical authority and more to do with preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of love. According to McPartlan, drawing on the resources of the early Church deepens this sense of the limits of papal power, whose proper exercise remains always at the service of Eucharistic communion and ecclesial fellowship.

There is much to admire in this approach, and McPartlan does well in bringing to light numerous sources that highlight the way in which the bishop of Rome's universal primacy has, from the earliest centuries, been linked to presidency at the Eucharist. I wonder, however, whether McPartlan does justice to the first millennium, particularly to problematic evidence that undermines the neat exclusion of juridical factors from the pope's episcopal role. For example, McPartlan underlines a repeatedly expressed contemporary view that, for most of the first millennium, the authority of Rome's bishop, while widely accepted, "was never understood as an authority 'by divine right,' and in particular the East never shared the West's basic understanding of the link between the bishop of Rome and Peter" (54). But is this in fact correct? Was for example the Greek theologian Maximus the Confessor a rare exception when, in the seventh century, he directly connected Christ's promise to Peter to the unique foundational status of the Church of Rome among all the Churches, and to its abiding orthodoxy in the face of widespread apostasy? What of the famous declaration of the Council Fathers gathered in Chalcedon—"Peter has spoken!"—after the reading aloud of Pope Leo's Letter to Flavius?

A more pointed concern has to do with McPartlan's effort to minimise the juridical aspects of Rome's episcopal primacy. Latching on to the phrase "primacy of honour" or, as he prefers to render it, "honour of primacy," McPartlan argues that the early Church regarded the bishop of Rome more as a "messenger of love, unity, and peace" (87) than doctrinal arbiter or ecclesiastical prince. But what does this make of numerous studies, such as that by Brian E. Daley,¹ that demonstrate that the phrase "primacy of honour," first used by the second ecumenical council (381), implied not just an honorific position or moral authority, but real prerogatives of office with practical, effective juridical implications. In fact, McPartlan cites Daley's study (55), but completely omits to mention Daley's central thesis that, in its original Christian context, "primacy of honour" included—these are Daley's terms—"final executive and juridical power," "practical leadership,"

¹ "Position and Patronage in the Early Church: The Original Meaning of 'Primacy of Honour,'" *Journal of Theological Studies* 44, no. 2 (1993), 529–553.

and “the ability to act as referee.” Among other sources, Daley refers to canons 6 and 7 of the Council of Nicaea, which affirm the practical authority (*exousia*), prerogatives (*presbeia*), and “consequences of rank” attending episcopal leadership in general, and Rome’s in particular.

None of this is to say that McPartlan’s argument about the primarily “communion configuration” (82) of the papal office is wrong. It simply calls for a widening in his account of Eucharistic presidency (and, by implication, of universal jurisdiction) to include the often very difficult practical task of judging whom to admit to the Church’s communion and whom to exclude. In other words, the practice of Eucharistic presidency must include the practice of excommunication—which, on a large scale, can implicate entire jurisdictions. This, in part, is what is meant by the office of the keys, given to be exercised by all bishops, but chiefly and in a unique way by Peter’s successor, the first among equals, servant of the servants of God. It goes without saying that all such judgements must concretely express the charity and solicitude proper to Christ’s redemptive office. Here the burden of McPartlan’s book is spot on. For it is only thereby that the papacy, in addition to exercising its other responsibilities and prerogatives, will continue to serve the truth of the Gospel and the unbreakable unity of the one true Church. N-V

Adam G. Cooper

John Paul II Institute for Marriage and the Family
Melbourne, Australia

Incarnation Anyway: Arguments for Supralapsarian Christology by Edwin Chr. van Driel (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 194 pp.

AT LEAST FROM THE TIME of Rupert of Deutz, Edwin Chr. van Driel observes, Christian theologians have considered the place of redemption from sin amongst the motives for the Incarnation. Responses have divided into two camps, or “families”—infralapsarians and supralapsarians. He summarizes those positions as follows: for infralapsarians, “the divine will to become incarnate logically follows the divine will to allow sin,” while for supralapsarians, “the divine will to become incarnate logically precedes the divine will to allow sin” (4–5). According to van Driel, Western theology has favored the former; that is, until a resurgence of supralapsarian positions in nineteenth- and twentieth-century theology. He therefore selects three

supralapsarian resurgents as his primary interlocutors: Friedrich Schleiermacher, Isaak August Dorner, and Karl Barth. By engaging these theologians, he seeks both to “draw up the supralapsarian family tree” (5) and to develop his own supralapsarian arguments.

Van Driel utilizes two analytical distinctions in his investigation. First and foremost, he distinguishes between the three ways in which God is related to the world: creation, redemption, and consummation. These serve as three distinct “bases” for supralapsarian arguments. Each of his interlocutors exemplify one of these three “bases.” Next, van Driel distinguishes between two conceptions of the recipient of the Incarnation: (1) human nature and (2) human persons. This distinction, he contends, is obfuscated by all his supralapsarian interlocutors, resulting in Christological incoherence. These distinctions are not, then, merely analytic, but are put to constructive use throughout *Incarnation Anyway*.

Following an Introduction, van Driel gives a dense and impressive sketch of Schleiermacher’s supralapsarian “argument from redemption” (per the first aforementioned distinction). Schleiermacher’s argument, rather tersely put, runs as follows: given that humans are nonreciprocally related to God (i.e., absolutely dependent), the Incarnation cannot be *in response to* sin, but must be logically prior to sin. Van Driel objects, however, that this solution is internally incoherent: “The same notions of absolute dependence and divine causality that lead Schleiermacher to his supralapsarianism lead him to hold a form of divine omnipotence that excludes any alternative for reality as it is” (31). And yet, it is essential to Schleiermacher’s doctrine of redemption that any human being is possibly the Redeemer, given that sin is in no way essential to human nature. Van Driel, once he has exerted tremendous effort to save Schleiermacher from this dilemma, concludes that it is finally intractable. Thus Schleiermacher’s supralapsarian argument fails.

Dorner’s supralapsarian argument is grounded in his doctrine of creation, which van Driel finds curious. “Dorner’s root intuition is that the relationship between God and human beings is one of free, mutual love and embrace” (34). Surprisingly, Dorner derives from this premise a series of necessary arguments for creation and the Incarnation. Van Driel presents objections to Dorner’s claimed necessity, but still derives from Dorner a series of less dubious arguments for the supralapsarian conclusion and objections to the infralapsarian conclusion.

Like Schleiermacher’s, Dorner’s supralapsarian arguments entail problematically necessary divine operations *ad extra*, thereby raising problems for both Christology and the divine will. For these reasons, van Driel argues, “the argument for supralapsarian incarnation should

not be embedded in the doctrine of creation [or redemption] but in eschatology [i.e., consummation]" (62). With this observation, van Driel transitions to the primary interlocutor for the supralapsarian position he will develop: Karl Barth.

Two full chapters are devoted to Barth, one to Barth's "supralapsarian narrative," the other to his "supralapsarian ontology." By "supralapsarian narrative," van Driel intends Barth's reading of Scripture under the matrix of election. Election, which is primary in the order of divine decrees, is eschatological. Thus, Barth's argument is "based" in eschatology or consummation. Moreover, Barth's insistence that Jesus Christ is "subject and object" of the divine election entails that "incarnation stands at the very beginning of God's relating to what is not God" (81)—at least, so long as the assertion can be rendered coherent.

The following chapter, on Barth's "supralapsarian ontology" analyzes the aforementioned assertion that Christ is both subject and object of election in order to clarify Barth's supralapsarian argument from consummation. Here he gives a penetrating analysis of three possible interpretations of Barth's deeply disputed assertion, distinguishing his own position from that of Berkouwer, Brunner, and McCormack. He follows this with an extended reflection on two "objects" of election: (1) human nature in Christ and (2) *das Nichtige*. Van Driel is critical of both accounts of the "object" of election, insofar as Barth (1) fails to retain an adequate account of human agency in the eschaton and (2) assumes "creational entropy."

Following the Barth chapters, van Driel rehearses and sharpens his case for grounding supralapsarian arguments in eschatology. He then presents a series of objections to what he dubs infralapsarian *felix culpa* arguments, as well as Robert Grosseteste's supralapsarian arguments in *De Cessatione Legalium*. While he reiterates his preference for Barth's eschatological approach, he moves his second analytic distinction to the fore: Barth's supralapsarian Christology suffers insofar as it conceives the recipient of the Incarnation as human nature rather than human persons.

Finally, van Driel supplies three arguments of his own in support of supralapsarian Christology, which lack the aforementioned detriments of the other accounts. Very briefly, van Driel argues from the eschaton's "abundance" vis-à-vis, in van Driel's terminology, the proton that the means whereby abundance comes (i.e., Christ) cannot be contingent upon sin. I take it that this argument is built upon the premise that abundance orders divine motives. Second, he argues from Scripture that the beatific vision ("seeing God face to face") is a sensible, embod-

ied vision. If sensible vision is part of beatitude, and beatitude cannot be contingent upon sin (*per* the first argument), then the Incarnation is not contingent upon sin. Finally, God has revealed his desire for friendship with creatures, and friendship entails making oneself as available to the other as much as possible. Since this desire for friendship is prior to the need for redemption, his supralapsarian conclusion follows.

Incarnation Anyway retrieves a neglected question in Christian theology. Van Driel demonstrates both the importance of the question and the remarkable range of theological considerations a response elicits. Moreover, he draws attention to several related yet distinct modern attempts to secure the primacy of Christ. He isolates the central theological and conceptual issues at stake concerning each thinker with remarkable precision, and consistently works to render his interlocutors' positions as coherent and compelling as possible. Van Driel argues with impressive rigor.

But *Incarnation Anyway* is not without its weaknesses. Perhaps its greatest weakness stems from a lack of engagement with the medieval debates. For instance, van Driel asserts that the medieval conversation was problematic insofar as it was speculative, addressing the counterfactual question, "Would God have become human if human beings had not sinned?" (164). But of course, his putatively modern criticism of medieval speculation was raised much earlier by Bonaventure and accepted by Scotus, and this after both Albert and Thomas issued serious worries about the counterfactual posing of the question. Such oversights are unfortunately frequent, and above all marred by the insistent use of the supralapsarian and infralapsarian categories of later Reformed dogmatics. This prevents van Driel from seeing, for instance, that neither the modern arguments he recites nor his own final arguments engage Scotus's Christological argument for the so-called supralapsarian conclusion.

In spite of this, van Driel's *Incarnation Anyway* is a real achievement. Even the shortcomings prove the point: the question of the divine motive for the Incarnation is both demanding and central to Christian theology. As van Driel demonstrates, there is ample reason to hope that it will once again be taken up and given serious reflection by theologians today.

N V

Justus H. Hunter

Southern Methodist University
Dallas, TX

Dust Bound for Heaven: Explorations in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas by Reinhard Hütter (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), x + 511

IN HIS ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, Reinhard Hütter observes that this book took shape over the course of his first seven years as a Catholic theologian. Born and raised in Germany and educated both in Germany (PhD, University of Erlangen) and at Duke University Divinity School under Stanley Hauerwas, Hütter was an eminent Lutheran theologian, heavily involved with the journal *Pro Ecclesia*, at the time of his entrance into the Catholic Church at the end of 2004. Since his conversion, he has served as President of the Academy of Catholic Theology and co-editor of *Nova et Vetera*. While remaining on the faculty at Duke University Divinity School, he has held distinguished visiting appointments at Providence College (the Randall Chair) and Mundelein Seminary (the Paluch Chair).

On my reading, *Dust Bound for Heaven* is partly a response to the German theological and political context within which Hütter was educated and with which it seems reasonable that he should continue to engage. An examination of the chapters reflects this pattern of engagement. Thus, chapter 2 (the first chapter after the introduction, which Hütter titles chapter 1) is titled “Is There a Cure for Reason’s Presumption and Despair?”—Why Thomas Matters Today,” and it begins by discussing Friedrich Nietzsche’s challenge to the success of modernity’s purely “instrumental rationality” (30). Hütter insists that theology must not follow Nietzsche’s path of “‘postmetaphysical thought,’ characterized by the familiar agonistic strategies of ‘situating,’ ‘outbidding,’ ‘unmasking,’ and ‘overcoming’” (35). Chapter 3, “‘Body Politics beyond Angelism and Animalism’—The Human Passions and Their Irreducible Spiritual Dimension,” surely has Immanuel Kant and German idealism in view, though Hütter’s contrastive reflections on Aquinas on the passions engage René Descartes, as one would expect. Chapter 4, “‘Democracy after Christendom’—Sovereign Secularism, Genuine Liberalism, and the Natural Love of God: What Thomas Can Teach Us about Modernity’s Fraternal Twins,” proposes that Germany, chastened and instructed by the terrible disaster of Nazism, implemented after World War II a “genuine liberalism” guided by explicitly Christian principles, whose theoretical roots are found in the work of the German Catholic legal scholar, Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde. This “genuine liberalism” endured for some years, thereby showing that

liberalism is not necessarily the “sovereign secularism” that the West (including Germany) now experiences.

After this chapter explicitly engaging with the German context, chapter 5, “‘Paleothomism?’—The Continuing Debate over the Natural Desire for the Vision of God,” responds to John Milbank’s “Bulgakovian reading of de Lubac’s theology” (131), at the bottom of which, in my view, Hütter senses the monistic vision of Hegel. Here Hütter again critiques the Nietzschean/postmodern style of modern theological discourse according to which theology “can only be conceived as defensible and intelligible in a thoroughly historical-contextualist and constructivist mode” so that “[t]he only way to forward arguments is by situating and out-narrating opponents as well as offering rhetorical and aesthetic appeals leading to the volitional as well as conceptual conversion of the interlocutor” (137). Anyone familiar not only with Nietzsche but also with theology influenced by German critical theory (or even, from a different angle, with the theology of Hütter’s Duke teacher and colleague, Stanley Hauerwas) will resonate with Hütter’s depiction of the current scene: “Propositional discourse as informed by metaphysical realism and discursive, conceptual argumentation is therefore at present widely dismissed as a suspiciously disembodied and philosophically outmoded mode of speculative theology, oblivious to the historical, pragmatic, and practice-oriented nature of theology itself and thus vulnerable to being constantly co-opted by deeply entrenched as well as concealed discourses of power and interest” (137). Chapter 5 additionally finds Hütter contesting the way in which Karl Barth lays speculative groundwork for universal *apokatastasis*, although Hütter allows that “universal human salvation remains a legitimate theological expression of the infused, supernatural virtues of hope and charity and hence a matter of fervent prayers of intercession, as consistently argued by Hans Urs von Balthasar” (181).

Chapter 6, “‘Thomist Ressourcement’—A Rereading of Thomas on the Natural Desire for the Vision of God,” should be read as a companion piece to chapter 5. Rather than ruling out a natural desire for the vision of God, Hütter affirms it—though *not* a natural desire for the supernatural—along the creative and controversial lines set forth in 1950 by the Dominican, Marie-Joseph Le Guillou, who explicitly sought a middle ground between Henri de Lubac’s *Surnaturel* and those who attacked it most strongly. Chapter 7, “‘Thomas the Augustinian’—Recovering a Surpassing Synthesis of Grace and Free Will,” moves back in time to address Martin Luther on the issue of grace and free will. Hütter argues that Aquinas achieves a vision that, by means of

philosophical analysis of divine and human non-competitive causality, enables us to avoid Luther's view that humans are not free in relation to God. In chapter 8, "'In Hope He Believed Against Hope'—The Unity of Faith and Hope in Paul, Thomas, and Benedict XVI," Hütter again takes up Luther, this time through the writings of Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger). In *Spe Salvi*, Benedict XVI challenges Luther's translation of Hebrews 11:1. Luther interprets this crucial verse on faith as a description of our own subjective stance or firmness, rather than a description of an objective reality given to us. Hütter supports Benedict XVI's approach via a retrieval of Aquinas's teaching about faith and hope.

In Chapter 9, "'A Forgotten Truth?'—Theological Faith, Source and Guarantee of Theology's Inner Unity," Hütter addresses the nature of theological faith and the nature of theology through a brilliant critique of Walter Kasper's 1967 *The Methods of Dogmatic Theology*. He observes that, for Kasper, indebted to the later Schelling and the later Heidegger, "[b]ecause there is no perennial supernatural given of the faith, there can be no contemplation of the faith that rises above the flux of history toward God" (329). Chapter 10, "'The Wisdom of Analogy Defended'—From Effect to Cause, from Creation to God," defends the balance and fruitfulness of Aquinas's account of the analogy of being (as interpreted especially by Bernard Montagnes) through an exposition of the contradictory criticisms lodged against it by two major German Lutheran theologians: Wolfhart Pannenberg's charge that the analogy of being anthropomorphizes God through univocity, and Eberhard Jüngel's charge that the analogy of being makes God utterly unknowable through equivocity. In Pannenberg, Hütter finds "metaphysical conceptualism with its strong Hegelian undertones," whereas he notes that "Jüngel, by mistaking Thomas for Cajetan—read in turn through Kant—reduces Thomas's way of analogical predication to conception proportionality," so as to turn the analogy of being into "merely . . . a mentally immanent system of comparison" (382).

Chapter 11, "'Seeking Truth on Dry Soil and under Thornbushes'—God, the University, and the Missing Link: Wisdom," constitutes a nuanced and constructive critique of the modern research university, based as it is upon the German model established in the nineteenth century. Hütter begins this chapter with Pope Benedict XVI's 2006 address to the University of Regensburg, where Benedict depicted the true university as necessarily inclusive of theology. Despite its natural orientation to the transcendent, human reason that lacks the contribution of theology becomes truncated, instrumentalized, and frag-

mented. In the same chapter, Hütter underlines yet again his critique of “post-metaphysical” theology, which in his view inevitably opens the door to “deficient understandings of God, what it is to be human, and the world as created ‘all the way down’” (414). He contrasts Benedict Ashley’s insistence upon reason’s ability to apprehend the transcendent with Kant’s reduction of reason’s scope to the level of the phenomenal. Rather than completely rejecting the German research model, Hütter—much as he does for “genuine liberalism”—has an affirmative word for the goods offered by the German university in its ideal form: “Ashley’s approach and agenda seem more capable to accommodate the modern, Berlin-type research university with its ideal of an integral unity between research and teaching. . . . For Ashley can acknowledge the modern research university as the great-grandchild of Aristotle’s comprehensive program of research, from whence Ashley also sees arising the very potential for internal reform” (416).

In his final chapter, titled “‘This Is My Body’—Eucharistic Adoration and Metaphysical Contemplation,” Hütter focuses on transubstantiation, set forth in light of his experience of participating in Eucharistic adoration in the diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina. Though he does not mention it explicitly, the presence of Luther’s insistence upon consubstantiation inevitably looms large for any reader who has been paying attention up to this point.

The connections with German theology and the German context that I have highlighted might seem to paint Hütter’s book in a reductionary way, as though his theology could be reduced to biography, which it most certainly cannot. Thus we should recall the significance of German theology and philosophy for all theology—and especially all *Catholic* theology—done in the United States today. No Catholic theology in the United States today could be imagined that does not deal in some way with Ratzinger, von Balthasar, Rahner, Kasper, and even Barth and Pannenberg—to say nothing of Nietzsche, Adorno, Heidegger, Hegel, Schelling, and Kant. Hütter’s work, thus, is as fully American as it is rooted in the German context. Indeed, it is a much better contribution precisely to the American context, precisely because of its intimate and multi-sided knowledge of the German context.

Given Hütter’s effort to retrieve Aquinas’s philosophical theology in dialogue with German philosophy and theology, a predictable question should be addressed: is Hütter’s insistence upon the value of Thomas Aquinas a repetition of Leo XIII’s attempt to replace modern German philosophy with Aquinas’s metaphysics and epistemology, cast as the

philosophia perennis? Put more plainly, given the implicit meaning that such a question typically bears, in my experience, has Hütter become reactionary and defensive in his post-conversion theological path? The answer (obviously) is no, for a twofold reason. First, Hütter's engagement with German scholarship needs to be read through his nuanced presentations of genuine liberalism and the university, and especially through the crucial function that Ratzinger/Benedict XVI plays throughout the book as *the* representative of salutary Catholic theology today. For Hütter, a Thomistic contribution is not here opposed to the insights of the *nouvelle théologie* and the contributions of the modern world. Second, rather than a reactionary defensiveness, a deep optimism about human capacities and human destiny—and even about the potential of modern politics and universities—courses through this book, without detriment to Hütter's awareness of the dire consequences of human sin.

Consider Hütter's critique throughout of an all-too-common-place agonistic theology that depends solely upon "rhetorical and aesthetic appeals" due to its inability, having jettisoned metaphysical and dogmatic realism, to defend truth about God and creation. In fact, Hütter's critique works not primarily in a negative direction, but in a way that aims to highlight a highly positive account of reason's capacities. In chapter 2, in which Hütter defends reason's wondrous capacity to obtain real knowledge of God, this positive view of reason does not lead Hütter to minimize the need for revelation or to neglect the need for the conversion of the will for the attainment of knowledge of God. Hütter's optimistic anthropology is rooted appropriately in a strong sense of the will's fallenness and its important role in reasoning. He states, "The 'will' here addressed might better be described as reasoning's directedness—that which constitutes the horizon of the gaze in which judgments are made. This gaze is not just conceptual but volitional. . . . [T]he will also exerts a constant impact on the intellect by directing it in light of the good to which the will is drawn" (43). For this reason, intellectual judgment of truth cannot, ultimately, be separated from "reasoning's directness under the condition of sin" (45). Thus, his highly positive anthropology remains balanced by awareness of the need for conversion via the Christological "restoration and perfection of the image" (46) all the way to deification.

Hütter also argues in this chapter that the metaphysics of being, in order to fully differentiate beings from Being (as required by creation *ex nihilo*), needs the aid of the metaphysics of creation, which flows

from divine revelation that culminates in Christ Jesus. Hütter explains: “While its arguments are in principle universally acceptable (assuming the absence of error), a metaphysics of creation will be less than universally acceptable, not just because philosophy is an intrinsically controversial phenomenon, but more importantly because it requires a seeing and a willing, informed by a particular practice of judgment, that is shared in only historically contingent ways” (63). The fact that theology cannot do without the metaphysics of creation (or without the metaphysics of being) makes clear that theology has not become a self-sufficient philosophical realm for prideful humans to ascend to the knowledge of God. Even those whose will has been converted and whose minds have been enlightened still experience this “under the condition of sin” (69) and therefore stand in constant need of self-emptying transformation by Christ’s Cross. Yet, the highly positive valuation the power of our created rational capacities remains in place. In making this complex point, Hütter recognizes himself to be at odds with those German philosophers who sought to cut reason off from Christian faith while, at the same time, subsuming and re-casting certain fundamental aspects of faith (see 69).

The same generous optimism about human capacities, without losing awareness of human sinfulness, appears in chapter 3 on the human passions in light of the twin pitfalls of angelism and animalism. Hütter here insists upon the goodness of the passions, despite the unruliness that we experience. He emphasizes that, far from being in need of repression, the passions integrally belong to the life of virtue because they “are in potency to and indeed indispensable for a moral and spiritual formation that is integral to achieving the twofold human end” (88). In fact, according to Hütter (and Aquinas), the passions can and should be formed or habituated by human reason under the power of grace, so that they are able to contribute to the full flourishing of the human person, rather than merely leading the person astray through the violent impulses of lust, anger, fear, hunger, and so forth.

We have already seen a similar optimism in chapter 4’s defense of liberalism (implicitly against the much more negative view of Hauerwas and others) as fully open to a “genuine” Christian liberalism, and therefore not necessarily productive of a “sovereign secularism”—although, in Hütter’s view, liberalism becomes secularism once the connection to Christianity has been rejected. The implications for *Dignitatis Humanae* are clear: we need not choose between Christendom (or sectarianism) and liberalism, for there can exist a Christian liberalism. The two chap-

ters (5 and 6) on the natural desire for the vision of God have been much discussed since their publication, and unsympathetic readers have sometimes construed them as a bad-old-Thomism attempt to secure Aristotelian nature at the obviously unacceptable cost of making grace irrelevant to human flourishing. Hütter, however, resists the view that grace is a mere intensification of a dynamism that already belongs to nature—and he does so not in order to remove the necessity of grace, but in order to insist upon its necessity and, indeed, upon its greatness. Our destiny is so great that not even our highest rational dynamism touches upon it, while grace utterly accords with and fulfills that highest human dynamism. Surely this is a tremendously positive portrait of the human being and human destiny, despite Hütter's point that Christian revelation does not permit us to seed human nature itself with the logic of a necessary salvation of all persons. Hütter also makes clear that the human "specific obediential potency" (177) for divinization is not a mere *neutrality* toward God.

The optimism of Hütter's chapter 7 on free will's non-competitive relationship with grace should already be clear, given that the alternative is the rejection of true human freedom in matters of salvation. Likewise, one can only be consoled by Hütter's dual insistence in chapter 8 that Christian faith is not reducible to a blind leap of trust taken by isolated individuals in the depths of their subjectivities and that Christian hope is not annulled by suffering, but rather goes along with it. The extraordinary optimism of Christian hope can be seen not least by contrast with contemporary culture's growing despair about death: materialist accounts of the human person can give no firm or lasting place to any object of hope, and therefore the materialist view of the human person that Hütter devotes his work to opposing is inevitably the most negative and defensive (because inhumane) view of existence.

Like Hütter's account of hope, the vision of wisdom set forth by chapters 9 and 11 is so optimistic as to be thought laughably naïve by most of Hütter's university contemporaries, perhaps especially at secular universities such as Duke. The same goes for his accounts in chapter 10 of the analogy of being and of our capacity to reason from finite effects to a transcendent cause. Rather than giving up the theological task to philosophy, Hütter makes clear that "because *sacra doctrina* is a subaltern *scientia* and as such essentially informed by the principles of the superior *scientia Dei et beatorum*, there is by definition no way that the analogy of being could ever determine or govern what infinitely surpasses it in dignity as well as depth" (386). Yet, lacking the ability to

conceive analogously the transcendence of God, we could not receive a revelation from God, since we could literally not conceive God in any way whatsoever.

Chapter 11's reflections on wisdom and the university raise the question of whether any Catholic college or university today provides a home for the integrated quest for wisdom, which Hütter conceives primarily along Benedict Ashley's lines. In this case, Hütter's optimism leads him to propose that Thomas Aquinas College serves as a living example of the integrated quest for wisdom, although Ashley, as Hütter recognizes, insists upon the goodness of diverse intellectual disciplines and research programs (even for undergraduate institutions) in a way that Thomas Aquinas College does not.

Lastly, the very act of adoring Jesus Christ in the consecrated host—the topic of chapter 12—is surely an act of deep affirmation of the material and the human, which is only amplified by the chapter's commitment to *philosophical* reflection upon the Eucharistic mystery, which is therefore accessible in some way to human reason.

In short, the Christianly optimistic title, *Dust Bound for Heaven*, aptly describes the great themes of this book, which treats human reason and will, the passions, human sociality (in liberal democracy, in universities, in the Church, and in the task of theology), human desire for the vision of God, the human call to a supernatural destiny, the meaning of faith and hope, and Eucharistic adoration. *Dust Bound for Heaven* offers an extraordinarily positive vision of humans coming forth from God and being drawn up to God in the Church of Christ and in relation to other social institutions, such as the state and the university. At the same time, the book does not flinch from human fallenness. This is to say that *Dust Bound for Heaven* exhibits the same virtues that the Church has long found in Thomas Aquinas, and does so from within Hütter's own German and American context. Hütter's self-described "seven-year-long journey of becoming a Catholic theologian" thereby becomes also a journey into what it means to think of God and humanity when divine revelation is read and heard through the contemporary Magisterium (here meaning mainly Pope Benedict XVI, since the book was written between 2004–2011) and through Aquinas as mediating and enriching the patristic interpretation of the Gospel.

If this splendid book could be enhanced, it would be by a more detailed and consistent introduction (or chapter 1). The introduction/chapter 1 is admittedly the most pessimistic part of the book. Hütter encourages "a ressourcement in Thomas" but then undermines his own

ability to undertake such a project by stating that such a *ressourcement* would require “a coherent philosophical and theological curriculum *ad mentem S. Thomae*, a body of teachers competent and dedicated to implement such a curriculum, gifted students dedicated to the arduous task of being ‘beginners’ under the tutelage of Thomas Aquinas, a way of apostolic life and witness of which study and contemplation are integral components, and last but not least an institution that enables, coordinates, and fosters such an ambitious and complex intellectual endeavor” (6). Hütter means here to be signaling the value of the renewal currently underway at the Dominican House of Studies, and he is right to do so, but the problem is that, for most young readers, the suggestion that all these things are needed in order to think with Aquinas will quite simply be too daunting and may produce an impulse to put the book down before going further. Indeed, if Hütter himself had believed that all these things were necessary before he could think *ad mentem S. Thomae*, he could not have written this book, because his own training and institutional contexts are largely the opposite of his description of what is ideally required for his project. The success of the book makes clear that the ongoing and utterly crucial Dominican renewal, in which Hütter participates as a Third-Order Dominican, is not the sole path by which young (or older) students of theology can find enrichment in Aquinas—as no doubt Hütter would agree.

In my view, too, the summaries of the chapters in the introduction (chapter 1) do not bring out the book’s full unity or its fitting connection with Hütter’s own theological journey. Furthermore, by concluding the introduction with an extensive annotated bibliography for “further explorations” in Aquinas’s philosophy and theology, Hütter amplifies the sense of the arduousness of reading Aquinas and may cause introductory readers to turn back in fear that the field has already been plowed by too many brilliantly educated thinkers. My own advice would be for beginners simply to start reading Aquinas, ideally under the guidance of a teacher, and things will go well. For many readers such as Flannery O’Connor, it is immediately a pleasure to read Aquinas. For others like myself, the practice of reading him under the guidance of a teacher for a few months reveals why so many generations have found his work to be so helpful. I do not think that Hütter and I disagree in this regard, but I mention the point here in order to encourage readers to take up *Dust Bound for Heaven* and read the whole thing with confidence in the treasure-trove of Christian wisdom that it contains. Let me add that the bibliography that Hütter offers at the

end of his introduction will certainly be of help, in due time, to the beginners who read this book and who become inspired by its powerful vision of the human journey, dust bound for heaven. N·V

Matthew Levering
Mundelein Seminary
Mundelein, IL

Aquinas at Prayer: The Bible, Mysticism and Poetry by Paul Murray (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), xii + 274 pp.

NEWS OF PAUL MURRAY'S publications always promises edification and delight, and *Aquinas at Prayer* delivers. It picks up on Jean-Pierre Torrell's seminal study, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, which, toward the beginning of volume 2, quotes Étienne Gilson: "[the *Summa Theologiae*'s] abstract clarity, impersonal transparency, crystallizes before our very eyes [Thomas's] interior life" (cf. 16). For Murray, the student and devotee of Thomas need not stop at defending his lapidary prose or expositing his spiritual brilliance. One can boldly aim for "a direct way of gaining access" to his very interior life. To that end, *Aquinas at Prayer* looks at Thomas's prayers and biblical commentaries and their expression of heartfelt desire and poetic grace.

Part I, "Aquinas: man of prayer," begins by considering "The interior life of a 'mystic on campus'" (chap. 1). Murray argues that Thomas deserves the title "mystic," addressing a contention found in Adrienne von Speyr's *The Book of All Saints*, "a truly unique and bizarre document" (4). That book lists over two hundred dictations to Hans Urs von Balthasar, ostensible records of entranced visions of "saints" at prayer. Thomas is witnessed as all head and no heart. Contrarily, Murray discovers much of the "secret" of Thomas's heart precisely in his conceptual clarity and "plainness." Hyper-intellectualism in scientific endeavor is a real danger to avoid (Murray cites Charles Darwin as an intriguing example)—but it is a danger to which Thomas did not fall prey. The Angelic Doctor was significantly concerned with "experience" and "affection" in life and in theology. His spiritual ardor is one Murray likens (as did Gilson) to that of St. John of the Cross, connecting the nothing of "*non nisi te*" with that of "*todo y nada*." Even publicly, Thomas defended his positions with vehemence, e.g., "on campus" at the University of Paris. At the same time, his intellectual confidence was balanced with a certain apophaticism, and he taught by way of the *quaestio*.

It would be helpful to know what Murray thinks are the formal judgments of Thomas's apophaticism. What does it really mean to say that "[Thomas] is prepared, at times, to risk sounding almost like an agnostic"? (26) Is it even the case that "believing Christians today seldom hear from preachers and teachers about the incomprehensibility of the divine nature"? (25) It might rather seem that that is all the rage. Indeed, certain kinds of emphasis upon "mystery," while casting aspersions upon Latin and/or scholastic theology, fund various discourses of "experience." It is just this trend that demands that the superior "theologian" be a "mystic." For Murray (and Torrell), M. D. Chenu is in the background, for whom theologies are expressions of spiritualities. (See the debate between Louis Bouyer and Jean Daniélou on whether the one Church of Christ reducibly has one or many spiritualities.) But if someone like von Speyr is commonly accepted as a "mystic," why is the medieval magister's head in need of such a post-Reformation laurel?

Not too long ago, theologians debated about the nature and universality of mystical prayer. One could abandon reference to these debates—between Dominicans and Jesuits, somewhat adjudicated by a Benedictine (Cuthbert Butler)—because of their controversialism or jargon. Indeed, Murray is wary of "the dogged, abstract idiom of a scholastic philosopher or theologian" (159). But the "universal call to holiness" of the "new evangelization" has its roots in these very debates (and arguably in the position of Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, via St. John Paul II). The "spiritual theology" of a saint might be understood as a "practically practical science" (Jacques Maritain) without becoming a windowless factory that manufactures deductions to no end. I think this is an overall take-away from *Aquinas at Prayer*: utilization of scientific reason, vehemence of loving desire, and creativity of poetic expression all find iconic integration in the Church's Common Doctor.

Like any great teacher, Murray not only gives his students wonderful conclusions, of which there are many in *Aquinas at Prayer*; he also inspires them to discover new questions and answers. Not for nothing is he a favorite and longtime professor at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas in Rome (the Angelicum), president of its Institute of Spirituality, and Master of Sacred Theology (a Dominican accolade of the highest rank, carefully given by the Master of the Order). He is also an accomplished and scintillating poet. One of this book's luminous facets is that it seems to be a very personal quest: a Dominican seeking to discover and bear witness to the interior life of another Dominican. Appropriately, Murray draws heavily upon early biographies, especially

those of Dominicans William of Tocco and Bernard Gui. Moreover, Murray's own experience—as a preacher, teacher, and poet—is, I infer, critical for his accessing Aquinas from the friar's own experience of those same gifts. Murray possesses the proper connaturality to apprehend Thomas's life of prayer—a noteworthy fact that adds unique authority and verve to his arguments.

Murray makes the fraternal situation of Aquinas's own thought and passion evident in chapter 2, "Four prayers: the influence of Humbert of Romans," where he considers four of the *Piae preces*. Although these short personal prayers are written in prose, Murray lays bare the "clear bronze-like pattern of thought and image" characteristic of "good verse" (34), providing fresh English translations in versified style. Precisely as devotional prayers, it is not surprising, he says, that they were not included amongst the *opera* catalogued for Thomas's canonization. They are almost certainly by a Dominican—a kind of pious response to a letter issued by Bl. Humbert, Master of the Order of Preachers (1254–1263). If the prayers are Thomas's, identifying Humbert as an influence upon him is a scholarly gain.

But Lydia Maidl finds the "popular" language of the prayers unrepresentative of Thomas's "scholastic conceptual world." Against her conclusion, Murray deploys Mark-Robin Hoogland's presentation of Thomas's "academic sermons," noting that Thomas used different linguistic and conceptual registers. In these sermons, the technical language is sparing and the discourse is "strikingly plain and simple." In the prayers, Humbert's words are "imaginatively transformed," rendered more in keeping with concerns and phrasing characteristically Thomas's. The same mind and heart is at work in the theology, sermons, and prayers. Finally, William of Tocco's inclusion of the *Piae preces* in the fourth and final edition of his biography of Thomas resolves the question for Murray. All told, his wide consideration of the most recent scholarship, his attention to the best and original manuscripts, his own theologico-poetic attention, and his Dominican connaturality are marshaled to proffer an original, coherent, and personal apologia for the authenticity and import of these prayers.

Part II, "Prayer considered: soundings in the biblical commentaries," is where, to my mind, Murray's sense for the way of the friar preacher is most significantly at play. He continues the happy trend in recent scholarship of giving attention to the commentaries of a first-rate magister in *Sacra Pagina*. He further highlights the charismatic and ecclesial context of Thomas's mendicant preaching order. Different from the neo-Platonic, spiritualistic readings of the monastics, and

against contemporary influences from creation-disparaging heretics, Thomas analyzes the surface of the text, attentive to the materiality of things and happenings. The use of logic is meant to serve this reverence for the literal in service of the Church's contemporary needs.

Murray notes that Thomas's attention to "prayer" in the Pauline commentaries has not received focused attention from scholars. Thomas repeatedly considers prayer in these commentaries in terms of "petition" and "thanksgiving." To understand prayer in terms of "petition" had come to be regarded "as almost the poorest cousin within the family of prayer" (101). But approaching "prayer" as the "prayer of asking" unlocks the deeply experiential and Christological mode of Thomas's theology. Murray's work further demonstrates "something of Thomas's own passion, as a friar preacher." It "bear[s] witness, and with telling force and beauty, to both the apostolic and contemplative energy and passion of St. Thomas" (108–109). The reader gathers that Murray's close reading of the commentaries likewise manifests something of his own passion, as well as "humility and tact" similar to Thomas's commentarial restraint and deliberateness (per Kenelm Foster).

In Chapter 5, "Praying in time of need: Aquinas on the Psalms," Murray locks in on the most exigent questions about the nature of prayer: how is it that prayer is at once most simple and most arduous? What does it mean to pray always? Why does God sometimes feel absent? As he does throughout his book, Murray selects the choicest passages and phrases from Thomas. In a marvelous commentary on Psalm 32, both Dominicans teach us that "prayer is the interpreter of hope." How? Reflecting on God's nature to be merciful and on mercies received nourishes hope, which exercises itself in prayer. Thomas himself, "in a situation of manifest terror [while sailing through a life-threatening storm], reminded himself of the two greatest 'favors' of God's mercy in all of human history: the Incarnation and the Redemption. And that thought, that memory of grace in itself, was enough to give him confidence and serenity" (145). Analytic attention, speculative commitment, and practical import are strung together and furthermore concretized through a narrational snapshot of Thomas's own life.

The most enchanting section of the book is Part III, which one suspects also contains the work dearest to Murray: "Poet of the Eucharist: the hymns and canticles of Aquinas." Throughout four chapters and an appendix, he considers the only known vernacular work attributed to Thomas, the *Corpus Christi* texts, and the *Adoro te devote*, which Murray subheads "the finest prayer of Aquinas." It is this final chapter on the *Adoro te* that, if it is not too precious to say, "sings with

authority" (cf. 237). It recapitulates the main themes and positions of the book, while introducing an original argument on the *Adoro te*'s two-part structure as one of reflection, or adoration, and petition. In all of the commentaries, the most recent historical and textual research is consulted and illuminatingly presented, arguing for Thomas's authorship (new translations are provided).

To Murray's mind, the hymns and canticles are assuredly "poetry." Alluding to W. H. Auden's pithy description, Murray states that poetry is "memorable speech" (cf. 231). But it is the "musical," "singing" quality of Thomas's work that most establishes its poetic form. Murray also raises the question of poetry's relation to truth and theology. What was the value of poetic expression for Thomas himself? Did he not say that poetic knowledge suffers from a *defectum veritatis*? In answering these questions, drawing upon the work of the late Jesuit, Walter J. Ong, Murray would connect the medieval and the modern, resisting the postmodern. On the one hand, certain moderns grant that poetry is a supreme form of expression, though this appreciation tends to be grounded in skepticism at the conclusiveness of "reason." On the other hand, though not scientific, Thomas locates the nature of poetry within the ambit of logic. Murray's resolution is to show how Thomas is the "poet of paradox."

The presentations are compelling, and Murray's close poetic analyses themselves repay close reading. Admittedly, one may question the degree of rapprochement that is suggested. Throughout his book, Murray references many modern writers one would not expect to find in a scholarly work about Thomas Aquinas's interior life—Herman Hesse, Ted Hughes, Rainer Maria Rilke, Archibald MacLeish, Dylan Thomas, Ezra Pound, Seamus Heaney, etc. Do these references help to convey Murray's arguments? Perhaps they do not so much. But their inclusion is more personal than probative. They reveal the author's love of God and humble delight in contemplation, rooted in his apostolic experience of the age's approaches to truth and beauty. If what our time needs are, pace Kierkegaard, not only witnesses, but also teachers and poets, we have all three in Murray. What he ultimately says about Thomas regarding his apostolic and contemplative spirit is also rightly said of Murray himself: he is a *bonus theologus*. All of us who aspire to the same must certainly study the one; we would also do well to read the other.

N V

Bruno M. Shah, O.P.
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

God the Father in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas by John Baptist Ku, O.P. (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), xvii + 378 pp.

THE NUMBER OF EXTENDED theological studies on the person of God the Father is meager, to say the least. Thankfully, Fr. Ku's recent exposition of St. Thomas's theology of the Father not only serves to redress that paucity, but does so with remarkable comprehension and skill. Ku's text unfolds in three movements: the first provides the scriptural basis for Thomas's theology of the Father (chapter 1); the second explores the Father in relation to the intra-Trinitarian life (chapters 2–5); and the third covers the Father's role vis-à-vis creation (chapter 6).

One of the greatest strengths of Ku's text, concentrated most thoroughly in his opening chapter, is its demonstration of Thomas's unwavering dependence on divine revelation in whatever theological speculation may have followed thereafter. Working primarily through Thomas's scriptural commentaries, Ku provides overwhelming textual evidence in showing just how scripturally saturated Thomas's theology of the Father truly is. Ku also makes a convincing case in showing how Thomas's theology of the Father is grounded solely in God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ by way of the Holy Spirit. The unfortunate prejudice that St. Thomas is insufficiently biblical or Christologically deficient will have difficulty in explaining away the textual data that Fr. Ku so skillfully displays.

The necessity in Thomas's theology of God's self-revelation in Christ for the formation of any competent theology of the Father is underscored in Ku's second chapter, wherein he shows why Thomas holds paternity—not innascibility (being “utterly without origin”)—is best taken to be foundational for identifying what constitutes the person of the Father precisely as such. Over against St. Bonaventure's claim that innascibility includes the idea of fontal plenitude as a positive principle, Ku shows how Thomas's treatment of innascibility as a pure negation exhibits its dependence on the prior notion of paternity, rendering it a non-privative property of the Father's person, and yet not a personal property. That is, Ku demonstrates that, while innascibility is certainly to be taken as a notion that makes the Father known and distinguishes him from the Son and Spirit, it cannot rightly be thought to constitute the person of the Father *qua* person, for all negations depend upon an affirmative in order to function, and innascibility is a *pure* negation. It is therefore the subsisting relations that are the Son's begottenness and the Spirit's common spiration that provide the necessary affirma-

tive element that, according to our way of knowing, must be thought to constitute the person of the Father precisely as such. “‘Paternity’” describes the relation of the Father to the Son, while ‘unbegotten’ (like ‘innascibility’) designates the Father’s absence of relation to any origin” (84). The Father is the “principle not from a principle.”

With his third chapter, Ku further examines what it means when Thomas claims the Father is the “principle” of the Godhead, particularly as Thomas strives to eliminate any hints of Trinitarian subordinationism. Ku nicely displays Thomas’s distinction between being a principle (“that from which something proceeds” but which need not be “outside the essence of the principled”) and being a cause (which implies “a diversity of substance and the dependence of one on another”). “Although the Father is indeed the principle of the Son’s personal being by giving him the divine essence, he is not the cause of the essence which the Son receives” (144). Ku here provides a helpful account of Thomas’s use of “author” and “authority” among the Trinitarian persons, the former being restricted to the Father alone as a principle not from a principle, with application to the Father’s relation to the Son. “Authority,” however, is a term Thomas will allow to find application not only with the Son and the Holy Spirit, but with creatures as well. Thus, taking the Father as the “principle” of the Godhead in no way implies that the Son and Spirit are subordinate to the Father as “author” of the Son. For, the Father is not the cause of the essence the Son receives from him, and all of the Trinitarian person share equal authority. Recognition of order within the Trinity, Ku argues (via Thomas), need not (indeed, should not) imply priority.

Particularly, though by no means exclusively, in this chapter, Ku demonstrates Thomas’s theological distinctiveness with respect to Bonaventure. Focusing on their respective usages of the concept “principle,” Ku shows that, for Bonaventure, it is possible to abstract paternity from the hypostasis of the Father such that a pre-relational person can be thought to exist prior to its being manifested in a paternal relation. “For Aquinas, the relative personal property (a subsisting relation) constitutes the divine hypostasis, and the definition of ‘person’ is an intellectual *hypostasis*. For Bonaventure, *origin* constitutes the hypostasis, and the relative personal property (not a *subsisting* relation) *manifests* the distinct person but does not constitute his hypostasis” (172). Here Ku highlights Thomas’s use of the words “relation” and “origin” over against Bonaventure’s use of the same to show the greater coherence of the former. Thomas maintains that “notional acts differ from the relations of the persons only according to our mode of signification;

in the real order they are altogether the same" (174). Though the Father's act of generation makes his paternal relation known to us, it as the acting person of the Father who performs the generative act. To posit a pre-relational hypostasis of the Father, constituted by his mode of origin (innascibility) and simply manifested by the paternal relation that stems from his generative act vis-à-vis the Son, is to risk making Trinitarian faith unintelligible. The Son either becomes subordinate to the Father in the direction of Arianism, lacking the innascible essence that the Father has as himself, the divine essence, or the Son becomes conflated with the Father in the direction of Sabellianism, sharing in the innascible essence but lacking anything to distinguish him constitutively from that by which the person of the Father is established.

Ku shifts to explore the name "Father" in his fourth chapter, showing why Thomas holds it to be the most proper term for distinguishing the subsisting relation that the Father is. Here he shows why Thomas takes the analogous terms of "father" and "paternity" to be most fitting according to the *res significata*: the Father's generation of the Son is more perfect and complete than the imperfect mode of paternal generation found among creatures. And since a name is that by which a thing is identified, and given that the Father simply is his act of paternity, it is most fitting to identify him as Father. By way of the divine essence that he simply is, then, the Father communicates all that he has to the Son. Here Ku shows how and why Thomas favors Augustine's analogy of the generation of the Son in terms of the procession of an internal word. The Father speaks his Word in perfect self-knowledge that, just as that which is spoken is really distinct from the one who speaks, distinguishes between the Father and the Word. Ku likewise maintains that Thomas finds fecundity in the analogy and power of generation itself (especially when the power to beget is viewed more in terms of a "principle of action" than as "productive capacity") in that it neatly manifests both that the Father "concomitantly desires the Son's generation" and that the Son "possesses the power of generation as the one receiving" (232).

With Ku's fifth chapter, the Father's relation to the Holy Spirit takes center stage, just as the Father's relation to the Son took pride of place in his third and fourth chapters. Here Ku adroitly shows why Thomas holds that, if one does not hold that the Spirit is spirated from the Father and the Son, it becomes so exceedingly difficult to identify clearly that which distinguishes the Son from the Spirit. Moreover, Ku exhibits how the principal role of the Father in the procession of the Spirit is manifest in the Father's generation of the Son as one precisely with the

same power sufficient to breathe forth the Spirit, such that they are not “two Spirators but two persons spirating as one single principle” (280). Carefully navigating the debate between Anselm and Richard of St. Victor, Ku then provides an account of Thomas’s understanding of the Holy Spirit as the procession of the love of God for himself and as the bond of mutual love shared between the Father and the Son. And while Thomas gives preference to the former analogy (i.e., the Holy Spirit as God’s love for himself), Ku nevertheless evidences the importance of the latter analogy (i.e., the Holy Spirit as the mutual love of Father and Son) to Thomas’s scripturally reasoned pneumatology.

With his final chapter, Ku focuses on Thomas’s understanding of the Father as it relates to creatures and the divine economy. Distinguishing between the united Trinity as the ostensive Father of all creatures and the person of the Father as the unoriginate principle of creation, Ku displays Thomas’s case for how the latter serves as both the origin and last end of the created economy. For, while the Trinity is the principle by which all creation comes into being, the unique relations of the Trinitarian persons are reflected in creation by way of the temporal missions of each person. Thus, Ku provides evidence that, for Thomas, as the person of the Father communicates the divine essence to the Son and Spirit by way of generation and common spiration, so too the Father can be seen in the temporal missions of the Son and Spirit to be the unoriginate principle and ultimate end of all creation. Through divine grace, the Spirit and Son reveal the Father as the invisible beginning and redemptive end of all things.

There is a great deal to be celebrated in Ku’s thorough and carefully researched text. First, Ku’s juxtaposition of various texts in the vast Thomistic corpus is a boon for the theological (and especially Thomist) community, showing the ways in which the Angelic Doctor’s thinking developed over time in response to his surrounding circumstances and bringing texts into the conversation that might not otherwise be easily available to some readers. Second, Fr. Ku does a laudable job manifesting and expanding on the divergences between Thomas and Bonaventure in a manner that is clarifying and equally charitable to the positions of both. Third, while Ku provides his own translations of Thomas’s text for the reader unfamiliar with Latin, he thankfully supplies the original language for all quotations in the endnotes. Fourth, Ku does an excellent job reminding the reader frequently that the vocation of the theologian, as modeled in exemplary fashion by St. Thomas, is to distinguish according to the mode of signification. He provides careful grammatical analyses of the relevant terms and

arguments in a way that maintains the distinction between second and first order discourse. Fifth, Ku leaves no room for doubt that Thomas's theology of the Father is a scripturally saturated enterprise through and through, repeatedly drawing the reader's attention to the biblical bases for Thomas's arguments.

It should be said that Fr. Ku's book does suffer from certain small stylistic deficiencies. However, he demonstrates awareness of these and perhaps rightly suggests that, given the amount and type of material with which he is engaged, certain aesthetic shortcomings were all but inevitable. That he was able to keep the text to 300 pages is quite an achievement in itself, after all. But because of his continuing use of outline in structuring the book and its argument, at times the volume reads as if it simply *were* an outline, albeit one with a bit more filling out. And the recurrence of the outline's numeric and alphabetic signposts in the body of the text, signaled with brackets and parentheses, is often more distracting than enlightening. One might also have hoped for footnotes rather than endnotes. And those readers who are not already somewhat familiar with St. Thomas's theology and/or the technical intricacies of early scholastic theology will find Ku's work difficult to inhabit. Nonetheless, these considerations detract in no way from the significance of the theological gem Fr. Ku has provided us. Whatever its weaknesses, its great strengths are its demonstration of Thomas scriptural genealogy, its display of Thomas's thought and development across multiple texts, and its illuminating engagement with St. Bonaventure's (and others') contrasting theological positions. **N V**

T. Adam Van Wart
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, Texas

Philosophical Virtues and Psychological Strengths: Building the Bridge edited by Romanus Cessario, O.P., Craig Steven Titus, and Paul C. Vitz (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 2013), 322 pp.

THE WISDOM OF CATHOLICISM, accumulated and handed down through centuries of experience and reflection, remains a resource of tremendous proportions, although one that is, by and large, neglected today, not least by Catholics themselves. The present volume proposes to draw on this resource for the benefit of the contemporary psychological sciences and their application in therapy. The contributors help establish "a foundation column near the side of philosophy" for the "bridge" between the philosophical virtues and the psychologi-

cal strengths mentioned in the title (293). At the heart of their considerations, therefore, is the notion of virtue.

Virtue, as Catholic tradition has it, is a stable quality of mind, a “habit” of soul, by which one has a fixed disposition to act rightly as a rule, and in so doing, to lead a good life. The virtuous man or woman is the constant one, the reliable one. Together with reason, truth, nature, and being, virtue is one of the great *Leitmotifs* of Western thought. After much elaboration by Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, the theme of virtue was given a Christian inflection by the Fathers of the Church and the scholastics. In the modern world, the word virtue has taken on a prim and priggish tone, but the human excellence that it names continues to show up regularly in human affairs, as does, of course, its opposite, vice. More recently, the theme of virtue has been revived by philosophical scholars under the somewhat awkward term *virtue ethics*, a term whose reach is taken to include the work of some Thomistic philosophers and theologians, including such notable figures as Josef Pieper, Servais Pinckaers, and Alasdair MacIntyre.

The theme of virtue enters into an ancient analogy between philosophy and medicine: as medicine heals the body, it was thought, so philosophy heals the soul, which it does by cultivating true virtue. Medieval Christianity took up this theme of health of soul under the name *cura animarum*, the care or cure of souls exercised by priests, especially in their preaching and hearing of confessions. The term *cura animarum* coincides semantically with the modern word *psychiatry*, and the obvious similarity between the sacrament of confession and psychiatric consultation—two situations in which one is assured that one can “come clean” with the truth about oneself—has often been noted.

As many even non-Catholics might agree, the theme of virtue finds its most perfect expression in the *Summa theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas, a work whose central part contains Aquinas’s most complete account of virtue in general, the seven great virtues in particular, the three theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity), and the four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, courage, and moderation). Leonard Boyle has shown that an important context for the *Summa* is the concern of the Dominican order, from its beginnings, with *cura animarum*. Aquinas evidently saw a close connection between care of souls and the doctrine of virtue. Most of the contributors to this volume draw on the works of Aquinas, especially the *Summa theologiae*. Several of them also refer to the form of psychotherapy called cognitive therapy, the premise of which is that awareness of truth can of itself be curative.

The essays are the fruit of meetings organized by the Scholarly Research Center of the Institute for the Psychological Sciences in Arlington, Virginia. Gladys Sweeney, Academic Dean Emerita of the Institute, and Romanus Cessario, O.P., one of the editors of the collection, have played important roles, both theoretically and practically, in eliciting the contributions and bringing them together into a whole. Other notable influences on the contributors include Benedict Ashley's *Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian* (1995) and St. John Paul II's encyclical *Fides et ratio* (1998). (Fr. Ashley, who also contributed to the volume, passed away on February 23, 2013, shortly before the volume was published.)

The volume is divided into three sections, the first consisting of two introductory essays. Romanus Cessario ("Fresh Beginnings from Classical Foundations") presents the interdisciplinary, bridge-building aims of the volume. Kenneth Schmitz ("Overarching Considerations") provides metaphysical context by giving an account of the transcendental properties of being, then indicates how each of the essays in the central section of the volume can be placed in this context.

The central section consists of eight essays in Thomistic philosophy, each of which includes suggestions for therapeutic application of philosophical principles. Christopher J. Thompson ("At the Therapist's Door") proposes that conversation between Thomists and clinical psychologists should begin in the setting of the contemporary counselor, who must be aware of what it means to be a human person, made to pursue one's own good, and ultimately one's beatitude. Matthew Cuddeback ("Personal Unity") presents Aquinas's account of the nature of the human soul, its union with a body, and its powers. John Cuddeback ("Ordered Inclinations") discusses the ordering of human inclinations and the measuring of human action in light of man's true end. Craig Steven Titus ("Reasonable Acts") develops several aspects of the large and complex topic of right practical reason.

Tobias Hoffmann ("Free Choices") gives a clear and thoughtful Thomistic account of will and free choice and reflects on the meaning of freedom. Paul Gondreau ("Balanced Emotions") provides a metaphysical account of the emotions, then shows how emotion can participate in reason and thereby become ordered to the human good; he draws implications for clinical therapy in cases of intemperance. Daniel McNerny ("Poised Strength") discusses effective cognitive therapy with particular reference to the irascible appetite. He shows how disturbing passions of the irascible appetite, such as anger, hope,

daring, and striving for honor, can be turned to good use in therapy; and he presents Aquinas's sophisticated analysis of the virtue of the irascible appetite, namely, courage, into elements of attack (confidence and magnificence) and endurance (patience and perseverance). J. David Franks ("Tempered Desire") discusses temperance, in particular chastity, in the context of an interesting, non-Marxist critique of the pernicious effects of consumerist ideology on human desire.

Three essays make up the concluding section. Roger Scruton ("Modern Philosophical Anthropology") provides an alternative to the volume's predominantly Thomistic approach by discussing modern "anthropology" and the modern theme of "subjectivity," especially as developed in the German tradition stemming from Kant. Benedict M. Ashley ("Mental Health and Human Well-Being") reviews the articles of the central section and closes with the pertinent suggestion that Thomists might look more closely into what Aquinas calls the *vis aestimativa* in animals and the *vis cogitativa* in human beings. Paul C. Vitz ("Postscript") brings the volume to a close by proposing that fuller application of the analyses and suggestions of the foregoing essays must be carefully worked out with reference to particular pathologies and mental problems. By way of illustration, he briefly describes the work of two students at the Institute for the Psychological Sciences, Leslie Trautman and Eric Gudan.

The editors and contributors are evidently motivated by the admirable hope that Thomistic insights can be made to serve the prudence of contemporary counselors of troubled souls. May it prove to be so. Meanwhile, this collection of essays provides much material for reflection, not just for therapists, both Catholic and non-Catholic, but also for Thomistic scholars with an interest in Aquinas's astonishingly accurate understanding of human nature. N.V

Kevin White

Catholic University of America
Washington, DC