

Book Reviews

Reading the Church Fathers with St. Thomas Aquinas: Historical and Systematical Perspectives edited by Piotr Roszak and Jörgen Vijgen (*Turnhout: Brepols, 2021*), 520 pp.

Collaborative scholarly studies on Thomas Aquinas are a privileged place to situate oneself within research trends. This type of literature provides important insights into current research interests and the various methods and approaches employed, all of which are essential for those interested in Thomistic fields of study. The collective work *Reading the Church Fathers with St. Thomas Aquinas: Historical and Systematical Perspectives*, edited by the distinguished scholars Piotr Roszak and Jörgen Vijgen in the scholarly collection Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, is certainly a milestone in this field. It gives a synthetic overview of the historical and theological research on the relationship between Thomas Aquinas and his patristic sources, thus inviting us to continue the scientific work based on the knowledge acquired to date. To use the expression from Bernard of Chartres, remodeled by Ezra Sullivan, O.P., we discover that Thomas Aquinas is a “giant that stood on the shoulders of giants” (186). In all, thirteen studies are published by as many different authors, three in French and ten in English. Given the collaborative nature of the work, it would be too large a task in a review to present and analyze each of the contributions while doing justice to the quality of the essays. This review consists of (1) a presentation of the context that led to the writing of the book, (2) an overview of the book's objective and plan, (3) a review of selected essays, and (4) some general remarks.

By way of background, let us note beforehand the dedication of the work to Father Leo J. Elders, S.V.D., who passed away in 2016. The tribute is a credit to him and his work, not only in the field of Thomistic study but more specifically in the question of the relationship between Thomas Aquinas and the Fathers of the Church. The book contains thirteen contributions that

originate in a 2019 colloquium held in Toruń, Poland. The colloquium and the publication are the results of a research project entitled “Tradition and Identity: The Patristic Sources of Thomas Aquinas’s Thought (2017–2020).” The research project was conducted by the Research Center of Biblical Thomism established in 2016 at the Faculty of Theology of Nicholas Copernicus University. The Research Center aims to study the impact of Aquinas’s biblical exegesis.

The objective of this collective work is to explore the thesis that the theology of Thomas Aquinas is *ad mentem patrum* by investigating his use of the Church Fathers through historical and systematic analysis (13). The editors situate this project in the context of biblical Thomism, which has been gaining prominence for over twenty years. St. Thomas constructs his theology first from the Bible, *auctoritas proprie et ex necessitate* (*Summa theologiae* [ST] I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2). The arguments of the Fathers, *proprie sed probabiliter*, certainly serve to support and develop the doctrines found in the Bible. But interpretation, like inspiration, is never independent of the Holy Spirit. The editors note: “Such a structural correlation between the sacred text and the reading of that text enables Aquinas to reject the criticism that—to use Hans Urs von Balthasar’s expressions—the ‘patristic autumn’ represents an ideological disfiguration of the fresh, green leaves of the ‘biblical spring’ to which one should return” (12). Revelation for St. Thomas is not a passive event initiated in the past. It is a participation in the knowledge of God and the saints, especially through the *sacra doctrina*. The structural correlation presented by the editors allows them to react against tendencies aiming at the detraditionalization of theology. To read the Church Fathers with St. Thomas is to understand divine truth both from the Bible and from the Fathers, since the Spirit of truth is found both in inspiration and in interpretation. This balanced position allows Thomas to avoid a romanticized vision of the early Church in which corruption inevitably follows the apostolic age. Hence tradition retains its proper value and importance without being idealized. The treatment of sources in Thomas, the hierarchy of authorities in *sacra doctrina*, and the hermeneutics of the *expositio reverentialis* amply attest to Aquinas’s healthy hindsight vis-à-vis his patristic authorities.

Regarding the plan of the work, the first two contributions, those of Gilbert Dahan and Carmelo Giuseppe Conticello, are somewhat independent of the organizing element of the plan. The first deals with Aquinas’s dependence on St. Jerome in his biblical commentaries. The second deals with the reception of a medieval Greek author as a major source for Aquinas, Theophylact of Ohrid. A diligent reader will notice the implicit organizing principle of the following eleven contributions, which is to be found in the

outline of the *ST*. This is a practice already seen among editors. Think of *Reading Job with St. Thomas Aquinas* (2020) or, to some extent, *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas* (2012). In contrast, our book more carefully follows the outline of the *ST*, revealing intriguing editorial choices. The reader can associate the contributions in this manner: for *ST* I, Piotr Roszak on the question of the *sacra doctrina* and Serge-Thomas Bonino, O.P., on angelology; for *ST* I-II, Ezra Sullivan, O.P., on the *habitus*, Cajetan Cuddy, O.P., on law, Joseph Wawrykow on grace, and Anton ten Klooster on the gifts of the Holy Spirit; for *ST* II-II, Andrew Hofer, O.P., on the theology of religious life; for *ST* III, Franklin T. Harkins on grace and the knowledge of Christ, Conor McDonough, O.P., on Christ's headship, Jörgen Vijgen on penance, and Bryan Kromholtz, O.P., on eschatology.

Let us now focus on the contributions of Sullivan, Wawrykow, and Harkins. Sullivan's essay is entitled "The Church Fathers' Influence on Aquinas's Account of *Habitus*." Sullivan demonstrates that, even if there is a small number of direct quotes from the Fathers on *habitus* in the *ST*, we should not conclude the Church Fathers were uninfluential. Sullivan examines early accounts on *habitus*, prior to the *ST*. Following Aquinas's progression of thought, he becomes gradually independent of Augustine's authority. However, he shows the indirect influence on a patristic source, since the dialectic encounter with Augustine's views constitutes the starting point of Aquinas's position. Sullivan's essay underscores the issue of broad categories of "source" and "influence." It surely contributes to complexify the study of an author's fonts.

Wawrykow's essay is entitled "The Fathers in the *Summa*'s Teaching about Grace." Focusing on what Aquinas calls "grace" (236), he argues that Aquinas revisited his view on grace because he discovered later works of Augustine on the topic. Wawrykow builds on his previous work on grace and merit in Aquinas that shows the development of Aquinas's thought from a habitual conception of grace in the *Scriptum* to the conception of grace as *auxilium* in the *ST*. Not only did Aquinas adapt his view from Augustine, but he also shows originality from Peter Lombard and the Scholastics, as well as being the only one making use of later Augustinian works such as *De predestinatione sanctorum*, *De correptione et gratia*, and *De dono perseverantiae*. We can best see this influence from the African bishop in the questions in the *tertia pars* of the *ST* on the grace of Christ and its repercussion on predestination. Wawrykow highlights the influence of the Greek Fathers on Aquinas's treatment of grace. He goes beyond direct quotations in the *ST* and traces back the influence of Cyril of Alexandria, linking Christology and soteriology,

most notably on St. Thomas's exegesis of 2 Pet 1:4 on participation and deification.

Harkins's essay is entitled "Christ's Perfect Grace and Beatific Knowledge in Aquinas: The Influence of John Damascene." Harkins asks a new question on Christ's beatific vision: "How has Aquinas's reading of Scripture in light of the Fathers shaped his systematic teaching on this contested Christological point?" (340). The author is interested in Aquinas's interpretation of John 1:14, 16, and his reading of the Christology found in John Damascene's *De fide orthodoxa*. Harkins contextualizes his essay within the general modern critique against Aquinas's thesis of Christ possessing beatific vision from conception. He identifies two counterarguments to Aquinas's position, namely that it devaluates Christ's human nature and that it is not faithful to the New Testament. Harkins shows otherwise, that Aquinas's theology highly respects Christ's humanity and the New Testament through the pivotal role that plays John 1:14, 16, in understanding his theory of Christ's beatific vision in light of John Damascene's Christology. He interprets John's scriptural passage using a threefold approach: (1) a detailed examination of how Aquinas reads John 1:14, 16; (2) an examination of Aquinas's interpretation in the *Compendium theologiae* and the *ST*; (3) an examination of how the *De fide orthodoxa* shapes Aquinas's engagement with the passage. As a side note, the distinction between the approach's first and the second stages appears to overlap. The author does not examine John's reference outside of Aquinas's systematic works. Harkins contributes to recent Thomistic studies on Christ's beatific vision by filling a lacuna in treating John 1:14, 16, in Thomas's late systematic works. Harkins argues that the "principle of perfection," the plenitude of Christ's grace that Aquinas reads in the Gospel of John (*plenum gratiae et veritatis*) is based not only authoritatively on Scripture, but on the conciliar and patristic tradition as well. In his exegesis of John, St. Thomas depends on John Damascene's teaching of Christ as having assumed in his Incarnation the "natural and nondetractable passions" to safeguard the peculiar mode in which the Word incorporates itself into human nature. The plenitude of Christ is necessary for salvation in the sense of fittingness, for he is the one from whom flows grace to the Church, beatific vision being the ultimate end of human life.

More generally, I note that the contributions are concerned with Aquinas's dependence on one or the other of the Fathers on a specific theological doctrine. It is unfortunate that we do not find amongst the contributions a paper dealing with the *Catena Aurea*, since this absence excludes a significant domain of the reading of the Fathers in Thomas Aquinas.

Bonino suggests a typology on the studies already conducted on Aquinas

and the Church Fathers (131–32). There are (1) positive studies of historical nature that list the patristic references in the works of Thomas, (2) studies on the method and hermeneutics of the Fathers in Aquinas, and (3) more precise works on the influence of a particular Father and his doctrine in the works of Thomas and its evolution. The studies gathered in the book fit rather into the first and third categories. For the second category, Roszak's essay deals specifically with the use of the Fathers in the method outlined in question 1 of the *ST*. To a certain extent, Bonino explicitly locates his essay in the junction between the second and third categories. Vijgen does mention the *expositio reverentialis*, but does so as a given, although he briefly explains by means of a few examples how Aquinas employs this hermeneutic in the questions on penance in the *ST*.

It seems unfortunate that none of the contributions has focused on the problem of anachronism in the designation of authorities in Thomas. Bonino briefly touches on the issue, referring to the essay written by Gilles Berceville (138n28). In fact, St. Thomas only rarely refers to patristic authorities as *patres ecclesiae*, preferring rather the expression *sancti doctores*. What does this reveal about his treatment of patristic sources for the *sacra doctrina*? Does he place the same authors as we do in the category of Church Fathers? How does he situate himself among his contemporaries vis-à-vis the Fathers in terms of the hermeneutics of authorities? Furthermore, for an author that shows profound commitment to both Latin and Greek patristic sources, a cross-analysis between Aquinas's treatment of those sources and that of his contemporaries such as Bonaventure and Albert the Great would have added to our understanding of his originality in his use of the Fathers. The contribution of Conor McDonough is certainly in this direction, though the analysis remains historical and doctrinal rather than hermeneutical and methodological.

Finally, many elements of recent Thomistic research are well represented. For example, Hofer shows clearly from the *Contra impugnantes* and the *De perfectione* that the digital edition of the *Corpus Thomisticum* sometimes contains divergences from the critical text of the Leonine edition. This is a reminder of the extreme importance of a prudent choice of the text, which, in the digital age, sees a proliferation of online editions and translations. Even the most authoritative tools can be subject to inaccuracy. N.V.

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Engaging the Doctrine of Marriage: Human Marriage as the Image and Sacrament of the Marriage of God and Creation by Matthew Levering
(Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020), 301 pp.

The Christian doctrine of marriage is today at the center of many theological debates. Some believe that marriage as understood in the Catholic tradition (a lifelong union of a man and a woman open to procreation) is too narrow a framework for living out human sexuality. They propose to reform the Church's sexual and family moral doctrine to adapt it to new "scientific knowledge." In this way they hope to eliminate a stumbling block to better propose the Gospel.

In this context, the publication of Matthew Levering's *Engaging the Doctrine of Marriage* is most illuminating. For, Levering shows that at stake in this debate is not just a particular area of Catholic morality, or a matter of detail about the sacraments, but the core of the confession of faith. The doctrine of marriage belongs to the basic grammar of Christianity, without which the Church cannot articulate any evangelizing language.

In fact, Levering's book is presented within a book series that expounds the fundamentals of Catholic doctrine. The first volumes published by Levering (*Engaging the Doctrine of Revelation*, *Engaging the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, and *Engaging the Doctrine of Creation*) unfolded God's original plan for the world. The doctrine of marriage, on its part, contains the ultimate end or *telos* to which God directs all his work: "We cannot wait for marriage to appear as a topic within sacramental and moral theology. It should be brought to the front of the line, as the 'final cause' of creation and redemption" (3).

Levering's proposal is in line with a tradition present already in the Middle Ages. Thus, for example, Alexander of Hales maintains that marriage, while communicating less grace than the other sacraments, surpasses the others by its significance.¹ For there is no greater sign than the unity of Christ and the Church. St. Bonaventure also teaches that marriage and the Eucharist share the highest significance, encompassing the whole of salvific history, for they contain the unity of Christ and of humanity.²

This relationship of marriage with theology as a whole is confirmed if we look at the general plan of Levering's book. The first chapter is dedicated to what John Paul II called the "great analogy," that is, the biblical comparison between marriage and the unity of God with his people Israel, which

¹ Alexander of Hales, *In IV sent.*, d. 26, 2.

² St. Bonaventure, *In IV sent.*, d. 26, a. 2, q. 2, c. 1.

culminates in Christ and the Church.³ A second chapter argues that marriage belongs to the image of God in the human being, thus proving to be a key to theological anthropology. In the following chapters, marriage is associated with the mystery of sin (chapter 3) and with redemption through the Cross of Jesus Christ (chapter 4).

We confirm thus that, by studying marriage, we address the great theological questions: Who is the Christian God and what is his love for the world? Who is man created in the image of God? What is the economy of salvation, from sin to the redemption of man through Jesus Christ? Consequently, those who refashion the doctrine of creatural marriage, rejecting that the male–female difference is constitutive of human sexuality, are changing not only one aspect of the Church’s morality, but her very capacity to proclaim the Gospel.

The second part of Levering’s book concentrates on several specific issues: the morality of marriage (chapter 5), the sacramentality of marriage (chapter 6) and the social function of the family (chapter 7). It belongs to the Catholic doctrine of marriage that the general vision outlined in the first part of the book touches the concrete flesh of man and woman and shapes their whole life in time. Thus, defending the doctrine of sacramental marriage is crucial if faith is not to be separated from life, but to have an impact on life, to purify it and to bring it to fulfillment. In what follows I will address only some essential themes from Levering’s rich vision.

The first two chapters anchor marriage in its origins. By studying the theology of marriage, we understand who God is and his plan for history (chapter 1), as well as the meaning of the image of God in man (chapter 2).

Levering emphasizes the nuptial analogy to explain the love of God and Israel. This image is not just one among others, such as the images of God as a shepherd, a vine grower, or a king, for marriage includes all the elements of the relationship between God and his people. Indeed, marriage allows us to see Israel’s journey through time, as a journey built upon promise and rebuilt by forgiveness. Marriage also allows us to see the extreme closeness of God to men, to the point of making them the people of his possession and building his tabernacle among them. Two aspects are crucial in the way Levering presents the spousal analogy.

In the first place, all matrimonial symbolism is directed toward the Incarnation. This is the culmination of the Old Testament, but also a novelty, given the presence in flesh of the Bridegroom. The progress of the nuptial

³ See John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Media, 2006), catechesis 89:8, August 11, 1982.

image toward Christ culminates in the Eucharist, as Levering shows, relying on Brant Pitre's research. In this relationship with the Eucharist, which is the "sacrament of sacraments,"⁴ we have the first clue toward understanding the sacramentality of marriage.

Secondly, Levering confronts the difficulties that our culture experiences with the image of marriage as a description of God's love for his people. Is this not a patriarchal approach that subjugates women? Levering responds by situating this image in the culture of the time and emphasizing the ancient equivalence between the feminine body and the social body. Israel's punishment at the hands of God is not contempt for the woman's body, but the way to make palpable to the people the gravity and the social effects of their sin against God. In any case, it is necessary to wait for the revelation of Christ to obtain a complete vision of this nuptial image, rooted on the mutual subordination of both spouses through the love of Christ (see Eph 5:21).

From the point of view of the nuptial comparison between God and his people, I think that Levering's approach to the question of those who remain single, without marrying or making a consecration to God, offers room for improvement. I think Levering stresses too much the description of consecrated life or apostolic celibacy as singleness, by talking about "singleness in the Lord" (17), "consecrated singleness" (2), or "God's call to singleness" (85). For consecration to God, as Levering shows well in his book's first chapter, always acquires a spousal sense, since it includes a promise that embraces the whole of life (spousal comes from *spondeo*, to promise). Virginal consecration is thus closer to nuptiality than to singleness.

Beyond the issue of terminology, for the pastoral help of "singles," it is necessary to understand their specific situation. It consists in the fact that they have not yet chosen a state of life in the Church. John Paul II, in *Familiaris Consortio* §11, teaches that this promise can take two forms: marriage or virginal consecration. To shed light on the situation of the "singles," it helps to consider (as Levering rightly emphasizes on 18) the promise they have made in baptism and confirmation, which is sufficient to sustain their whole life and fulfill their vocation to love. It is also helpful to reflect on the particular providence of God that guides each concrete story.⁵

The second chapter deals with marriage as a place for understanding the image of God, which is the center of the Christian definition of man.

⁴ St. Thomas Aquinas, *In IV sent.*, d. 25, q. 3, a. 2, qncula. 1, arg. 4.

⁵ On the question of singles, see Olivier Bonnewjin, *J'existe! Un autre regard sur les célibataires* (Madrid: Éditions Emmanuel, 2020), with the critical review of A. Diriar, "Les célibataires dans l'Église: Un état de vie à part entière? Dialogue avec Olivier Bonnewjin," *Nova et Vetera* (French) 96 (2021): 323–38.

Levering presents a theological anthropology that takes seriously the sexual dimension of humanity and, in particular, the call to man and woman to be "one flesh" (Gen 2:24). To this end, he rightly finds it necessary to inquire whether the relationship between male and female is part of the image of God.

Levering presents a balanced view that shows how sexual difference could be seen as a reflection of the Trinitarian God. This implies enriching the traditional Trinitarian analogy of the word and the will that proceeds from the mind, as images of the Logos and the Spirit coming from the Father. The male–female communion open to fruitfulness allows a complementary access to God as a communion of persons.

In explaining this analogy, Levering takes care to avoid direct correspondence between each member of the family (man, woman, child) and the persons of the Trinity. For, God is certainly a communion of persons, but he is neither male nor female. Recall, indeed, that the nuptial image is used in revelation to refer not to the intra-Trinitarian relationship, but to the relationship of Christ and his Church. In this light, nuptiality constitutes a novelty in creation which has no direct correspondence in the Trinity in terms of masculinity and femininity. There is a clear difference with the father–son relationship, which does correspond to the divine persons in biblical language.

A derivative question concerns the place of the body in the image of God. Levering defends the Thomistic approach, which sees the soul as the image of God, which is then participated through the soul to the body. A somewhat different tradition is represented by St. Irenaeus of Lyons, St. Justin Martyr, or Tertullian, who see in the human body the privileged place of the image and likeness of God. This is possible because the body is seen by them as the relational opening of the person which reminds man that he has received life and that he is called to the gift of self. In this way the body, as the place of openness toward communion, can bear the seal of the God who is Love.

If marriage is key to defining man as the image of God, it is also crucial to understanding other areas of the Christian mystery, from fallen man to man redeemed by Christ. Thus, Levering goes on to reflect on the relationship between marriage and original sin, as well as marriage and the redemptive Cross.

First, Levering shows how marriage helps to understand the Fall. Of course, the question is not to affirm that sexuality is sinful and that it distances man from God. On the contrary, precisely because man's relationship with God is at stake in sexuality, the male–female relationship gains weight in explaining rebellion against God. Levering finds that, while

contemporary biblical scholars do not usually perceive this link between sin and marriage (an exception could have been found in the writings of Paul Beauchamp), the link is present in the Fathers of the Church.⁶

Among them, Levering examines St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine. For Chrysostom, Eve is the greatest gift God entrusted to Adam, and therefore Adam's ingratitude has to do with his rejection of this gift. St. Augustine reads more deeply the complicity of Adam and Eve in the first sin. They sin because they choose their mutual love over the love of God, thus separating marriage from its source in the first love of the Creator. In this way their sin can justify itself as a "sin for love," hiding the fact that this is a false love. Adam and Eve's sin consists in forgetting that God is the wellspring from which flows the capacity to receive the beloved and to give oneself to him or her. Levering's vision could also be confirmed by an ancient rabbinic and patristic tradition, attested to by St. Theophilus of Antioch and St. Irenaeus of Lyons, among others, according to which the first sin consisted in an improper use of sexuality: Adam and Eve did not want to wait to unite at the time of maturity indicated by the Creator, and thus committed a kind of adultery.⁷

To the argument developed by Levering, I propose to add this one. Marriage not only explains better the sin that was committed at the origin, but it allows us to understand why that sin can be transmitted to the whole human family. For each child is born from the mutual union of man and woman, as flesh of their flesh. Thus, the parents are not alien to the identity of the child, and the parents' actions (either good or bad) have an impact on the core of the child's identity. St. Augustine formulated this relationship when, to the question whether the sins of Adam were alien to us his children, he answered: "They are alien, but they are paternal, and for this reason . . . they are also ours."⁸ We could extend this reasoning by saying that the sins of Adam and Eve are for us maternal and paternal and, therefore, in a certain sense they are ours.

Thus, marriage, being the place where the human vocation is fully unfolded, stemming from God's love, is also the place of that love's rejection. However, as a counterpart, marriage also has a special place for understanding the redemptive Cross of Christ.

⁶ See Paul Beauchamp, *L'un et l'autre Testament*, vol. 2, *Accomplir les Écritures* (Paris: Seuil, 1990).

⁷ See A. Orbe, "Original Sin and Marriage in the Theology of the Second Century," *Gregorianum* 45 (1964): 449–500.

⁸ St. Augustine, *Contra Iulianum* 1.48 (*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* [CSEL], 85/1:40; unless otherwise stated, any translation into English is my own).

The connection that Levering establishes between marriage and the Cross could find support in medieval theology. According to St. Thomas, marriage was instituted by Christ on Calvary. Aquinas (who here follows St. Albert the Great) sees a prophecy of marriage being a sacrament in Zephora's statement to Moses: "You are to me a bridegroom of blood" (Exod 4:25), which is fulfilled on the Cross.⁹

Levering approaches the marriage-cross relationship from the point of view of the vocation of the spouses, called to identify with Christ. Levering's perspective helps to avoid romanticism in married life. As our author notes elsewhere in the book, while many young people today understand well that a career requires effort and renunciation, they do not feel the same way about starting a family (228–29). I think the reason lies in the disconnection between the family and the rest of social life, whereby the family becomes a private affair, leading to the idea that marriage is spontaneous and does not require effort. But the Christian faith, which insists on the relationship between love and work, places marriage once again in the light of sacrifice. For this reason it is important, in preparation for the wedding, to remind the bride and groom that marriage is a sacrament of the love of Christ and the Church, not only in moments of harmony, but also when suffering or offenses arise, which require patience and forgiveness.

Levering clearly shows that marriage is sacrificial in that it embraces pain, but he insists that the key measure is not that of pain, but of love. Levering's view can find support in St. Thomas Aquinas, when he teaches the doctrine on the institution of marriage on Christ's Cross.¹⁰ There Aquinas wonders how it is possible that, marriage being an event of joy, it is instituted in a situation of extreme pain. His answer is that marriage is instituted at the Cross not insofar as the Cross is a place of pain, but insofar as it is a place of love.

Levering describes this sacrificial love from the perspective of St. Catherine of Siena. In some letters addressed to spouses who were friends of hers, St. Catherine invites them to unite to the blood of Christ. One may be reminded, in reading Levering's beautiful exposition, of how the medieval piety was centered on the blood of Christ, which places St. Catherine's vision of marriage in the light of the Eucharist.¹¹

Levering reinforces the link between marriage and the Cross by studying

⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *In IV sent.*, IV, d. 49, q. 4, a. 4, sc 2.

¹⁰ St. Thomas, *In IV sent.*, d. 26, q. 2, a. 1, ad 3.

¹¹ See C. W. Bynum, "The Power in the Blood: Sacrifice, Satisfaction, and Substitution in Late Medieval Soteriology," in *The Redemption: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on Christ as Redeemer*, ed. S. T. Davis, D. Kendall, and G. O'Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 177–206.

the principal Pauline texts, as well as the vision of Karol Wojtyła. Wojtyła emphasizes the spousal gift of self, which is fulfilled in a special way when this gift is confronted by lovelessness or infidelity. The gift of self can still be realized because, even when the spouse does not receive it, Christ does. All this does not eliminate the need for justice. For forgiveness is not simple forgetfulness, nor is it a matter of banalizing evil, but consists of the reestablishment of a covenant based on purification from sin.

These two chapters dedicated to sin and the Cross nicely reinforce each other. For salvation arrives in the very place where the wound had been inflicted. We may note that Levering has emphasized the afflictive element of sin and the Cross. Likewise, the link of marriage with grace (and not only with sin) and resurrection (and not only the Cross) could have been developed. Levering insists, rather, on the condition of this world, “as we wander far from the Lord” (2 Cor 5:6). But Levering also embraces this positive vision, for his starting point was the image of God in man and woman and his plan of divinization for them.

After having situated marriage in the whole of salvation history, Levering turns to a study of its more experiential aspects. He begins by addressing the creatural structure of marriage, and then goes on to consider marriage as a sacrament and as a source of just social life. I will dwell only on the first two aspects.

The consideration of creatural marriage is centered on Augustine’s view of the three goods of marriage. As is well known, these are the children (*proles*), mutual fidelity (*fides*), and the sacrament (*sacramentum*), which is for Augustine the indissolubility of the bond. Levering also touches on the medieval view of the ends of marriage, inspired by Aristotle, and addresses the contemporary insistence on the love of the spouses as the center of married life.

The chapter’s central point is very well chosen: the order between the primary and secondary end of marriage. Some today hold that the Second Vatican Council left this doctrine aside.¹² However, as the Council’s doctrinal commission explained, if this hierarchy of ends is not mentioned, it is only because it is considered unsuitable for a pastoral document. Levering rightly defends the priority of the procreative end, so that the importance of the unitive end is not diminished. He does so primarily by discussing the positions of Dietrich von Hildebrand and Cormac Burke.

Hildebrand confers a certain priority on the mutual union of the spouses

¹² See, e.g., in *Etica teologica della vita: Scrittura, tradizione, sfide pratiche*, ed. V. Paglia (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2022), 298.

as to the meaning of marriage. The problem with his view, Levering shows, is that it tends to separate the personal complementarity of man and woman from biological complementarity. This would open the way, as has been done by some contemporary theologians, to argue for the extension of complementarity even to same-sex acts. Levering is right to emphasize that the male–female relationship cannot be described apart from the concrete configuration of their bodies, which includes these bodies' biology.

Burke advocates dispensing with a hierarchy of ends and maintaining just a complementarity between the unitive and the procreative ends. I agree with Levering when he argues for a hierarchy of the ends on the basis that, if one starts from the procreative end, the unitive must necessarily be integrated, but when one starts from the unitive end, the procreative could be left out. Moreover, Levering adds, the procreative end best describes what the spouses seek, and what they talk about when they present themselves in society, which is not so much their mutual love as their common task: to raise a family. In sum, Levering gives solid ground for his claim that it is necessary to defend the hierarchy of the ends of marriage.

A successful formulation of this doctrine seems to me to be that of St. John Paul II, in a text quoted by Levering (176n157). For John Paul II, both the procreative meaning and the unitive meaning are dimensions of conjugal love. The procreative meaning has priority because it takes the couple beyond themselves. For this procreative meaning associates the spousal union, firstly, with its roots in God, showing that their love comes from him. And in this way the couple is projected beyond themselves toward a common task that overflows them and generates society.

After dealing with creatural marriage, Levering addresses it as a sacrament of the new law instituted by Christ. He first confronts the position of historian Philip Reynolds, who argues that marriage came to be considered a sacrament only in the Middle Ages, because of a desire of the clergy to dominate and control the ordinary lives of the faithful.

Levering rightly criticizes Reynolds, both for his reading of the Middle Ages, and for his lack of consideration of the development of doctrine. Even if it were true that only in the Middle Ages did theologians begin to speak of marriage as a sacrament, this would not mean that sacramentality was invented at this point, if we take into account how doctrine grows and matures.

To Levering's argument it can be added that Reynolds's position is weak already in his reading of St. Augustine. Although Augustine does not apply the term *magnum sacramentum* to marriage, he does uphold the sacramentality of marriage. On the one hand, Augustine sees marriage as a sacrament

in that it is indissoluble, and he compares this indissolubility to that which occurs in baptism. Moreover, Augustine calls marriage *minimum sacramentum*, because it participates in the *magnum sacramentum*. In this way, Augustine prepares the medieval development.¹³

Levering also points to a central element in support of the sacramentality of marriage: indissolubility, which is key to the Catholic notion of marriage as a sacrament, and which has a solid biblical basis. As Levering says, following Edward Schillebeeckx: “Jesus’ logion about the indissolubility of marriage was, from the point of view of the history of dogma, the basis of the scholastic assertion of the truly sacramental nature of marriage” (207). The same idea appears in Levering’s account of Peter J. Elliott’s theology (209, 211).

In sum, in this book, Levering makes a rich contribution to the theology of marriage, in constant dialogue with the theological tradition and with contemporary theology. His main merit seems to me the presentation of marriage within the full vision of salvation history. The book thus shows the importance of the current debate on marriage. It is not just a matter of discussing a specific aspect of sexual morality or social justice. On the one hand, what is at stake here is the core of the Christian proposal, that is, the Christian image of God and man in the light of Christ’s redeeming love. On the other hand, the doctrine of marriage makes clear the capacity of Christ’s action to touch the flesh of man and to have an impact on his life and on society. N.V

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A Living Sacrifice: Liturgy and Eschatology in Joseph Ratzinger by Roland Millare (*Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2022*), 309 pp.

The scholarly reception of the immense oeuvre of Joseph Ratzinger / Benedict XVI is gathering pace in the English-speaking world, and Roland Millare’s most welcome contribution testifies to the enduring relevance of the late Pontiff’s thought. For Ratzinger, the sacred liturgy was central to

¹³ St. Augustine, *De nuptiis* 1.21.23 (*CSEL*, 42:236).

his academic and pastoral work, since he was convinced that divine worship brings us into the right relationship with God and with one another, and its true meaning far exceeds the actual liturgical celebration. *A Living Sacrifice: Liturgy and Eschatology in Joseph Ratzinger*, which originated as a doctoral dissertation at Mundelein Seminary under the direction of Matthew Levering, investigates the strong and complex connections of Ratzinger's writings on the liturgy with other major themes in his work, especially in eschatology.

The thread running through this volume is Ratzinger's fundamental thesis of the priority of *logos* over *ethos*. Chapter 1 ("Primacy of the *Logos*") discusses the impact of Romano Guardini on Ratzinger's thought. The present reviewer has long been puzzled about the late Pontiff's regard for Guardini, since there were profound differences between their visions of the liturgy. Guardini encouraged the spirit of liturgical experimentations that has led to the upheavals of our age and promoted the minimalist aesthetics that has done considerable damage to sacred art and architecture. As Millare evidences, we need to look for Guardini's wider philosophical and theological insights as a source of influence on Ratzinger. According to Guardini, the human person is ordered to the divine, and this disposition (expressed by the term *logos*) leads to right action (*ethos*), but always has priority. Modernity has ruptured the relationship between God and the world and has insisted on the priority of action, which often degenerates to a mere exercise of power. Following Guardini, Ratzinger proposes that this gap can be bridged by the Church's liturgy, which is above all the work of God (*opus Dei*) and draws us into communion with Christ and with one another.

Chapter 2 ("A Sacrificial People in the Incarnate *Logos*") surveys Ratzinger's understanding of the Eucharistic sacrifice and relates it to his spiritual Christology. Millare highlights the importance of the Exodus narrative and of book 10 of Augustine's *City of God* in Ratzinger's theology of the liturgy. The priority of *logos* over *ethos* does not mean that they are disconnected. As the prophets of the Old Covenant warned, cultic sacrifices become empty if they are disconnected from love of neighbor: "Only a unified life of worship and ethics oriented towards God can deliver Israel [*sc.* and all nations] from their tendency to form a self-generated cult" (82). True worship and sacrifice are God's gift in the Eucharist, which aims at a transformation of humanity and the world into the new heaven and the new earth. This process already began with the resurrection of Christ, which is the *eschaton*, the final action of God in history (84).

In chapter 3 ("Eucharistic *Communio* in a *Logos*-centric Key"), Millare turns to ecclesiology. For Ratzinger, communion with Christ in the Church

and in the Eucharist anticipates eschatological reality. This chapter also introduces the reader to Ratzinger's critique of political theology and of liberation theology. In essence, Ratzinger sees in them an identification of the Kingdom of God with human political activity that can never truly fulfil the human person. At the same time, he insists that the "vertical communion" with Christ in his Body, which is the Church, strengthens "horizontal communion" with my neighbor (157).

Chapter 4 ("*Logikē Latreia* and an *Ethos* of Charity") includes an excellent discussion of *logikē latreia*, a key concept in Ratzinger's thought, which he takes from Rom 12:1 and in his Regensburg Lecture of 2006 renders as "worship in harmony with the eternal Word and with our reason." Again, Millare rightly singles out the importance of book 10 of the *City of God*. The Eucharist has a cosmic dimension, and its final end is the transformation of the entire world by the sacrificial love of Christ. From there flows the Christian's engagement with the concerns of this world: "A more authentic communion with Christ deepens one's communion and love with one's neighbor. . . . The life of every Christian should be an extension of the love that he has encountered through Christ's love in the liturgy" (196). In this chapter, Millare effectively illustrates how the theological work of Joseph Ratzinger came to fruition in his teaching as Pope.

It is only in chapter 5 ("The *Logos-Centric* Beauty of Heavenly Worship") that we reach the topic of liturgy in a narrower sense. The theological foundations laid in the previous chapters allow the reader to see specific questions in a broader context and in connection with other themes in Ratzinger's theology. Millare argues that the eastward direction of prayer, embodied gestures of adoration, and aspirations for beauty "serve as concrete expressions of an eschatological liturgy" (200). In particular, the common direction of priest and people recalls the eschatological and cosmic character of the liturgy, and this is the main reason why Ratzinger returns to this point again and again in his writings. The reversal of this liturgical direction indicates an eschatological deficit.

Millare draws from a wide range of Ratzinger's writings (and Benedict's magisterium) to build his argument. His familiarity with Ratzinger scholarship, including the German-speaking world, is impressive. The book cannot conceal its origins as a doctoral dissertation; some footnotes are long and contain extensive discussions that could better have been moved to the body of the text. The author's broad approach means that some of the concepts and arguments are presented in a brief and dense way and would need more unpacking. At the same time, the book uses passages from Ratzinger liberally and so invites the reader to explore his writings more fully. It is a

particular merit of this book that, despite Ratzinger's own protestations of the occasional and incomplete character of his thought, Millare show its symphonic unity that emerges when one considers the redemptive work of the incarnate Logos throughout Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology—and theology of the liturgy. This thoroughly researched study admirably succeeds in elucidating the central place of the liturgy in Ratzinger's life and work. Thus, anyone seeking an academic introduction to the thought of Joseph Ratzinger / Benedict XVI will gain much from perusing this book. **REV**

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Emergence: Towards a New Metaphysics and Philosophy of Science by Mariusz Tabaczek, O.P. (*Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019*), xxii + 396 pp.

Especially in a post-MacIntyre age, Catholic theologians may be tempted to ignore developments in mainstream contemporary Anglophone philosophy. Perhaps this is grounded in an understandable desire not to cloud one's thinking with an incommensurable intellectual tradition adjacent to the *praeambula fidei* already approved by the magisterium. But this neglectful stance not only deprives the theologian of the opportunity to dialogue with ideas influential on an increasingly college-educated populace; it also deprives the theologian of ideas of great value in their own right. In a world where the classical metaphysical tradition is not a self-evidently adequate framework for the explanation of centuries of scientific observation that have shaped our contemporary world, theologians should seize opportunities to rigorously explain their compatibility with the Catholic *philosophia perennis*.

Emergence: Towards a New Metaphysics and Philosophy of Science by Mariusz Tabaczek, O.P., is unambiguously a work of contemporary Anglophone philosophy taking aim at the most serious contemporary philosophical interpretations of emergent phenomena in the contemporary sciences. Not only can theologians find an antidote to the crushing relentlessness of the "scientific" reductionistic materialism in emergent phenomena, but they will also find unexpected benefits of the classical metaphysical tradition only through fully engaging analytic philosophy's grappling with this very scientific problem.

Fr. Tabaczek's *Emergence* shows a mastery not only of the considerable contemporary philosophical literature on emergent phenomena but also of the scientific observations prompting such reflection. After an unusually historically literate taxonomy of the different kinds of philosophical treatments of emergence in the first chapter, Fr. Tabaczek's second chapter rightly takes Jaegwon Kim's critique of emergence systems as "causally overdeterminative" as the central obstacle of all emergence metaphysics seeking to posit something beyond a reductive physicalism. As explained in the first chapter, any philosophical explanation of emergence worthy of the name will need to analyze the emergent phenomena as exerting some non-reductive influence on the constituents of the system from which they emerged. To take a now-classic example, the structure of the water molecule exerts a "downward" influence on the two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atoms that are its constituents. As the key feature of most emergence schemata is this "downward" influence of the emergent phenomena on the substrate from which they emerged, this "downward causation" emergence (what Fr. Tabaczek labels "DC") is the most fundamental form of emergence in the philosophical literature.

Kim's counterargument is that any causation of the whole on the part is viciously circular, and therefore that DC analysis is "causally overdeterminative." Most commentators, as Tabaczek notes, do not want to posit explanatory entities in emergent phenomena that cannot be empirically verifiable by scientific observation. If this is the case and DC holds that the whole exerts a genuine causal effect on the parts, but the whole is nothing more than the result of its parts, then how can the whole be exercising causality on the very things that make it up without a remainder? How can the "upward causality" of the parts forming the whole also be governed by the downward causality of the whole on its parts? Kim's argument, made with much more analytic rigor than can be summarized in this review, lays bare the peril of circularity in philosophical explanations of emergent causality.

While providing a notably lucid and comprehensive account of the responses to Kim in the philosophical literature, it is here where Fr. Tabaczek first broadens the concept of causality beyond the monistic, reductionistic account of eighteenth-century appropriations of Newton to show the possible applicability of the classical Aristotelian picture of metaphysics.

Such a full treatment, however, is only teased in the third chapter, where the reader is rigorously introduced to Terrence Deacon's "dynamical depth" model of emergence. Deacon's account of emergence is explicitly inspired by Aristotle, incorporating teleology and even some formal structure alongside thoroughly contemporary scientific concepts of entropy and systems-level

analysis. Fr. Tabaczek carefully distinguishes Deacon's multivalent causal analysis from the strict Aristotelian metaphysics by which it was inspired before launching into a philosophical critique of Deacon's account for such notions as the causality of absences and the reinterpretation of substantial form as geometrical properties of a probability space. This chapter shows Fr. Tabaczek's scientific background as well his philosophical rigor in the explication and clarification of this contemporary "Aristotelian" thinker, setting the stage for his eventual revival of Aristotelian philosophy of science in the contemporary scientific space.

Part II of *Emergence* begins an investigation into the broader context of emergence: analytic philosophy of causality. Fr. Tabaczek's fourth chapter is a lucid, comprehensive, and concise taxonomy of theories of causality in contemporary analytic philosophy. I am not aware of a better overview of all the major metaphysical theories in only forty pages. Fr. Tabaczek also includes detailed, readable charts schematizing the different analytic positions in causality, creating a chapter that is worthy of note on its own, especially for those who need to become familiar with the literature in a short period of time.

Into this context of causation, Fr. Tabaczek's fifth chapter provides an exposition and critique of the recent Aristotelian turn in analytic metaphysics of dispositions and causal powers. Again, *Emergence* is philosophically rigorous, comprehensive, and exceedingly clear in its taxonomy of metaphysical theories. Most of the neo-Aristotelians in dispositional and powers metaphysics are on the way toward Aristotle but fail to ground the powers and dispositions in an underlying entity, causing some confusion between essential and merely necessary properties. Fr. Tabaczek also draws attention to abuses of certain scientific diagrams in the attempt to build dispositional metaphysics.

For those skeptical of the ability of classical Aristotelian metaphysics to integrate contemporary scientific advances, chapter 6 of *Emergence* presents a bridge from analytic dispositional metaphysics to a full classical Aristotelian metaphysics while addressing significant scientific advancements, such as "fundamental" particles like quarks and leptons (or whatever they may turn out to be). One of the most interesting turns that Fr. Tabaczek takes in this chapter is his commitment to the Thomistic-Aristotelian doctrine of virtual causality, whereby the substance acquires the causal powers and qualities that it has in virtue of its constituents, which themselves have been structured by its substantial form. It seems that Fr. Tabaczek can account for a great number of biochemical molecular interactions through a robust

virtual causality, preserving the character of both the sciences and the full Aristotelico-Thomistic metaphysical approach.

Where emergence and analytical metaphysical causality come together at last is in the final chapter of *Emergence*. One of Fr. Tabaczek's major claims is that formal causality in its Aristotelian metaphysical sense solves the major conundrums of dispositionalism and DC emergence. Instead of defining essences by their properties, a hylomorphically constituted substance is not reducible to its properties or measurements, providing rather the metaphysical structure from which the qualitative and quantitative properties of a substance flow. The novelty of emergent properties being grounded in novel substantial or accidental forms allows clarity without reductionism, saving emergence from being merely epiphenomenal while also saving dispositionalism from collapsing into a mere description of new properties. Such a collapse would deprive emergent analysis of its properly metaphysical character, reducing it to mere scientific description. Arguing that the whole fourfold causality of Aristotle is able to account for the teleological observations of scientific processes observed by Deacon's dynamical depth theory of emergence, Fr. Tabaczek puts his critiques and expositions together in a synthesis of irreducible, pluralistic causality of emergence as sufficient for contemporary observations of emergent phenomena.

Fr. Tabaczek's *Emergence* itself is a significant contribution to analytic metaphysics and the philosophy of science. The clear indexing of metaphysical theories of emergence alone would make it worth having on the philosopher's shelf, let alone the incisive critiques of neo-Aristotelian thought from both the analytic and classical Aristotelian perspectives. Fr. Tabaczek's study is everything one would look for in an analytic philosophical account of emergence and does an admirable job of presenting Aristotelian metaphysics as a contemporary competitor to other analytic approaches. As stated above, Fr. Tabaczek's scientifically literate analysis adds much to his clear philosophical exposition. While not likely to be much of a contribution to classical Aristotelian metaphysics (nor of much interest to those seeking purely historical accounts of Aristotle), *Emergence* is a powerful entry in the Aristotelian sub-set of contemporary metaphysics and philosophy of science. Certainly not for undergraduates, this volume would be an excellent textbook for graduate seminars in metaphysical emergence or recent topics in the philosophy of science.

Outside of the strict contemporary philosophical academy, given the contemporary abuses of the emergent phenomena, Fr. Tabaczek's philosophical rigor is of great use to theologians deliberating about incorporating emergence into theological pursuits. *Emergence* will also be of great help to

any theologians struggling with the scientific and philosophical viability of hylomorphic metaphysics, seemingly embedded as it is in Catholic doctrine.

While Fr. Tabaczek does an admirable job at maintaining clarity in exposition and argumentation, non-philosophers should be warned that Fr. Tabaczek abides by the analytic custom of liberal use of acronyms and numbered propositions throughout his chapters. While his chapter introductions and summaries do wonders to reorient the reader at each juncture, the reader is bound to exert himself significantly due to the engagement with numerous schools of contemporary thought on an important but sometimes abstract topic. The struggle to grasp these different models of emergence, however, are more than made up for by Fr. Tabaczek's powerful union of Aristotelian and contemporary metaphysics shedding light on emergent phenomena. N.V

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The Historical Jesus and the Temple: Memory, Methodology, and the Gospel of Matthew by Michael Patrick Barber (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023*), xi + 316 pp.

Michael Patrick Barber proposes that the Gospel of Matthew has something important to tell us about the historical Jesus's relationship to the Temple. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus does not reject the Temple, but rather claims that God dwells in the Temple and that the Temple's altar makes a gift holy (Matt 23:21). Matthew depicts Jesus as insisting upon the enduring validity of Torah and as concerned about "lawlessness." Jesus even obeys Torah in details that we tend to overlook, such as by wearing a tassel on his garment (Matt 14:36). Barber observes that Matthew's community could easily have felt itself in competition with or under attack from certain synagogues without ceasing to understand itself as Jewish. Matthew attributes to Jesus some harsh criticisms of the Pharisees and scribes, but such harsh critiques were common in Jesus's day; these critiques are not "anti-Judaism," though later Christians used them as such. The evangelist Mark mentions that Jesus "declared all foods clean" (Mark 7:19), whereas Matthew omits this. Barber shows that it is more probable that Matthew is correct, given that Jesus contends especially with the Pharisees and scribes (rather than with

all Jews) and given that, in Acts 10, Peter is portrayed as reluctant to eat unclean foods.

The body of Barber's book, after his introductory first chapter, consists of a chapter on debates about historical methodology and five chapters examining Jesus and the Temple. In his chapter two, on the criteria for assessing historicity, Barber agrees with Dale Allison (and others) that the traditional criteria of dissimilarity, embarrassment, multiple attestation, and coherence are problematic. Allison, aided by E. P. Sanders, provides Barber with a solution: start with recurrent attestation, and then test a particular claim about Jesus by asking whether it fits plausibly with "what we know about both his first-century Jewish context, as well as the beliefs of the movement that succeeded him" (37). When claims about Jesus's life converge with the characteristic emphases of his early followers and with his late-Second Temple Jewish context, the claims are likely to be true about Jesus.

In his third chapter, Barber draws upon Eyal Regev's argument that Jesus and his first followers had a positive view of the Temple. Barber lists twenty-one passages from the four Gospels that indicate Jesus's appreciation of, and participation in, the Temple and its sacrificial cult—a "recurrent attestation." He argues that it is improbable that Jesus, like the Essenes, separated himself and his followers from the Temple. The first Christians, as evidenced by Paul, spoke of Jesus and the Christian community frequently in terms of cultic imagery. The book of Acts describes Paul, Peter, and John continuing to participate in some aspects of the Temple cult or at least preaching in the Temple. Barber grants that Hebrews clearly (and perhaps Galatians as well) takes the view that Jesus, in dying, annulled the Temple cult, but he notes that Hebrews "presents itself as post-Easter theological reflection" rather than as the teaching of the historical Jesus (54).

Turning to the Gospel of Matthew specifically, Barber treats a number of Jesus's sayings and actions, including texts that indicate Jesus's divine identity. He notes that Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew quotes Hosea 6:6, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice"; and Jesus also proclaims, "Something greater than the Temple is here" (Matt 12:6) and claims an exemption from paying the Temple tax. Jesus declares prophetically that the Temple is left "desolate" after his departure from it (Matt 23:38). In accordance with the views of Daniel Gurtner and others, Barber demonstrates that Jesus in no case is rejecting the Temple cult as such; after all, he participates in the Temple cult at the Last Supper. Jesus does not take an Essene position on the Temple.

Barber's fourth chapter argues that it is probable historically that Jesus predicted the Temple's destruction. There is a recurrent attestation to such a prophecy in all four Gospels. Scholars have generally supposed that this

prophecy was invented by the evangelists after the fact, but Barber—here agreeing with Amy-Jill Levine and Bart Ehrman—offers reasons for doubting such a view. He explores the statement of the false witnesses at Jesus's trial that Jesus taught he would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. Why, asks Barber, would the evangelists—presuming they invented this saying—describe Jesus's prediction of the destruction of the Temple and connect it to false witnesses? The late Second Temple period contains another reputed prophet (Jesus the son of Ananias) who predicted in AD 62 that the Temple would be destroyed, and who as a result of his doomsaying was seized by the Jewish authorities, scourged by the Romans, and killed by the populace after his release. Historically, it is perfectly plausible that Jesus of Nazareth, too, predicted the Temple's destruction. The very fact that Jesus was remembered as a prophet and not simply as a teacher and miracle-worker suggests the historicity of the Gospels' attestation to Jesus's prophecy.

In the Second Temple Jewish context, one would expect Jesus's prophetic discourse to draw upon the prophecies of Daniel—and this is in fact what Jesus does in his prophecy of the Temple's destruction. In Dan 8, 9, and 11, Daniel makes reference to the Temple, and Dan 9:26–27 predicts the Temple's destruction in connection with the Messiah being cut off. These Danielic chapters describe both the temporary end of the Temple sacrifice and the defiling of the Temple. It makes sense, then, that Jesus would prophesy a judgment upon Jerusalem, due to sin, that includes the destruction of the Temple. This is especially so given that Jesus's sharp critique of the Temple administration was shared by other Jews of his day.

What about the fact that Paul does not seem to know of Jesus's prophecy of the Temple's destruction? On the one hand, says Barber, we should not expect that everything important that Jesus said and did is mentioned by Paul. But on the other hand, Paul does say in 1 Thessalonians that a divine judgment is coming upon Judeans due to the sins committed against Jesus and his followers. There are parallels, too, between Paul's teaching about judgment and Jesus's teaching in Matt 23 and Luke 11. It seems probable, in other words, that "Jesus's early followers believed judgment would come upon those Judeans who rejected their Lord" (96). This supports the historical probability that Jesus prophesied the destruction of the Temple.

In Matt 21, Jesus's cleansing of the Temple is part of a narrative of judgment. Jesus alludes to Isa 56 and to Jer 7, the latter of which refers explicitly to the (Solomonic) Temple's destruction. Soon after his Temple action, Jesus curses the fig tree—a prophetic sign of divine judgment upon Jerusalem. The holiness of the Temple as such is not at issue in Matthew. Nor does Jesus envision a future without a Temple or without sacrifice. Instead, in Matthew, he

suggests that the destruction of the Temple will be linked with the coming of the eschatological Temple (and the eschatological cult), in accordance with Zechariah's prophecy about the day of the Lord. Immediately after cleansing the Temple, Jesus miraculously heals the blind and the lame in an action laden with eschatological resonance: "The son of David lifts the barring of them from the temple" (105; see 2 Sam 5:8). By not understanding what the common people have understood (namely, that he is the Messiah), the Jewish leaders bring down a divine judgment: the Temple's destruction. Barber sums up what he has gleaned from Jesus's Second Temple context and from the perspective of Jesus's first followers, in light of Matthew's narrative: "If Jesus was inspired by apocalyptic traditions such as those found in Daniel [as he surely was], it would not only be strange if he did not announce some sort of coming judgment, it would also be surprising if that judgment did not involve a kind of cessation of the temple's activity" (111).

Barber's fifth chapter addresses Jesus's Davidic status. Especially in 1 Chronicles, David is depicted as a new Moses, closely connected with the Temple. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus presents himself as the Davidic Messiah and Son of Man who will execute eschatological judgment. It is historically probable, as Barber demonstrates with help from Allison, that Jesus preached the kingdom of God and understood himself as the coming king of this eschatological kingdom. Not only Jesus's followers but also Jesus himself likely saw Jesus as the Davidic Messiah who did things expected of an eschatological Son of David. Barber focuses attention upon Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, an event that many scholars, including John Meier, consider to be historical. Jesus appears to have understood that, in identifying himself in royal terms, he was running a great risk of execution.

Barber shows that in Jer 30, Ezek 37 and 45, Hag 2, and Zech 4, as well as at Qumran, the Davidic Messiah and the eschatological Temple are linked. After listing central Davidic elements of the Matthean Jesus, Barber notes that the Matthean Jesus, in explaining his and his disciples' cultic prerogatives (Matt 12:4) and in healing the blind and the lame in the Temple precincts, makes clear his Davidic status. He shows that Jesus's reference to Ps 110 in Matt 22 should be read in light of another passage from Ps 110 (namely, verse 4), where the royal Davidic figure is given priestly prerogatives in the line of Melchizedek, king of Salem (just as David is king of Jerusalem). Hasmonean kings also claimed priestly prerogatives, and the connection between the Davidic king and the building of the Temple is found not only in 2 Sam 7 and other texts in the historical books (e.g., 1 Kgs 6–7; 1 Chr 17; 22:14–16; 28:19; 2 Chr 3–4), but also (eschatologically) in Zech 6. Barber mounts an extended argument that the Gospels often connect Jesus's Davidic

status with the Temple. Indeed, Paul does something similar, for instance by describing Jesus's community as a Temple. In 1 Cor 2–3, Paul describes laying the foundation of the Temple community in terms that echo the Davidide Zerubbabel's laying the foundation of the Temple (Zech 4:7–9). Historically, Barber's point is that "it is not believable that Matthew himself simply invented the connection between Jesus's Davidic identity and his concern for the temple" (146).

Barber's sixth chapter treats "The Son of David and the Temple-Community." To this point, Barber has shown that the following things are probable historical conclusions about Jesus: Jesus had a positive view of the Temple and its cult; Jesus prophesied the Temple's destruction as a divine judgment; and Jesus looked forward to "some sort of eschatological sanctuary" (157). Barber now argues that, in Matt 16, where Peter confesses Jesus as the Messiah and Jesus replies that he will build his Church upon the "rock" that is Peter, the imagery entails Davidic Temple-building. As the Messianic Son of David, Jesus must build the eschatological Temple (the Church). His community is to be this Temple, and his disciples are to be its priests. Commenting upon Jesus's gift to Peter of the keys of the kingdom (alluding implicitly to Isa 22), Barber observes that Second Temple and Rabbinic texts associate Isa 22 with the Temple. Indeed, Jesus's promise that his disciples will judge the twelve tribes of Israel involves his disciples in a priestly (eschatological) task. Jesus's parable of the wicked tenants ends with a reference to the "cornerstone" (see Ps 118), which Barber links with Temple-building. As the Davidic Messiah, Jesus himself is the cornerstone of the eschatological Temple community, the Church; and his disciples are the new priests of this Temple. Barber grants that, historically, it may not be plausible to hold that Jesus used the word *ekklesiā* in Matt 16, but he defends the general historicity of the passage—including by reference to Paul's identification of Peter as a "pillar" in Gal 2:9. As Barber notes, this is Temple imagery. Whether or not Matt 16 reflects a memory of something Jesus himself said, the association between the Davidic Temple-builder and his Temple community certainly goes back at least to Paul and the first Christians, including Mark.

The final chapter asks whether this Temple symbolism likely goes back to Jesus himself. Certainly, the earliest believers maintained that Jesus identified the cup at the Last Supper with his blood, despite the Torah's commandment against consuming blood. Barber argues that it is historically likely that Jesus foresaw his death and had it in view at the Last Supper. The first Christians (represented especially by Paul) understood Jesus's death in terms of cultic sacrifice. Other Second Temple texts anticipate that there would be a period of tribulation prior to the eschatological consummation (e.g., Dan 12:1–3).

Paul understood his own suffering in terms of the eschatological tribulation, and he seems to have predicted his martyrdom. Focusing on the Last Supper, Barber notes that Jesus interprets his coming death as a sacrificial sealing of the New Covenant, in light of Exod 24 and Jer 31. Jesus in the Synoptics understands his death as an atoning sacrifice, as does Paul in his letters; and both the Synoptics and Paul contain clear allusions to the Suffering Servant (Isa 53), who is a priestly figure. Paul and Luke contain Jesus's instruction to "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19), which is cultic language.

In addition to the Last Supper narrative, there are numerous other passages that portray Jesus and his followers in cultic and priestly terms. Barber examines Jesus's saying that the twelve disciples will "judge" the twelve tribes (see Luke 22:29–30). He explores the parable of the wicked tenants and the establishment of the "cornerstone," along with the charge that Jesus threatened to destroy (and rebuild) the Temple. Drawing upon Brant Pitre's work, Barber shows that Jesus's organizing of his disciples—with Peter at the head, then the three (Peter, James, and John), then the twelve, then the seventy-two—has a parallel in Exod 24, which indicates that the twelve are priestly figures. There is also a parallel—in the numbers 1, 3, and 12—with a priestly ordering found in the Qumran documents. In light of Matthew Thiessen's work, Barber shows that Jesus's body is presented as "something greater than the temple" (Matt 12:6), given that Jesus can communicate ritual holiness, overcoming evil spirits and various kinds of ritual impurity. The Gospel of John, too, portrays both Jesus and his followers in cultic and priestly (new-Temple) terms.

As Barber demonstrates, the association of Jesus with cultic imagery in the Gospels easily meets the criterion of recurrent attestation. It also fits, as he shows, within the first-century context. Nevertheless, a question is whether Jesus really would have envisioned his disciples serving as priests in the restored Israel. For Barber, the probable answer is yes, given Jesus's Davidic status and the prophets' testimony to the eschatological expansion of Israel's cultic life (an expansion that includes the Gentiles and that goes well beyond the limits imposed by the Torah, as seen in Mal 1 and Isa 56 and 66). In accordance with Isa 66, Jesus's followers are to be "a kingdom of priests" (Exod 19:6). Barber shows that, for Paul, all believers share in Jesus's priestly action on the Cross, not least through sharing in the "table of the Lord" (1 Cor 10:21), an echo of Mal 1. The lot-casting at the outset of Acts also suggests priestly service (cf. 1 Chr 24), and it fits with the parallels drawn throughout Luke-Acts between Jesus and his followers. Barber sums up: "That Jesus therefore spoke of himself and his disciples in terms taken from Israel's liturgical life makes complete sense. . . . Moreover, if, as we have

argued, Jesus saw himself as the Davidic king in waiting, it makes perfect sense that he would expect to appoint the priestly leaders of the eschatological regime" (233). As the Messianic Son of David, Jesus establishes himself as the eschatological Temple, and he appoints his followers to be its priests, sharing in his redemptive New Covenant sacrifice.

Barber adds an appendix that discusses issues of authorship and Jesus's (and Matthew's) relation to Torah. In the first-century context, if Jesus was an eschatological figure, bearing all authority, then he would have been expected to transcend and reconfigure Torah. According to John Meier, the Gospel of Matthew was likely not written by a Jew, but Barber finds the arguments of Allison and W. D. Davies in favor of Jewish authorship to be compelling.

In sum, Barber makes a strong case that it is historically likely that Jesus valued the Temple and its cult, predicted that it would be destroyed as a divine judgment upon sin, understood himself as the Messianic Son of David who would build the eschatological Temple through his redemptive New Covenant sacrifice, and organized his followers as the kingdom of priests called to be built up into the eschatological Temple established by Jesus.

Theologically, this fits with a strongly cultic understanding of the Church: the Eucharist builds the Church. It fits with understanding Jesus's death as a New Covenant sacrifice, expiating sin and opening up the eschatological New Covenant. It fits with understanding the Eucharist as our sharing in Jesus's sacrifice, making us into members of the eschatological Temple that is presently being built up on the cornerstone. Barber also makes a strong case for a distinctive Petrine ministry in the Church.

This is a deeply erudite, stimulating, and satisfying book that will be of evident interest to everyone who seeks to encounter Jesus in the pages of the New Testament. 

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Reading the Song of Songs with St. Thomas Aquinas by Serge-Thomas Bonino, O.P., translated by Andrew Levering (*Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2023*), xii + 162pp.

In this brief volume, Serge-Thomas Bonino, dean of philosophy at the Angelicum, attempts to chart a path forward in Thomistic studies which complements the currently burgeoning scholarship. Specifically, Fr. Bonino aims to further the emphasis on the deeply scriptural aspect of St. Thomas's thought, essential to his entire work. He refers to this as "biblical Thomism," which speaks to "the determining role of the Scriptures and their interpretation in the work of understanding the faith" (85). While works abound in studying St. Thomas's biblical commentaries themselves, as do others that focus on the use of Scripture in one or another of the systematic works, Fr. Bonino sees a place for a third way, a "little way" (88), which examines St. Thomas's approach to Scripture based on "citations of the biblical books on which [St. Thomas] did not comment."

That the use of the Song of Songs deserves to be the object of such a study is clear from its influence on the life of the Dominican friar: "[St. Thomas] meditated on it, prayed on it (in the liturgy as in personal prayer), and absorbed it, so that the words of the Song are for him familiar and come spontaneously to his lips or his pen" (3). Bonino's careful perusal of St. Thomas's use of the Song of Songs throughout his corpus reflects not only the intellectual brilliance of the Angelic Doctor's mind, but the affective ardor of his heart. In this regard, Fr. Bonino's study highlights the role of St. Thomas as a spiritual master, thus continuing the work of Fr. Jean-Pierre Torrell, to whom the work is dedicated.

Fr. Bonino helpfully situates St. Thomas's engagement with the Song of Songs within its broader medieval context, indicating St. Thomas's indebtedness to ancient figures such as the Venerable Bede and Origen or more proximate medieval sources as the Glossa Ordinaria and St. Bernard of Clairvaux. While these sources often illuminate how St. Thomas relied on those who had gone before him, it also shows how original readings arose from his own spiritual experience. Since no commentary on the Song of Songs survives, Bonino draws on St. Thomas's Dominican contemporary, Hugh of Saint-Cher, whose proemium to the Song of Songs (the Latin transcription of which is provided in the second appendix) gives a sense of the milieu in which St. Thomas approached the work. Here, we find the Song of Songs as part of a continuum of the three stages of the spiritual life which ascends from the active life through to the contemplative. This movement from imperfect to perfect, which goes back to Origen, corresponds to the

progress of the believer in Proverbs, through Ecclesiastes, to the present work. The Song of Songs is seen “as the summit of the spiritual journey of the believer: it is addressed to the ‘perfect,’ to the contemplatives, and it celebrates their union of love with Christ” (19).

Against this broader medieval backdrop, we can appreciate St. Thomas’s approach to the Song of Songs, which, in continuity with the Church Fathers, reads the book as being primarily about the union of Christ and his Church. Fr. Bonino develops the rest of his book by unfolding various themes that arise from this treatment of lover and beloved. The lover refers to Christ (ch. 2), while the beloved refers to the Church, the spouse of Christ (ch. 3). The Church as spouse can be further read as signifying the Blessed Virgin Mary (ch. 4), or all of the faithful (ch. 5). Fr. Bonino’s analysis provides a concrete example of the sapiential nature of St. Thomas’s exegesis. The unity of the Scriptures (7) enables St. Thomas to draw from its treasures to speak on all aspects of Christian life and doctrine, which are finally ordered to contemplation of the beatifying divine essence. Through these considerations, the reader is given a glimpse as to how St. Thomas himself “made his own, in meditation and prayer, the words of the beloved” (89).

Fr. Bonino’s work highlights, most fundamentally, the scriptural source of all of St. Thomas’s theology. We see how, for St. Thomas, the Scriptures act as “a permanent foundation” (86) for theological inquiry. The theologian must continually return to the Scriptures (*conversio ad Scripturas*) in the work of theology, just as the human knower must continually have recourse to phantasms (87). Fr. Bonino’s short work is a welcome addition to the currently flourishing field of Thomistic studies and shows how Thomism, if it is to be true to its progenitor, must always be a biblical Thomism. NEV

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Theological Determinism: New Perspectives, edited by Peter Furlong and Leigh Vicens (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020*), 290 pp.

This volume is a collection of essays on the cutting edge of philosophical research into the question of theological determinism: whether God determines all contingent facts. The editors have done a fine job of including a range of essays from the more technical and propositional (the contributions

of Alexander Pruss and Alicia Finch) to the more exegetical and theological (Jesse Couenhoven and especially Katherine Sonderegger), with most exhibiting the vague monotheism, the originality, and the appeal to but also clarification of intuitions through thought experiment that characterize the broad middle of analytic philosophy of religion. The topics covered in the essays are diverse: issues that come up in multiple contributions include the conditions necessary for personal identity (is our identity dependent on sinful choices in the past—our own or our ancestors—and does that require God to be involved in a certain way given that he loves *us*?); the appropriate attitudes one should take toward sin (forgiveness, gratitude, resentment) and whether theological determinism enables or prevents such attitudes; and, of particular interest for Thomists, the viability of a transcendent or non-competitive account of theological determinism, in which God's determination of creatures occurs at such a different metaphysical level that it does not threaten their freedom, perhaps not even their libertarian freedom. On the whole, though the authors disagree on the question of God's determination, the collection is strongest in bringing out the continued force of the determinist position: the commitments it allows one to retain, the absurdities that it can, with sufficient cleverness, avoid. For that, it will be of use especially to Thomists of a Banezian predilection, though in a Church and indeed a world that seems to be ambiently libertarian (not to say Pelagian) about freedom, a collection that gives the counterarguments with this level of force is useful to everyone.

The outsider to these debates may be surprised at what is not in focus here, such as questions of moral responsibility, whether ours or God's. These of course are in the background of many of the discussions, but the collection evinces a general sense that debates over things like responsibility have mostly reached gridlock. This is one way in which this is on the cutting edge of philosophical reflection on the issue: not just a certain excitement in exploring new issues, but a certain exhaustion in handling old ones. Relatedly, as the editors note in the introduction, there is a reticence among the authors actually to decide the central questions at stake: "Although philosophers and theologians of past centuries may have sought to settle the matter of theological determinism in one fell swoop, contemporary authors are likely to both be more cautious and work in a more piecemeal fashion, suggesting that this or that consideration makes the view more plausible than it would otherwise be" (5). The biggest exception to this is Sonderegger, who matches a kind of hesitancy of argument with a readiness of assertion that is much more typical of theologians than philosophers. And while this does leave a gap between one's evidence and one's belief, to be closed by Newman's

illative sense or Christ's Holy Spirit or who knows what else, it also actually gets us believing something. Truth is the happiness of the intellect, as Father Antonin Sertillanges said, to which he might have added: not cautious suspension of judgment. But it is hard to say—it is perhaps a question of mood and of context—which path is to be preferred: happiness in suspense or dispassion on solid ground; a house upon sand or scattered furniture upon rock. One underrated feature of the philosophers' way is a humility about their positions and a readiness to revise that theologians would do well to learn from.

The conditions behind this difference are worth exploring, since the greatest obstacle to many theologians' engagement with this book will have to do not with its content (theological determinism is of perennial interest), nor with its form (a collection of academic essays), but with something like its mood in this sense. Most of the contributions to this book are in recognizable continuity with a certain kind of ordinary-language philosophy. For example, what do we seem to mean by "forgiveness": what are the everyday situations in which it applies, and does that make the term applicable to a case where God "forgives" us after determining us to sin? This approach works best for situations where we can trust our intuitions about sufficiently specified cases and our judgments about when those cases are relevantly similar to theological ones. Given the sort of precision and care for argumentation with which this process is executed, it often bears a certain resemblance to a Scholastic approach. What remains puzzling is less the focus on language, as is sometimes suggested, than the focus on the ordinary: why think that broadly shared intuitions about particular cases or judgments about the relevance of those cases will be veridical? Why should the committed Calvinist care about the intuitions of those raised Armenian, or those raised Jewish, or those raised without any religion at all? This is where the approach differs somewhat from the Scholastic, in which the practice of theology presupposed a more robust tradition and a more rigorous moral and spiritual formation uniting the interlocutors.

The Calvinist is a useful example because he will have prior theological reasons for doubting the intuitions of those not, or not sufficiently, redeemed. He is useful, that is, because he makes clear that this way of doing philosophy has a number of theological assumptions behind it, and these assumptions might themselves be in tension with a larger systematics in which prominent traditional forms of theological determinism find their home. (There is a strong connection between original sin and theological determinism in the broadly Augustinian tradition, as Vicens points out in this collection.) That is, there remains in the mood of this way of doing

theology an optimism about fallen reason that is logically consistent with a commitment to theological determinism but perhaps sits uneasily in the more delicate web of its implicatures (if, e.g., the passages of Scripture that most suggest determinism seem also most to be eying the effects of sin).

At any event, this kind of methodological optimism also explains, to us as much as to the Calvinist, why the significant disagreements seem to end in gridlock, why the conclusions end up so tentative—why, we might say, the most representative form for a philosophy book is a collection of quarrelsome essays. What do you expect when the audience to which you are accountable is all reasonable people everywhere? The point here is Alasdair MacIntyre's, but in a broad sense: not just that we have to reason in a tradition and that the persistent disagreements within analytic theology, as within analytic ethics, are due to the breakdown of traditioned inquiry, but also that these traditions go beyond the intellectual to require deep moral and spiritual formation in order to acquire the connatural knowledge necessary to settle significant questions.

The theological reception of Ludwig Wittgenstein, in contrast to the philosophical, has tended to follow the MacIntyrean point, but in its narrow form. In various forms of postliberal theology, the grounding of philosophical reflection in a form of life is taken to require a reimmersion in the form of life that is the Church. In principle this might also involve a reimmersion in the broader set of practices required truly to *sentire cum ecclesia*; in practice it has meant a more purely intellectual traditioning. (Even the most postliberal of graduate programs has nothing that approaches the moral and spiritual formation of a Dominican *studium*, except perhaps those that are Dominican *studia*.) That may explain why substantive convergence is about as rare among theologians—even “the right kind” of theologians, whatever your kind is—as among philosophers. But I do mean only that it *may* explain it: it seems to me an empirical question whether further moral and spiritual formation will produce the right sort of convergence, a question not yet put to the test.

I began by suggesting that this book is on the cutting edge of philosophical research, but it should now be clear that I mean that somewhat ironically (though I do still mean it). The “cutting edge” of “research” supposes some viable shared research program of the kind that philosophy cannot claim, not until it shows it can consistently resolve important questions. (The philosophers will note that this assumes a view, conciliationism, that is itself disputed within philosophy—naturally.) That said, there is something remarkable, almost heroic, about a commitment to argument with so few shared premises (“intuitions”); there is something like the Protestant

commitment to Scripture, which, in disregarding authoritative interpretation both makes Scripture practically impotent and, in the struggle against that impotence, provides inspiring examples of scriptural engagement. And we should truly be inspired by them, both the Protestant exegetes and the philosophical syllogists, to imitation and not to pity. For the important point here is that, as with Protestant uses of Scripture, analytic philosophy's use of argumentation is not to be disregarded for its vanity, only resituated. The standard practice among theologians is to ignore works like this, but that is to avoid the problem of persistent disagreement just as much as the philosophers do—as if it were merely a problem of the philosophers. We all need all the help we can get. That help includes the precision, the care, even the thought experiments of analytic philosophy. Often the essays of this book could benefit from the sort of narrowing that more explicit placement in a tradition would provide; always the essays exhibit certain habits of mind that those already placed in such a tradition would benefit from. N·V

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Handbook of Catholic Dogmatics, Book 2: Doctrine about God, or Theology in the Narrower Sense by Matthias Joseph Scheeben, translated by Michael J. Miller (*Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2021*), 693 pp.

Handbook of Catholic Dogmatics, Book 5: Soteriology, Part 2: The Work of Christ the Redeemer, and the Role of His Virgin Mother by Matthias Joseph Scheeben, translated by Michael J. Miller (*Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2021*), xxii + 716 pp.

Shortly after Matthias Joseph Scheeben published the initial volumes of his *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, a French translation of the work appeared. Scheeben was not pleased. He found the translation insufficient, which he blamed on the carelessness of the translator. Josef Höfer, the mid-twentieth-century editor of Scheeben's collected works, thought Scheeben had underappreciated the objective difficulty of translating his theology. Translators capable of transmitting Scheeben's thought without deforming it through conceptual simplification are, in Höfer's judgment,

“extraordinarily rare.” Höfer states the problem directly: “Scheeben’s way of thinking and his language are, in a particular sense, German.”¹

Scheeben never finished the *Dogmatik*. Having completed his treatments of theological epistemology, God, creation, sin, and soteriology, Scheeben died in 1888 at the age of fifty-three while working on the grace treatise, leaving intended volumes on the Church and eschatology unrealized. Though incomplete, Scheeben’s *Dogmatik* is regarded as one of the finest works of modern Catholic dogmatic theology. Yet decade after decade passed without the publication of an English translation. Höfer’s observations help explain why. In addition to the sheer volume of the work, Scheeben’s style, concepts, and language are particularly German—and not necessarily good German. Even native-speaking German theologians frequently lament the impenetrability of Scheeben’s prose. (One scholar proposed that Scheeben thought in Latin but wrote in German, and suggested that the best way to read Scheeben is to translate back into Latin while reading the German.)² We might suspect that, over the years, a few prospective translators entertained the idea of an English version of the *Dogmatik*. Perhaps a brave soul or two even embarked on the project, only to turn back after finding the task too daunting, the necessary resources—whether of time, skill, or finances—too few.

At long last, thanks to the efforts of translator Michael J. Miller and publisher Emmaus Academic, a full English translation of Scheeben’s *Dogmatik* has been completed. In 2019, book 1, *Theological Epistemology* (*Theologische Erkenntnislehre*), of Scheeben’s *Handbook of Catholic Dogmatics* was published (in two volumes). In 2020, the first part of book 5, *Soteriology* (*Erlösungslehre*) appeared. In 2021, two more volumes were published: the second part of *Soteriology* and book 2, *Doctrine about God, or Theology in the Narrower Sense* (*Gotteslehre, oder Die Theologie im engeren Sinne*). The remaining three books were published in 2023: book 3, *God in His Fundamental, Original Relation to the World, or The Founding of the Natural and Supernatural Order of the World* (*Schöpfungslehre*); book 4, *Sin and the Kingdom of Sin as a Contradiction and a Combat Against the*

¹ Josef Höfer, “Die Theologie M. J. Scheebens in neuer Ausgabe” (1), insert in Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *Die Mysterien des Christentums*, ed. Josef Höfer, vol. 2 of *Gesammelte Schriften* (Freiburg: Herder, 1941), 2–3. This insert differs slightly from the article with the same title printed in vol. 1 of Scheeben’s *Gesammelte Schriften*, which we cite in the next footnote.

² Franz Pelster, S.J., quoted in Josef Höfer, “Die Theologie M. J. Scheebens in neuer Ausgabe” (2), in Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *Natur und Gnade / Die Herrlichkeiten der göttlichen Gnade*, ed. Martin Grabmann and Robert Grosche, vol. 1 of *Gesammelte Schriften* (Freiburg: Herder, 1941), xiv (note 8).

Supernatural Order of the World (Sündenlehre); and book 6, *The Realization of the Salvation Merited by Christ in Individual Human Beings through the Justifying Grace of Christ (Gnadenlehre)*.

The English translation of Scheeben's *Dogmatik* is an extraordinary achievement. One might quibble with some of Miller's word and style choices (e.g., rendering *der Heilige Geist* as "the Holy Ghost" rather than "the Holy Spirit"; unrestrained capitalization of words that pertain to God), but overall he has produced a faithful translation of Scheeben's masterwork. In so doing, Miller has proved himself to be that rare translator described by Höfer, one capable of translating Scheeben's complex German thought into readable English prose without deforming it through oversimplification. The appearance of the first English translation of the *Dogmatik* more than a century after Scheeben's death provokes questions: Why Scheeben? Why now? What is the significance of this translation for twenty-first-century Catholic theology? We will return to these questions below. But first, let us examine the contents of the two volumes published in 2021.

Doctrine about God enjoys a privileged place among the books of the *Dogmatics*. For the radically theocentric Scheeben, the Trinity is the foundation, goal, and exemplar of all God's activity *ad extra*. As a consequence, all the other mysteries which theologians contemplate (Christ, grace, the Church, etc.) are ultimately intelligible only in light of the mystery of the triune God. Scheeben lamented the fact that theologians gave scant consideration to the relation of the Trinity to the rest of Christian revelation, and he believed that the significance of the Trinity for Christian life was underappreciated. Nevertheless, *Doctrine about God* does not begin with the Trinity. Instead Scheeben offers a *de Deo uno* treatise in part 1 of the book before proceeding to the *de Deo trino* in part 2. Scheeben gives reasons for this arrangement. He believes that considering God as one before considering God as three follows the order of knowing and is grounded in the very dogma of the Trinity, which affirms that the one divine substance subsists in three divine persons. Furthermore, beginning with the *de Deo uno* tract and then proceeding to the *de Deo trino* permits Scheeben to counter the proposals of nineteenth-century rationalists (specifically Anton Günther's arguments for the demonstrability of the Trinity) that are often in his sights, because the *de Deo uno–de Deo trino* schema helps demarcate what reason unassisted by faith can and cannot know about God. Scheeben rigorously lays out this distinction in the first chapter of part 1, which considers human knowledge of God.

The remaining two chapters of the *de Deo uno* part of *Doctrine about God* treat, first, the attributes that pertain to God's being (*Sein*) or essence

(*Wesenheit*), and second, the attributes that pertain to God's life (*Leben*) or nature (*Natur*). In the chapter on divine being, Scheeben begins with the *via negationis* (or *remotionis*) and presents God's negative attributes (e.g., simplicity, infinity, immutability), and then proceeds along the *via eminentiae* to consider the positive attributes of divine perfection, which include perfections that consider both God vis-à-vis creation (e.g., God's omnipotence and omnipresence) and God's inner attributes. These inner attributes include the transcendental properties of being as they pertain to God, namely, divine unity, truth, and goodness. Scheeben adds two more properties to this traditional list which will feature prominently in his theology of divine glory and personalist theology of grace: divine beauty (*Schönheit*) and divine dignity (*Würde*). He knows that beauty and dignity are not customarily singled out as divine attributes, but he thinks they merit their own considerations because they express particular aspects of God's goodness: beauty brings out how a good confers delight, enjoyment, and blessedness to the subject who beholds it; dignity indicates that a good should be esteemed, honored, and served.

Having treated the attributes of divine being, Scheeben turns to the attributes of God's life or nature. While many theologians treat God's life as a single divine attribute, Scheeben uses life as an overarching concept to describe the activity of the divine nature. Although Scheeben's predilection for life arose, in part, from the Romanticism of his nineteenth-century German context, he relies on traditional Christian sources, especially Dionysius, to build his account of divine life. God's life, as the imminent activity of the divine nature, consists in God's knowing and God's willing. Thus, treatments of divine knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) and divine will (*Wille*) form the two main sections of the chapter on the attributes of divine life. Scheeben explains that divine knowledge and divine will are united in divine wisdom (*Weisheit*), which is the concept that organically brings together all aspects of divine life. The *de Deo uno* part of *Doctrine about God* reaches its climax in a concluding consideration of the blessedness (*Seligkeit*) and glory (*Herrlichkeit*) of the divine life. Here Scheeben presents God as a subject who possesses himself through knowledge and love, and thereby delights in himself as an object of perfect beatitude and glorifies himself.

The account of divine blessedness and glory provides the point of transition from the one God to the doctrine of the Trinity, which Scheeben presents in part 2 of *Doctrine about God*. Scheeben believed that the *de Deo uno—de Deo trino* relation had been insufficiently considered. This neglect resulted in two errors that stand as a Scylla and Charybdis he must navigate. A first mistake is to understand God's existence in three persons as a

necessary and rationally demonstrable unfolding of the one divine substance (e.g., as Günther argued). A second mistake is to separate the orders of faith and reason in such a way that the Trinity has no meaningful connection to God's oneness, and the *de Deo uno* and *de Deo trino* tracts have no intelligible relation to each other. The fruitfulness of divine life is the theological baroque Scheeben employs to steer a course between these dangers. Through natural reason, we can come to know of God's substantial vitality as the productive font of all created being. But only through divine revelation do we know that God is fruitful in his own being—that is, that the superabundant fruitfulness of the divine substance brings forth real productions in God. After Scheeben gives an overview of the teaching of Scripture and Tradition about the Trinity, he constructs his own speculative account of the Trinity from the principle of the intra-divine productivity of God's life.

A hallmark of Scheeben's Trinitarian theology is his emphasis on the processions, or as Scheeben prefers, "productions" (*Produktionen*), of the divine persons over their relations. Scheeben believes that a divine person is constituted by a procession rather than a relation. This places him within the Franciscan-emanational tradition instead of the Dominican-relational tradition regarding a classical *quaestio disputata*. It also structures the order of his Trinitarian arrangement. In an explicit departure from Thomas Aquinas, whose Trinitarian theology moves from the processions to the relations to the persons, Scheeben moves from the processions directly to the divine persons and only then considers the relations. In Scheeben's rich doctrine of divine personhood, a person is understood principally as a possessor of a nature and only secondarily as a subsistent relation, which allows for deep analogy between divine personhood and created personhood. Furthermore, because Scheeben grounds the distinction of the persons in the way they come to possess the divine substance, rather than through the relations, Scheeben makes strong use of the psychological analogy: the procession of the Son is truly a production of the divine intellect and the procession of the Spirit is truly a production of the divine will.

Scheeben gives a detailed analysis of the Son's generation by considering the biblical names "Word" (*Wort*) and "Image" (*Abbild*), and of the Spirit's procession by examining the names "aspiration" (*Aspiration*), "pledge" (*Pfand*), and "gift" (*Gabe*)—three pneumatological titles Scheeben creatively brings together in the idea of the Holy Spirit as "kiss" (*Kuß*). He thinks the arrangement of the two productions is better understood—and more biblically grounded—in a linear, Greek patristic *ex Patre per Filium* understanding of the Spirit's procession than in the Latin *ex Patre Filioque* model; nevertheless, he does not believe these models conflict and thinks that the

ex Patre per Filium model, correctly understood, materially contains the *Filioque*. Scheeben offers an innovative analogy for the arrangement of the persons and productions that he believes powerfully expresses the character, relation, and distinction of the two productions: the generation of the Son from the Father is like a plant's production of a fruit or flower, and the Spirit's spiration is like the fragrance emitted by the fruit or flower. This linear movement of the communication of the divine substance from the Father, to and through the Son, to the Holy Spirit forms the intra-divine background for Scheeben's account of the divine missions, which he offers toward the conclusion of *Doctrine about God*. Here Scheeben presents the doctrine of appropriation (i.e., the practice of ascribing something that in reality is common to all three divine persons to one of the persons because of a certain fittingness, e.g., sanctification ascribed to the Spirit), but also suggests that the Trinitarian character of God's supernatural activity *ad extra* through grace goes beyond mere appropriation and includes, in a certain sense, things proper to the divine persons. Scheeben further develops this idea in his controversial account of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the next book (3) of the *Dogmatik*. *Doctrine about God* concludes with a stimulating discussion of the significance of the Trinity for the whole of Christian life and thought.

The longest of the six books of Scheeben's *Dogmatik* is book 5, *Soteriology* (*Erlösungslehre*), which in both the German *Gesammelte Schriften* and in English is divided into two volumes. The first volume of book 5, subtitled "The Person of Christ," treats the preparations for Christ, the ontological constitution of Christ, and the attributes established by this constitution that pertain to Christ's person as such. The distinctive feature of Scheeben's Christology is his doctrine of Christ's anointing (*Salbung*). Scheeben argues that Christ's hypostatic union is constituted by an anointing of his created nature with the ointment (*Salbe*) of his divinity, which fills and permeates the humanity and makes the humanity its own. The Logos is the agent of the anointing, the ointment itself, and the one who is anointed. The name "Christ" ("the anointed One"), therefore, is not simply a title, but an essential name for the person of the incarnate Word that expresses the union of the divine and human natures in one person.

The anointing leitmotif sounds throughout the second volume of book 5, subtitled "The Work of Christ the Redeemer and the Role of His Virgin Mother." Picking up where the first volume left off, Scheeben first treats the supernatural attributes of Christ's humanity. The root of these attributes is Christ's grace of union (*gratia unionis*), which Scheeben also calls the *gratia unctionis substantialis* ("grace of substantial anointing"). Scheeben explains

how Christ's created sanctifying grace flows from the anointing grace of union, and how these graces, operating conjointly, deify and sanctify Christ's human nature. Scheeben traces all of Christ's perfections back to the grace of the anointing of Christ's humanity by and with the divinity; these include the intellectual perfection of the beatific vision, the moral perfection of the holiness and justice of his will, and the infinite value of his meritorious actions as head and mediator. The final section of Scheeben's treatment of Christ's attributes considers the various states of Christ's humanity. Contemporary readers hoping to find a detailed treatment of Christ's public ministry, however, will be disappointed; Scheeben treats the abasement of Christ in the Incarnation and then moves to the states pertaining to the Paschal Mystery: Christ's Passion and death, his descent into hell, and his resurrection and ascension.

Scheeben then proceeds to the core of soteriology in the strict sense, to the redemption wrought by Christ. He unites the various biblical and theological descriptions of the efficacy of Christ's saving work under the concept of "atoning merit" (*Sühneverdienst*). With his characteristic emphasis on *gratia elevans* over *gratia sanans*, Scheeben is keen to show that Christ's work not only heals humanity from its sins but also establishes a higher supernatural order that exceeds both the natural order and the original supernatural state enjoyed by our first parents. Christ is the foundation, center, and crown of this new and highest supernatural order. The Christology part of *Soteriology* closes with a presentation of Christ's offices as priest, prophet, and king. As is typical of Scheeben, he illustrates the organic relation of these three offices. His focus, however, is Christ's priesthood, which Scheeben regards as the central office; whereas three pages are dedicated to Christ's prophetic teaching office and two to Christ's kingship, Scheeben's presentation of Christ's priesthood stretches to more than ninety pages. Scheeben places an uncommon accent on the laetetic dimension of Christ's priestly sacrifice, which he integrates into his theology of Christ's anointing and develops out of a detailed analysis of the Old Testament prefigurations of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice.

The final chapter of *Soteriology* is dedicated to Mariology. This material may be familiar to some readers, because it has appeared in English before. In 1946–1947, Herder Book Company in St. Louis published a two-volume *Mariology* by Scheeben, which was comprised of rearranged extracts from the *Dogmatik*; however, this was a translation of a translation, as the translator relied on a Flemish version rather than the German original. Miller's translation is far superior in quality. Furthermore, the Mariological material now appears in its proper place in Scheeben's *Dogmatics*, which is crucial

for rightly interpreting his Mariology given his efforts to show Mary's place within the *nexus mysteriorum*—especially as concerns her relation to Christ, other graced human persons, and the Church. If Christ's anointing is the leitmotif of his Christology, what Scheeben calls Mary's "personal character" (*Personalcharakter*) is the leitmotif of his Mariology. Mary's personal character is the grace of her divine motherhood that is constituted by a supernatural spiritual union between the person of Mary and the person of Christ. Scheeben conceives of this union as a *matrimonium divinum* or a *connubium Verbi*. Yet Mary is not just the bride of the Word, but also his mother. Scheeben unites these two aspects by describing Mary's personal character as a "divine-bridal motherhood" (*gottesbräutliche Mutterschaft*) or a "divine-motherly bridehood" (*gottesmütterliche Brautschaft*).

For Scheeben, all of Mary's other prerogatives are based on, animated by, and flow from her personal character, relating to it like accidents to a substance. These include the exalted place Mary enjoys within the supernatural order and her freedom from sin. Scheeben examines the latter in a substantial treatment of the Immaculate Conception (at whose solemn 1854 definition by Pope Pius IX in St. Peter's Basilica Scheeben was present). Continuing his analysis of Mary's freedom from sin, Scheeben closely links Mary's Immaculate Conception and her Assumption, concluding his consideration of the latter by suggesting that a dogmatic definition of Mary's bodily Assumption would be opportune—which, of course, was made by Pope Pius XII less than a century later. Scheeben is far cooler, in contrast, about the Marian title *Coredemptrix*, which he considers in his treatment of Mary's cooperation with Christ's redemptive work. While the title *Coredemptrix* can be justified, unless properly qualified it risks positing Mary's work as completing or directly coordinated to that of Christ instead of being subordinate and dependent. For this reason, Scheeben prefers the title "Helpmate" (*Gehilfin, adiutrix*), which he links to Mary's bridehood and to a provocative interpretation of her ministerial function: Mary serves as the deaconess assisting Christ the priest in his sacrifice. Scheeben naturally moves from Mary's cooperation in the work of redemption to her relation to the Church. He posits a "perichoresis" (*Perichorese*) between Mary's motherhood and the motherhood of the Church. Scheeben also suggests that Mary is the heart of the mystical body of which Christ is the head. However, the analysis of the relation between Mary and the Church is incomplete. In the closing lines of *Soteriology*, Scheeben explains that he had intended to treat this relation at the conclusion of his Mariology, but will instead do so after presenting his doctrine of the Church; sadly, this was never done, for, as noted above, Scheeben died before composing his ecclesiology.

The English translation of Scheeben's *Dogmatics* shows that eighty years after one observer noted the "remarkable growth of what can only be called a Scheeben cult,"³ there exists in certain pockets of Anglophone theology—if not a Scheeben cult—a marked renewal of interest in the nineteenth-century German dogmatician. Examining the mid-twentieth-century interest in Scheeben can help explain why theologians are returning to him at present. When Höfer introduced the Scheeben *Gesammelte Schriften* in 1941—as the dark shadow of the Third Reich stretched ever further across Europe—he explained that booksellers and Catholic publishing houses were frequently receiving inquiries about the new editions of Scheeben's works. These requests were coming mostly from young theologians and the laity. Pondering what the German youth were seeking in Scheeben, Höfer suggested that many young Christians were longing for presentations of the faith that can help them embark on "the venture of Christian existence." They hoped to find in Scheeben's theology "the 'essentially' Christian" (*das "wesentlich" Christliche*).⁴ The same is true in our time. Scheeben's *Dogmatics* offers an excellent representative sample of the best of nineteenth-century Catholic theology. But one suspects that the tremendous labor that has gone into making this work available in English has not been expended only to present Scheeben as a figure of historical interest. The aim, rather, is to allow Scheeben's theology—if we might borrow from a 1960 observation of Wilhelm Breuning—to serve as an "invigorating blood transfusion for our contemporary dogmatics."⁵

What does Scheeben have to offer theology today? Let us propose three points from each of the volumes we have considered. Scheeben's *Doctrine about God*, first, can prompt a renewal of Christian theology of the one God. As Bruce Marshall has observed, Karl Rahner's much-heeded exhortation to begin the doctrine of God with the Trinity rather than divine unity has had the effect not so much of rearranging the *de Deo uno–de Deo trino* order, but of killing off the *de Deo uno* treatise altogether.⁶ One of the reasons the *de Deo uno* treatise has vanished is that, as Scheeben observed years ago, the relation between the two treatises has not always been adequately

³ Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., editor's note in Matthias Joseph Scheeben, "The Splendors of Grace," trans. Michael Portier, O.P., *Orate Fratres* 17, no. 1 (1942): 13n1.

⁴ Höfer, "Die Theologie M. J. Scheebens in neuer Ausgabe" (1), 12–13.

⁵ Wilhelm Breuning, foreword to *Schöpfungslehre*, vol. 3 of Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, ed. Wilhelm Breuning and Franz Lakner, vol. 5 of *Gesammelte Schriften* (Freiburg: Herder, 1961), v.

⁶ Bruce D. Marshall, "The Unity of the Triune God: Reviving an Ancient Question," *The Thomist* 74, no. 1 (2010): 8.

considered. Scheeben's insightful exposition of the *de Deo uno—de Deo trino* relation addresses this problem and shows why a treatment of divine unity is critical for a sound theology of the Trinitarian God. The potential of Scheeben's Trinitarian theology for ecumenical dialogue with Eastern Orthodox Christians is a second contribution *Doctrine about God* can make to theology and Church life. Scheeben's abundant use of Greek patristic sources, his preference for an *ex Patre per Filium* rather than *ex Patre Filioque* model of the Spirit's procession, his emphasis on divinization and uncreated grace, and his theology of divine wisdom all provide points of contact with Eastern Christian theology. Third, Scheeben provides a robust account of the relation between the intra-Trinitarian life of the divine persons and their activity *ad extra* without collapsing this distinction, as happens, for example, in some Trinitarian theologies inspired by Rahner's famous *Grundaxiom*.⁷ In fact, the terms "economic Trinity" and "immanent Trinity" never appear in Scheeben, and his ability to give a thoroughly Trinitarian account of the Christian life without these terms could prompt theologians to consider whether employing them—a relatively recent phenomenon in the history of theology—is advantageous.

Soteriology: The Work of Christ the Redeemer and the Role of His Virgin Mother also contains promise for contemporary theology. First, Scheeben's theology of sacrifice offers resources for a renewed treatment of the subject, which has been much maligned in recent decades but remains essential for a proper understanding of the work of Christ and human participation in it, especially liturgically. Scheeben's doxological approach, expressed in his idea of latreutic sacrifice, is especially promising—and, indeed, theologians are already recovering it.⁸ A second point is closely related: Scheeben's theology of Christ's priesthood can contribute to a renewal of the theology of the priesthood more broadly. Of particular value is Scheeben's detailed examination of Old Testament prefigurations of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice, which leads to a theology of the priesthood, sacrifice, and liturgy anchored in a profound understanding of the intrinsic connection between the cultic theology of the Old and New Testaments—a point emphasized, we observe, in Joseph Ratzinger's theology of the liturgy.⁹ Third, among the

⁷ See Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 22: "The 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and the 'immanent' Trinity is the 'economic' Trinity."

⁸ See, e.g., Khaled Anatolios, *Deification Through the Cross: An Eastern Christian Theology of Salvation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020), 313–31.

⁹ See, e.g., Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 35–50.

many riches of Scheeben's Mariology is his account of how Mary's personal character serves as an exemplar of the union of other human persons with God through grace. While theologians have done much over the past century to illuminate the relations between Mariology and Christology and between Mariology and ecclesiology, important work remains to be done considering the nexus between Mariology, on the one hand, and theological anthropology and grace, on the other; Scheeben can help theologians address this task.

None of these contributions will be easily realized, for Scheeben's *Handbook of Catholic Dogmatics* is demanding. As he states in the preface, the work is not for casual reading, but for study, and study entails difficulties, "especially the study of such a sublime science as theology."¹⁰ The challenges are myriad: Scheeben's thought is complex; the range of authors he engages is vast; the disputes into which he wades will be unfamiliar to many theologians today. But those willing to give the time and effort needed to study this masterpiece of Catholic dogmatic theology will become better theologians for having done so and, as Scheeben assures his reader at the outset of his *magnum opus*, "will realize that the trouble expended on it was not wasted fruitlessly."¹¹ A careful study of Scheeben's *Dogmatics* will lead theologians to achieve the goal Scheeben presents as the aim of the work: "the glorification of Him 'in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' (Col 2:3)."¹² N·V

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¹⁰ Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *Theological Epistemology: The Objective Principles of Theological Knowledge*, vol. 1/1 of *Handbook of Catholic Dogmatics*, trans. Michael J. Miller (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2019), xiv.

¹¹ Scheeben, *Theological Epistemology*, xiv.

¹² Scheeben, *Theological Epistemology*, xvi.