

beginning of Pope Francis's pontificate. H. argues that both an authentic manifestation of the *sensus fidelium* and a sign of the times that manifests the working of God in history must be interpreted in the context of the fruits that these bear in the lives of people (196–203, 241, 243–54, 275). H. scrutinizes how to discern between what is a miracle in the Gospels and an unexplained phenomenon: only if an event such as a healing or other unexplained circumstances engenders faith or trust in God can it be considered a genuine miracle (178–81, 203–5). Without an awakening of faith and its fruit in people, unexplained natural phenomena remain just that, curious occurrences as yet unexplained by science. Similarly, authentic manifestations of the *sensus fidelium* and signs of the times may be determined to be authentic to the extent that they produce fruit in those who experience them that lead witnesses to a greater faith in the gospel evidenced by living it out in history—in other words, when unexplained phenomena become salvific events for those who believe in them.

Finally, two articles will prove suggestive and illuminating for those seeking to understand the pontificate of Pope Francis (293–314, 315–34). Both articles reference a memo by Giuseppe Dossetti written in 1978 about what the successor of Pope Paul VI should do in his first 100 days as pontiff. The recommendations bear a striking resemblance to Pope Francis's initiatives at the start of his tenure as bishop of Rome. Dossetti was among the council's most progressive voices—he had served as a resistance operative during World War II, jurist, politician, priest, founder of a religious community, and theological advisor to Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro of Bologna. Among Dossetti's seven recommendations (302–10) are pastoral “signs of reconciliation and hope” that convey the pope's episcopal solicitude for the people of his diocese, Rome, especially those who have experienced failure in their fidelity to their wedding or presbyteral vows. Dossetti also recommended a simpler and more evangelical pontifical style, as well as the appointment of a body of international cardinals from outside the Roman Curia that would aid the pope in the governance of the Church.

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*Pope Francis: His Life and Thought.* By Mario I. Aguilar. Cambridge, UK: Lutterworth, 2014. Pp. 189. \$19.99.

Human beings are creatures of habit. Pope Francis, when asked what he has in his black briefcase and why he carries it with him at all times, responded, “I don't have the key to the atomic bomb. I carry it with me because I always did before” (181). The pope's response serves both as a premise and an invitation: if you want to know and understand Pope Francis and his papacy, you must read and study Jorge Mario Bergoglio's life and thoughts. Given the immense interest in Pope Francis—a leader of more than 1.2 billion Catholics worldwide—another biographical work on the present Roman Pontiff does not come as a surprise. Aguilar has labored successfully to offer readers a resource through which to gain deeper insights into the unique style of Francis's pontificate.

While recent biographies of Pope Francis are primarily based on “history and myth mixed with personal opinion” (10), A.’s work was built on primary and secondary Spanish sources. More importantly, these sources were studied and analyzed by a theologian who shares the pope’s Latin American background and whose academic career and profession are devoted to the history of the very faith community that challenged and molded Bergoglio’s theological thought. The author’s unique perspective makes this work a rich and exciting read.

A. divides his work into seven sections. The first four study various stages of Bergoglio’s life journey prior to his election in 2013. While the chronological progression serves as a helpful guide, A.’s divisions within these sections are confusing since he neither differentiates among the various stages of Jesuit formation nor makes clear distinctions between the roles of auxiliary bishop, coadjutor archbishop, head of a diocese, and cardinal. The next two sections explore Bergoglio’s theological themes, namely, “The Nation, the Poor, and Others” and “Poverty and Other Faiths,” respectively. In the book’s last section, A. reiterates the purpose of his work: “to explore the dynamic pastoral life of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, in order to better understand the life and theological thought of Pope Francis” (179).

Through critical analysis and interpretation of various sources concerning Bergoglio’s formation and ministry, A. successfully identifies a single thread that is woven throughout Bergoglio’s life and thoughts—an intimate connection with, and a profound commitment to, the people who live on the peripheries of society. Both Bergoglio’s background as the son of an Italian immigrant family and his world-affirming Jesuit formation accorded with movements toward the marginalized of society. All concerted with striving toward imitating the divine movement in the Incarnation.

As provincial of the Argentinian Province of the Society of Jesus, Bergoglio had to learn how to deal and negotiate with various authorities to protect his Jesuit brothers and others who were marginalized during the “Dirty War.” Bergoglio himself experienced what it meant to live at the margins of society when he faced controversial claims surrounding his position in a passive ecclesial structure and thus his ineffectualness during this period and during his sojourn in Germany. After having lived at the peripheries, Bergoglio’s approach to pastoral strategy and planning reflected a deep theological understanding and profound convictions of how to empower the disenfranchised.

A significant distinction remains, however, between Bergoglio’s theological approach and approaches embraced by liberation theologians like Gustavo Gutiérrez. From his pastoral experience at the peripheries, Bergoglio signaled to Latin American bishops at their Aparecida meeting in 2007 that the root of poverty was no longer their countries’ underdevelopment, as understood by theologians and bishops at their 1968 Medellín meeting. Instead, Bergoglio argued that globalization and secularism were poverty’s principal causes. Globalization itself entails a contradiction, that is, while it brings people together, it also exposes them to global diversity. Furthermore, although globalization creates increased opportunity for developing solidarity, social inequality also increases. As a result, Bergoglio’s episcopal ministry avoided affirming the centrality of one theology over another; instead it focused on establishing common ground for dialogue, empowering reconciliation among all the marginalized.

A.'s exceptional care in studying Bergoglio's writings and homilies is impressive and commendable. The book ends the way good books often do, leaving readers in eager anticipation of how Bergoglio's behaviors and plans of action in the past will unfold during Francis's pontificate.

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*The Crisis of Confidence in the Catholic Church.* By Raymond G. Helmick, S.J. Foreword by Gerard Mannion. Ecclesiological Investigations. New York: Bloomsbury, 2014. Pp. xxiii + 293. \$112. \$32.95.

The multiple crises facing the Catholic Church over several decades are not easy to trace, yet Helmick sure-handedly addresses the major fault lines in the Church and why it has weathered the crises in such a defensive posture. He lays out the fortress mentality of the Catholic Church after the French Revolution and its heavy-handed, reactionary control that sowed the seeds for the upheavals starting in the 1960s.

After the Church's devastation during the French Revolution, the forces of reaction elected Leo XII (1823–1829), who embarked on a course of deep conservatism (37). From then on, the papacy shored up its power, authority, and influence. H. engagingly unfolds this power narrative from that point through the First Vatican Council, the imposition of stringent safeguards against Modernism, and the silencing of theologians in the 1940s and 1950s. By the time John XXIII was elected in 1958, "what was lacking to the Church, the thing that needed to be filled up in the flesh of the Body of Christ, was much of the love that Christ had assigned to his followers as their true task" (84).

H. shows how Vatican II, following the inspired lead of John XXIII, reversed the tide. Relying heavily on the "treasure house of knowledge" (83) of the scholarship of John W. O'Malley's *What Happened at Vatican II* (2010), H. deftly tracks the multiple currents operating during the council and the great hope it unleashed. His close reading of the council's breakthroughs and the rearguard machinations of those resisting change offer page-turning, high drama.

All the major players on the ecclesial world stage were at the council: Cardinals Joseph Frings, Léon-Joseph Suenens, Giacomo Lercaro, Bernardus Johannes Alfrink, Achille Liénart, Alfredo Ottaviani, Ernesto Ruffini, Augustin Bea, Pericle Felici, Giovanni Battista Montini, the Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV Saigh, and in lesser roles the American Cardinals Francis Spellman and Joseph Ritter. A crib sheet for the *dramatis personae* would undoubtedly assist younger readers who have no personal memory of the council.

The interventions by Paul VI during the council, especially his reiteration of traditional church teaching in *Humanae vitae* in 1968, were key factors in the subsequent crises. The Vatican continued to exert power and control by censoring the distinguished Catholic ethicist Charles Curran, among others.