

Book Reviews

Commentary on Thomas Aquinas's *Treatise on Law* by J. Budziszewski (*New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014*), 475 pp.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS'S *Treatise on Law* takes up questions 90–107 in the *prima secundae partis* of his *Summa theologiae*. It concerns not only the nature of law in general (rational, for the common good, and promulgated by he who has care of the community), but also the four specific types of law (eternal, natural, human, and divine) and questions concerning their natures, causes, and effects. Although discussions of Aquinas's view of natural law are not difficult to find—especially in the debates in recent years over the new natural law and its application to contemporary issues—no one, until now, has published a line-by-line commentary of the Angelic Doctor's *Treatise on Law*.

Most philosophers are exposed to Aquinas's work in law by way of selections found in anthologies, rather than by direct acquaintance with the full panoply of St. Thomas's philosophical and theological corpus. For this reason, these readers oftentimes approach the Angelic Doctor with a cluster of modern assumptions that make it difficult for them to truly understand Aquinas's thought. In this book, J. Budziszewski provides these readers with the epistemic, metaphysical, and theological infrastructure that is nearly always missing from contemporary “textbook” accounts of the *Treatise on Law*. As Budziszewski points out in his introduction, so many of the contemporary critics of St. Thomas assess his view of law while ignoring the rest of the *Summa theologiae*, the work from which the *Treatise* is derived and with which it is organically connected. Thus, to many of these critics, Aquinas's position seems naïve and simplistic, and thus not worthy of serious consideration by contemporary philosophers of law. Unfortunately, this mistaken understanding gets repeated and recycled by generations of scholars who are not aware of what they

do not know. Budziszewski's book is an important remedy to this exegetical negligence.

After the acknowledgements, a republication of Aquinas's prayer before study, and a diagram of the architecture of law, Budziszewski begins this volume with a wonderful introduction. As one would expect, he provides an overview of what he is trying to accomplish in this book. But he also offers an introduction to Aquinas's life and work, as well as to the *Summa* and how to read it. It is clear that Budziszewski is not writing just for the guild, but as he puts it, for "students, general readers, and other serious amateurs" (xxiii). For this reason, he situates Aquinas historically, explains the disputational structure of the *Summa* (prologue, *ultrum*, objections, *sed contra*, *respondeo*, etc.), and responds to questions and concerns about Aquinas's approach that contemporary readers often raise: that it is dry, lacks warmth, relies too much on authority, ignores issues important to present day scholars, and so on. (I have no doubt that this last point is a result of Budziszewski having, for many years, taught a graduate seminar on the *Treatise on Law* at the University of Texas, where he serves as professor of philosophy and government.)

The book covers only questions 90–97, which is the portion of the *Treatise* that is most often anthologized. In a free online-accessible volume meant to accompany the book—*Companion to the Commentary*—Budziszewski offers commentary (and reflections) on questions 100, 105, and 106, which concern the Divine Law, both Old and New. *The Companion* is 239 pages in length and addresses many questions that are not addressed in *The Commentary*. Among the over sixty issues (or topics) he addresses are the following: "What is the common good, anyway?" "Does the eternal lawmaker really exist?" "What counts as harm to others?" "Shared private goods," "Do even sociopaths and psychopaths know the natural law?" and "Conscience, conscience, and conscience, revisited." (In my judgment, the publisher should have fully integrated *The Companion* with *The Commentary*.)

The Commentary is divided into two parts. The first part—"Law Itself, In General"—covers questions 90–92, and the second part—"The Parts of the Law"—covers 93–97. Each question begins with some introductory comments (e.g., "Before Reading Question 93"), and this is followed by commentary on the prologue and then commentary on each article. Using the Dominican Fathers' translation, Budziszewski includes Aquinas's text along with his own paraphrase in a column to the right of it. So, what the reader gets is

the standard translation (which, as Budziszewski points out in several places, has its drawbacks) accompanied by the author's interpretation for those of us who are Dominican-Fathers-translation impaired. Following each section of the text (prologue, *ultrum*, objections, *sed contra*, *respondeo*, etc.) is Budziszewski's commentary. Because it is line-by-line, sections of the commentary are numbered to correspond to the portions of the text on which Budziszewski is commenting. So, for example, in Aquinas's text, we read: "[1] **Objection 1.** It would seem that law is not pertaining to reason" (12). And below in his commentary, Budziszewski writes: "[1] To say that 'law is pertaining to reason' is to say that it pertains to the very essence of law to be reasonable rather than arbitrary, to address itself to the intellect rather than merely the will, to be something that the mind can recognize as right. The objections deny that this is essential to true law" (13).

Sometimes Budziszewski breaks up the sections of Aquinas's text—mostly when it is a lengthy *respondeo*—in order to properly walk the reader through some difficult passages that require detailed attention. So, for example, when commenting on the precepts of the natural law in question 94, article 2, Budziszewski is careful in explaining what Aquinas means by self-evidence in theoretical and practical reason and how modern understandings of nature and rationality often impede the uninitiated reader from grasping what Aquinas is actually saying. This is where Budziszewski is at his best. He is exceptionally gifted in presenting difficult ideas in a readable and winsome fashion. There are, of course, those who think that to say that a book is accessible is the same as saying it is "popular" or "nonscholarly." That may be true of some works, but not this one. Budziszewski's clarity of word does what all good writing on difficult texts is supposed to do: it illuminates, while not diminishing, the sophistication and complexities of its subject matter.

By providing what, I believe, will soon be recognized as *the* standard work from which readers can derive an accurate and sympathetic rendering of Aquinas's *Treatise on Law* in language they can understand, Budziszewski has given us a unique and important contribution not only to the literature on Aquinas but also to the conversations in contemporary legal and political philosophy. **NCV**

Francis J. Beckwith
Baylor University
Waco, TX

The Glory of God's Grace: Deification According to St. Thomas Aquinas by Daria Spezzano (*Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2015*), 390 pp.

RECENT SCHOLARSHIP ON DEIFICATION has been ecumenical. Far from being an exclusively Eastern doctrine, it arguably plays a central role in Western theology. Anna Williams argued, for example, that Thomas Aquinas was much closer to Gregory Palamas than traditionally supposed, even suggesting that his mature thought was moving toward the Eastern view that grace is fundamentally uncreated.¹ Daria Spezzano's new book, by contrast—originally her dissertation at Notre Dame directed by Joseph Wawrykow—focuses exclusively on Thomas's mature account of deification. Since, by Spezzano's lights, Thomas understands deification as salvation, the bulk of the book is spent summarizing sundry soteriological topics.

After the introduction, chapter 1 discusses the doctrine of God, covering participation, the divine ideas, predestination, the beatific vision, and the divine missions. Chapter 2 discusses the image of God in connection with the divine missions. Human action, grace and free will, and sanctifying grace are covered in chapter 3. Chapter 4 focuses on Christology, including the Incarnation and the grace of Christ. Chapter 5 summarizes Thomas's questions on charity, and chapter 6 summarizes his view of wisdom and charity in connection with Christ's Passion and priesthood, as well as our deification through the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. Chapter 7 recapitulates the book, and two appendices briefly cover the history of deification and the question of created grace, respectively.

Chapter 1 begins with the basics of Thomas's view of nature and grace. Human beings are created for an end beyond their grasp. We must be transformed by grace and receive the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love to advance to eternal life, participation in God. At the most basic level, participation is when "something receives in a particular fashion what belongs to another in universal or total fashion" (24). All creatures participate in God to some extent, as God is being itself. Rational creatures participate according to intellect and reason and are thus capable of "true deification" (30), culminating

¹ Anna N. Williams, *The Ground of Union: Deification in Aquinas and Palamas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). This reading of Aquinas has not gone unchallenged; see Bruce Marshall, "Ex Occidente Lux? Aquinas and Eastern Orthodox Theology," *Modern Theology* 20, no. 1 (2004): 23–50.

in the beatific vision. In the vision—our ultimate deformity—the essence of God becomes the intelligible form by which we know God, thus making us like God, who knows himself through himself.

Most of chapter 2 is a commentary on *Summa Theologiae* [ST] I, q. 93, on the image of God. All creatures bear at least a trace of God, but rational creatures are properly said to “image” God, as they share a specific likeness of God’s intellectual nature. Thomas conceives the image in Trinitarian terms. The rational creature’s intellectual production of the word and love represent the eternal generation of the Word and Spiration of the Holy Spirit. Spezzano concludes by linking the image to Thomas’s treatment of the divine missions: the divine persons are sent to human beings to lead them to the beatific vision. To receive the persons in time, however, we must be transformed by grace.

Chapter 3 begins with a discussion of human action and the relation between grace and free will. All creatures have secondary causal powers and their actions are simultaneously caused by God, the primary cause; rational creatures have free will and are directed by providence. No creature has the power to reach beatitude unless God gives the grace of the Holy Spirit. Spezzano deftly explains Thomas’s view of sanctifying grace in the second half of chapter 3 (129–51), which can be read in conjunction with appendix B, on created grace. These are two of the most helpful sections of the book. Spezzano’s treatment of Thomas’s views goes a long way toward dispelling the objection that, if grace is created, deification is impossible. Created grace, as the intermediary between creature and creator, blocks genuine union with God. Instead (so the objection goes), we should say with the Orthodox tradition that grace is uncreated. Spezzano shows that, *pace* Williams, the vocabulary of created grace is found in Thomas’s mature works. (She suggests that Thomas usually describes grace as “habitual” rather than “created” because the former term is more specific, linking grace to the activities it enables [365]). As Thomas argues in *ST* I-II, q. 110, a. 1, grace can be said with reference to God’s gracious will toward his creatures or with reference to the transforming effect it has on them. Without the latter, sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*), we could not be deified; we would be stuck in sin. Grace is the means by which we participate in the divine nature and—as the subsequent chapters show in detail—in Christ’s sonship and the Spirit’s spiration.

Drawing heavily on Thomas’s biblical commentaries, chapter 4

shows that deification is given only through Christ. Indeed, every reference to 2 Peter 1:4 in the commentaries is Christologically oriented. By participating in the divine nature, we participate as adopted sons in Christ's natural sonship. Jesus Christ, who fully possesses grace as man, both models grace and dispenses it to us. Chapter 5 focuses on charity, the theological virtue enabling us to love God above all things as the source of beatitude. By charity, we become friends with God and participate in the Holy Spirit, whose proper name is charity. Chapter 6 begins by discussing wisdom, the virtue enabling one to judge things according to their highest causes. The wisdom of metaphysics and *sacra doctrina* can be acquired through study, but the wisdom that is a gift of the Holy Spirit is given to all believers. It perfects their charity so that they can judge, by way of inclination, what to do for salvation. Though the image of God in human beings is Trinitarian by nature, charity and wisdom conform us to the Trinity in a higher way. The chapter culminates with a discussion of how Christ, full of charity and wisdom, leads us to salvation through Baptism and the Eucharist: "By the Eucharist especially, one might say, we participate in the likeness of the Holy Spirit by being conformed to the charity of Christ's passion" (323). Chapter 7 recapitulates previous chapters.

The book is somewhat repetitive. The same summary of Thomas's treatment of the divine missions is found in both chapter 1 and chapter 2. Appendix A, a brief survey of deification before Aquinas, overlaps with the introduction. With the exception of created grace, engagement with objections to Thomas's thought is precluded by the study's very broad scope. It would have been interesting to see the author's response to the common objection (voiced even by some prominent Thomists) that Christ cannot have enjoyed the beatific vision uninterruptedly *in via*.² If the objection holds, it would seem Thomas's view of our participation in the fullness of Christ's grace would need to be rethought.

Despite these structural issues, the book is meticulously researched and provides a wealth of helpful material for scholars interested in Thomas's view of deification. The extensive citations from the biblical commentaries throughout the book are especially helpful, as are the fairly frequent references back to the *Scriptum*. Moreover, future

² See, for example, J.-P. Torrell, O.P., "S. Thomas d'Aquin et la science du Christ," in *Saint Thomas au XXe siècle*, ed. S. Bonino (Paris: Éditions St. Paul, 1994), 394–409.

ecumenical research will need to reckon with Spezzano's robust articulation of Thomas's view on the created effects of God's grace. **N&V**

Daniel W. Houck
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, TX

Benedict XVI's Reform: The Liturgy between Innovation and Tradition by Nicola Bux, translated by Joseph Trabbic (*San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012*), 165 pp.

A RETURN TO ROMAN liturgical tradition was a key aspect of the pontificate of Benedict XVI. This included ritual sobriety, the increased employment of Latin, the restoration of formerly abandoned vesture and practices, and the liberalization of the use of the Roman rites as celebrated in 1962 (the Extraordinary Form, including the Mass of John XXIII). It is noteworthy that Pope Francis has continued the general lines of this Benedictine "reform." The current pontiff has not nullified or placed general restrictions upon Benedict's 2007 *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum*. Francis continues to use a version of the so-called Benedictine altar arrangement, having, most importantly, an upright crucifix on the altar between himself and the congregation as they face each other. One could even say that, despite Francis's clear attempt to celebrate the liturgy in a simpler fashion than did Benedict XVI, Francis is maintaining the Benedictine return to a more sober, less exuberant, less creative style, a hallmark of Roman liturgy over the ages as compared to Eastern liturgies. Experientially, I would hold as well that Benedict's approach has led to and continues to typify the overall trend in American parish life toward a more traditional style. Nicola Bux's study of Benedict's liturgical theology and legislation thus retains its pertinence.

Bux, a professor of Eastern liturgy and sacramental theology at the Pugliese Theology Faculty of Bari, Italy, is an unabashed proponent of Pope Benedict's liturgical options. His book serves as a presentation and defense of the former pontiff and, more generally, of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass. Some of the book's material explicitly meditates on texts from Ratzinger, while other sections are more independent, although always in a Ratzingerian spirit.

Chapter 1, entitled "The Sacred and Divine Liturgy," identifies how Catholic religious ritual, the liturgy, is ultimately a gift from God to man, an encounter that should involve us responding to God

in devoted worship. For Bux, a contemporary retrieval of the sense of the sacred requires the Extraordinary Form of the liturgy, for it expresses preeminently the sacred. Furthermore, due to its divine origin, the liturgy is not changeable at man's whim. The liturgy is formed by and forms tradition. In this, Bux describes the liturgy as "rational," an intermittent theme of the book. One thinks of the Roman Canon's preconsecration petition that the *oblatio* be made *rationabilis*, rational, reasonable, spiritual. This focus on the liturgical *ratio* is inspired by Ratzinger himself (see his *The Spirit of the Liturgy* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000], 50). Although not mentioned by Bux in his book, one thinks here of Pope Benedict's Regensburg defense of human reason in the service of religious faith.

The second chapter draws upon Ratzinger's *Introduction to Christianity*, establishing how the liturgy is more God-centered than man-centered. Furthermore, in the liturgy's relationship between God and men, the dynamic flow is from God to men via Christ and his Passion and Resurrection.

While the first two chapters of the book are meditations upon large liturgical themes, chapter 3 begins a shift to the more detailed discussion of recent liturgical reforms. Herein, starting with Pope Pius XII, Bux presents various steps in the adaptation of the liturgy. He uses some traditionalist argumentation but generally gives a conservative critique. He presents the familiar distinction between a prudent reform requested by the Second Vatican Council and an imprudent one enacted by the post-conciliar *Consilium*. Bux upholds some of the changes as reasonable: "liturgical reform, . . . according to Pius XII, results from the necessity of things, because the liturgy itself is a form that continually tends to *re-form* itself in the sense of organic development" (61). Bux supports, for instance, the 1965 missal revisions of Pope Paul VI (61), a surprising position given Bux's promotion of the 1962 missal. He laments much else of the post-conciliar reform as unreasonable, afflicted by the particular disease of "antiquarianism (*archeologismo*)" (61 and 73).

Chapter 4 presents and defends *Summorum Pontificum*, insisting that the *motu proprio* is entirely about ecclesial and liturgical unity and that it does not represent a rupture. Bux identifies the initiative as "a cease-fire . . . in the battle" (75). Benedict attempted to emphasize divine worship, not to distinguish the relative value of varying liturgical rites. Bux raises the interesting point that a single Eastern Church *sui iuris* can have multiple rites for the Divine Liturgy. Thus,

diversity within the Roman Church can be a good development.

Bux's fifth chapter opens with concerns about how the unity and doctrine of the Church can be preserved in an environment of multiple liturgical forms. His overall intent is to illustrate that liturgical plurality should not and, indeed, does not threaten ecclesial unity. The chapter gets diverted, however, by the thorny question as to whether the liturgical rites promulgated in 1962 were ever officially abrogated by Paul VI. Bux marshals much material upholding the irrevocable character of the Mass of Pope John XXIII. The most convincing evidence that Bux raises is the thwarted request of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship (including Archbishop Annibale Bugnini) to have a declaration of abrogation issued for the 1962 missal by the Pontifical Commission for the Interpretation of the Decrees of the Second Vatican Council, a request that the Vatican secretary of state refused to forward to the latter dicastery "on the grounds that [such a declaration] would constitute persistent hatred of the liturgical tradition" (102). Overall, this chapter is one of the more unsatisfying of the book, for it is too simplistic and polemically emotional, often in self-contradictory ways. To say that "no liturgical book or part of a liturgical book has been abrogated unless it contained errors" (100) is difficult to harmonize with St. Pius V's *Quo Primum*, the bull that instituted the "Novus Ordo" of 1570 and that prohibited the use of many rites. To say that *Summorum Pontificum* "did not cause any confusion" on the matter of abrogation (105) is difficult to accept historically and sociologically. Bux's impassioned defense alone proves that this issue has been a concern among Catholics. Part of the problem turns on the definition of the term "abrogation." Bux makes oblique reference to this fact (104) but should have elucidated the matter more clearly. Furthermore, Bux should have admitted the complexity of justifying how an ordinary priest could have virtuously used the 1962 *Missale Romanum* in the 1970s and early 1980s and how the laity could have virtuously participated at such Masses. This would have allowed for a clearer recognition of the pastoral sensitivity and broadmindedness of John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

Chapter 6 reflects on how the liturgy should lead us to the adoration and worship of God. The discussed features are the servant quality of priests, the liturgical activity and devotion of the laity, the attention that should be given to a physical image of the Cross (including a unified *ad orientem* posture), and architecture that

elevates the soul. The seventh and final chapter offers an assortment of liturgical reflections, many based upon Benedict's 2007 post-synodal apostolic exhortation on the Eucharist, *Sacramentum Caritatis*.

Concerning the book's contents, the overlap between Ratzinger's ideas and Bux's is strong. Perhaps because it is more of a commentary and defense of Ratzinger, *Benedict XVI's Reform* does not substantially advance the overall subject of how to understand the liturgy and its recent changes or how to move the situation forward. Rather, Bux catalogs the major elements of the nontraditionalist, conservative critique of contemporary liturgy. In one innovative twist, he alleges at various points that the liturgical reforms after the Second Vatican Council possess a Rahnerian character (e.g., 31, 73, 95). This is an interesting opinion that Bux does not develop at length but that could bear further investigation.

This book would be most suitable for a liturgically interested, nontechnical audience already inclined to or at least open to a more traditional liturgy. Stylistically, Bux sometimes paints with broad strokes, asserting points as part of a meditation rather than establishing them via careful, structured argumentation. It is not written in a dispassionate, "ecumenical" style that may more readily entice progressives to abandon their positions. A more serene, broadminded style may have helped Bux to garner a greater percentage of the readers who have been captivated by the penetrating wisdom of Ratzinger's *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. N·V

Dominic M. Langevin, O.P.

Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception
Washington, DC

Human Action in Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, & William of Ockham by Thomas M. Osborne, Jr. (Washington DC: Catholic University of America, 2014), 250 pp.

THOMAS OSBORNE'S *Human Action in Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, & William of Ockham* provides a helpful comparative analysis of three key medieval thinkers with respect to their distinct accounts of human action or theories of "moral psychology" (xvi). These thinkers, Osborne states, "are arguably the three most significant philosophers and theologians of the central period in the development of Scholastic thought" (xiii). His work is written in an accessible style that renders it useful not only as a resource for specialist researchers in

the medieval era but also as a supplemental text for course instruction at the graduate level. While the exact focus and content of this study is unique, it is comparable in approach to other recent volumes in medieval ethics and moral theology such as M. V. Dougherty's *Moral Dilemmas in Medieval Thought: From Gratian to Aquinas* (2013), or to the comparative medieval studies of Marilyn McCord Adams, Richard Cross, or Russell L. Friedman.

Osborne states that his study aims to provide an overview of the issues with which medieval moral psychology grappled and that this, in turn, will serve to illuminate key philosophical questions in ethics, as well as to provide historical background for understanding Reformation and early modern thought (xvi). While Osborne states that his primary goal is to provide a systematic overview of the three thinkers under consideration, his study also illustrates a contextual historical understanding of the authors in question. For example, at times, he provides occasional contextual references to other important medieval ethicists such as Anselm of Canterbury, Peter Abelard, Peter Lombard, and Albert the Great. Osborne is explicitly conscious of the methodological need to avoid conforming the authors under consideration to a superficial historical narrative in which Scotus is construed as reacting to Aquinas, and Ockham in turn to Scotus (see 222–23, where Osborne briefly critiques two common historiographical trends). On this point, Osborne recognizes that Aquinas in the era prior to his canonization did not have as significant an intellectual import for Franciscan thinkers as contemporary scholars might expect (xix). Overall, Osborne indicates that his comparative studies should serve to provide his reader both with basic familiarity with the moral psychology of each thinker and with a cognizance of the doctrinal currents that proved to be influential upon subsequent Western thought (xxv). In this respect, Osborne points to three main themes that he indicates establish a reliable historical narrative concerning the doctrinal developments in fundamental ethics from Aquinas to Ockham: “(1) a developing separation between nature and will, (2) an increased emphasis on the will’s activity, and (3) a changing view of mental causation” with respect to elicited exterior acts (xxiv–xxv, cf. 227). These themes collectively provide a helpful orientation for continued study of these thinkers, a framework that other scholars will benefit from exploring and evaluating.

Osborne’s work is organized into five chapters enveloped by an introduction and a conclusion. Each of the five chapters is focused on

a particular ethical topic, such as the causes of a moral act (viz., an agent's intellect and will), the stages of a moral act, or the specification of a moral act. Regarding the structure of the book, Osborne states that it "develops thematically" (xxii). The topical arrangement of the study is intended generally to follow the *ordo doctrinae* found in questions 6–21 of the *prima secundae* of Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*, which Osborne maintains is the most complete and systematic treatment of moral psychology found among the works of the three thinkers under consideration (xvi). Each of Osborne's chapters is further divided into four parts. This schema for the most part follows a common pattern of first expositing Aquinas's position on the ethical topic at hand and then the positions of Scotus and Ockham and closing with a synopsis that compares and contrasts the main positions of these thinkers.

The work provides an extensive bibliography, including reference to a few non-English secondary sources. In contrast with the bibliography, however, the index of the book entails a shortcoming in that it does not extend to the footnotes and, thus, omits almost all secondary sources cited in the work. This is unfortunate, since Osborne's work is well-documented. The only way to determine quickly whether Osborne assesses other important secondary studies (for example, Pinckaers on moral freedom in Ockham) is to skim through all of the footnotes. In such notes, however, Osborne's engagement with secondary literature is concise and strictly limited to specific issues that arise during the course of his primary exposition (there is no distraction of his reader with long excursions). Regarding primary sources, Osborne takes care to cite the current critical editions of the Latin texts where such are available (see his introductory note on xi–xii). Osborne's closing contrasts at the end of each chapter communicate helpful summative analyses to the casual reader and invite closer engagement with the more in-depth preceding sections that supply precise documentation. Osborne's brief concluding chapter to the book serves to provide a similar summary for the entire work. This outlines his main observations and contains his exposition of the three main developmental themes mentioned above (see 221–28, as well as the summary at the end of his introduction, xxiv–xxv).

I found of particular interest and import Osborne's assessment of the thinkers under consideration with respect to their common position regarding the moral status of acts construed to involve intrinsic evil. Unlike other contemporary Catholic moral historians, Osborne recognizes that all three thinkers affirm that there are indeed certain kinds of human acts that involve intrinsic moral evil, and also that

there are biblical, medieval, and Aristotelian precedents for this doctrine (xvii–xviii, cf. 193 and especially the reference to Dedek on 151n11). Likewise, Osborne highlights how Aquinas and Duns Scotus both affirm that exterior acts have moral characters (188–89), whereas Ockham (like Abelard) does not differentiate between exterior acts and physical acts (177–78 and 191–92). The result here is that, for Ockham, the interior act of the will receives all “moral weight” in the examination of conscience (178, cf. 198). Osborne’s observations in this regard serve to indicate that proportionalist readings of Aquinas (for example, Janssens) confuse Aquinas’s moral theology with that of Ockham. In this and other respects, Osborne’s work is invaluable. It is not only a helpful and needed resource for scholars who conduct medieval research. The book also will serve contemporary instructors of moral theology who recognize the importance of ongoing historical investigation for illustrating the doctrinal narratives that unify the Catholic intellectual tradition. N&V

Matthew R. McWhorter
Divine Mercy University
Arlington, VA

Verbum Domini and the Complementarity of Exegesis and Theology, edited by Fr. Scott Carl (*Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015*), vii + 176 pp.

THIS VOLUME IS A COLLECTION of essays that emerged from conferences sponsored by the Msgr. Jerome D. Quinn Institute of Biblical Studies at the St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity at the University of St. Thomas in 2009 and 2011. As the editor, Fr. Scott Carl, states in his introduction: “The overarching goal of these conferences has been to think about the implications of these acts of the magisterium [i.e. the 2008 Synod of Bishops on the Word of God and the promulgation of Benedict XVI’s Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini* in 2010] for our lives as biblical scholars teaching in Catholic seminaries” (xii). Accordingly, the essays in this volume exhibit a vibrant concern for the interpretation of the Bible in concert with the Church’s faith and life, as well as the teaching of such theologically attuned exegesis in seminary formation.

The essays in this volume are collected into two major parts, each of which has a distinct theme. The essays in part I, “The Complementarity of Exegesis and Theology” (1), deal in various ways with

Ratzinger's / Benedict XVI's directive to better integrate biblical exegesis and Church doctrine (or theology more broadly), and thus overcome the so-called "hiatus" (41) between them (referencing Ratzinger's 1988 Erasmus Lecture). Abbot Denis Farkasfalvy, O.Cist. ("Inspiration and Incarnation") argues that a *Ressourcement*-style renewal of the theology of biblical inspiration would serve the reintegration of biblical exegesis and theology. Crucial for such a project, according to Farkasfalvy, is the place of Scripture as a theological reality within the economy of salvation, culminating in the Incarnation of the Word. Fr. Francis Martin ("Spiritual Understanding of Scripture") frames his presentation by referencing the ancient Judeo-Christian exegetical tradition that Scripture mediates the source of revelation to faith-filled readers. Martin goes on to identify certain modern philosophical ideas pertaining to the understanding of history (e.g., the rejection of transcendent causality in the world) and human cognition (e.g., the influence of Kantian epistemology) that obstruct conceptually our access to that source of revelation.

Brant Pitre ("*Verbum Domini* and Historical-Critical Exegesis") focuses on *Verbum Domini* §§29–49 and discerns five major principles in this section to guide Catholic biblical interpretation. He notes Benedict's positive (though not uncritical) appraisal of historical-critical exegesis and the need to overcome the split between biblical exegesis and theology by putting into practice the full interpretive program given in *Dei Verbum* §12. Fr. Pablo Gadenz ("Overcoming the Hiatus between Exegesis and Theology: Guidance and Examples from Pope Benedict XVI") provides a very substantive essay that focuses on two major ideas of Ratzinger/Benedict: "Dogma as Interpretation of Scripture" (45) and "The Church as the Living Subject of Biblical Interpretation" (52). Instead of seeing Church dogma as a movement away from the plain sense of Scripture, Gadenz notes, Ratzinger encourages scholars to think of it as a movement into the depths of Scripture (61). Gadenz's essay also complements nicely that of Farkasfalvy by documenting how the inspiring Holy Spirit is active within the faith community both as the Scripture's past context of composition and as its present context of interpretation. Christian D. Washburn ("The Catholic Use of Scriptures in Ecumenical Dialogue") argues for the incorporation into ecumenical dialogue of modes of theological exegesis, such as those methods inspired by the Church Fathers, to supplement the accepted use of historical-critical exegesis. The incorporation of theological methods of exegesis is

befitting ecumenical dialogue, since it presumes what the dialogue partners already agree on—"the Bible is the inspired Word of God" (71)—and provides insight into the Christian reception of biblical texts prior to the disputes of the sixteenth century (77–78).

Part II of the collection, "The Word of God in the Formation of Seminarians," takes up some various aspects of teaching Scripture in seminaries. Peter S. Williamson ("Preparing Seminarians for the Ministry of the Word in Light of *Verbum Domini*") draws out five key principles from *Verbum Domini* (supplemented by St. John Paul II's *Pastores Dabo Vobis*) pertaining to the biblical formation of clergy. He goes on to outline a series of goals and strategies for providing seminarians with the requisite spiritual and intellectual formation to be effective ministers of the Word. Fr. James Swetnam, S.J. ("Searching for the Obvious: Toward a Catholic Hermeneutic of Scripture with Seminarians Especially in Mind"), sets forth the major features of Catholic biblical interpretation in light of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. He argues that the Catholic approach to Scripture involves a return to the original meaning of the text and a bringing that meaning forth into contemporary application. Such an interpretive move is possible, Swetnam argues, "because of the common elements [e.g., faith, Eucharist, the Holy Spirit, life of holiness] involved in the lives of both generations [i.e., the first Christian generation and the contemporary generation]" (106; cf. 102).

In an outstanding contribution, Mary Healy ("*Verbum Domini* and the Renewal of Biblical Preaching") takes up the bland and largely nonscriptural character of much contemporary Catholic preaching and offers some strategies for improvement in light of *Verbum Domini*. Healy cites in particular the need for a renewed sense of biblical authority, a direct homiletic proclamation of the Christian kerygma through an exposition of the Mass readings, and the recovery of the fourfold sense. Such a renewal of biblically centered preaching is vital, Healy argues, because the initiatives such as the New Evangelization and the "revitalization [of faith] will *begin* with good preaching or it will not begin at all" (109).

Fr. Stephen Ryan, O.P. ("The Word of God and the Textual Pluriformity of the Old Testament"), offers the most exegetically sophisticated essay in the collection. He focuses on the notion of textual pluriformity: "the theory that a significant portion of the Old Testament has been transmitted in two or three different and irreducible versions" (123). In addition to illustrating this with examples

of multiple readings of specific biblical texts, Ryan documents how Catholic tradition has had a high tolerance for the concurrent existence and use of different versions of the same biblical books. Part of the theological payoff of textual pluriformity is to recognize that the Word of God is mediated through different “authentic” versions of the biblical books (132; referencing the Council of Trent’s description of the Vulgate). The Church has canonized books of the Bible, not specific textual versions (e.g., Hebrew, Greek, Latin) of those books (see 148), and the theology of inspiration should attend more to the former than to the latter.

Kelly Anderson (“How the Liturgy of the Hours Provides an Effective Means for Teaching the Book of Psalms”) addresses the many challenges that accompany teaching the Psalter in a seminary. As a helpful way forward, Anderson proposes (quite creatively) teaching the Psalter to seminarians through the Liturgy of the Hours and incorporating relevant, contemporary scholarship into its horizon. Through this pedagogical approach, Anderson writes, “the seminarian could learn how to *read* the psalms by employing modern methods, but *pray* the psalms to encounter Jesus Christ” (161). Similar to Anderson’s focus on the Psalter, Fr. Michael Magee (“Combining Synchronic and Diachronic Methodology in Teaching the Pentateuch”) focuses his essay on the teaching of the Pentateuch by recounting some of his own pedagogical experiences. Magee commends as a most helpful strategy the embedding of the diachronic analysis of specific texts within a larger synchronic approach to the larger Pentateuchal narrative. Such a blending of approaches will help equip seminarians for their priesthood, wherein “they will be called upon to unfold for God’s people, not the prehistory of the biblical text, but rather its divine unity and its everlasting message” (172).

Despite a possible construal of the volume’s title, the essays in this collection are not primarily about *Verbum Domini* in a strict sense of commentary on or analysis of Benedict’s text. The essays engage *Verbum Domini* to varying degrees, and they all exhibit a concern (whether overtly stated or not) for its teachings. What holds this collection together very well is a concern in each of these essays for the ecclesial, pastoral, and faith-filled aspects of biblical interpretation. The study and interpretation of the Bible as Sacred Scripture cannot be the privileged domain of specialists whose work is primarily directed to other specialists and apart from the Church and its faith. Rather, if we believe that the Bible truly mediates God’s Word to God’s people, then biblical interpretation must ultimately be directed

toward a transformative end. The work of believing exegetes is to help facilitate the intellectual, moral, and spiritual transformation of the people of God. Exegetes can do this effectively only if they have first been touched by the Word of God themselves.

In *Evangelii Gaudium* §133, Pope Francis writes, “the Church and theology exist to evangelize, and [theologians should] not be content with a desk-bound theology.”¹ The Holy Father’s words are, I think, equally applicable to biblical interpretation and its practitioners. The essays in this volume do an admirable job of encouraging biblical scholars and other seminary educators to continue on this transformative, evangelical road in service of the people of God and their ministers. N&V

William M. Wright IV
Duquesne University
Pittsburgh, PA

¹ Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel—Evangelii Gaudium* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2013), 67.