

ideas that are accessible to all citizens of good will, relying on reason rather than revelation.

St. Ignatius Parish, San Francisco

JOHN A. COLEMAN, S.J.

ECCLESIOLOGY AND EXCLUSION: BOUNDARIES OF BEING AND BELONGING IN POSTMODERN TIMES. Edited by Dennis M. Doyle, Timothy J. Furry, and Pascal D. Bazzell. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2012. Pp. ix + 334. \$38.

Exclusion, whatever its source and nature, is a challenge to the church's faithfulness to its own unity and mission. Such is the central thesis that underlies 32 brief essays collected in this substantial volume, a fruit of the Dayton "Ecclesiology and Exclusion" conference (2011).

By bringing together a group of outstanding theologians representing various denominations and cultures, D. and his coeditors made sure that the essays not only discuss but also embody various forms of diversity. Arranged in seven parts, the book presents the series of discussions on the problem of exclusion seen from multiple perspectives including race, gender, immigration, sacraments, and ecumenism. Most contributors combined their observations regarding instances of an exclusory identity politics found in churches with showing the theological implications of such stances.

Issues discussed in the volume range from ecclesial complicity in racial supremacy to a dichotomous theology of nature and grace with sharp boundaries between church and world, and again from the church's recurrent incapacity to take a prophetic option for migrants to "a whiff of Donatism" in the attitudes of some US bishops to their roles as teachers and leaders. The main thrust of the volume that unites these diverse frameworks is to explore exclusion as not merely an ethical but rather as a fundamentally ecclesial problem and to identify relevant issues confronting ecclesial practice in the postmodern context that many find prone to division and polarization.

Gerard Mannion's *Ecclesiology and Postmodernity* (2007) provided the focus that inspired the organizers of the Dayton conference. A later chapter on the exclusion of marginal people (mainly immigrants and the homeless) focused on a condition found in almost all countries. Two insightful comments on Bryan Massingale's *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* (2010) as well as his response show how creatively different contributors approach the question of exclusion.

Massingale's examination of racism as systemic, institutional, cultural, and foundational to US society leads him to the question of the role Christian faith ought to play in the effort to bring about racial justice. Nigerian Jesuit A. E. Orobator questions the adequacy of "lament" and "compassion" as the practical tools aimed at overcoming the evil of racism and suggests that

the idea of struggle should be brought to the fore instead. Sociologist Leslie Picca agrees that, due to its inherent catholicity, the church as a social body has all the means to facilitate the intergroup contact and thus contribute toward a more racially just society. Christian communities, however, often fail to witness against this sinful exclusion. Such failures not only jeopardize the church's integrity and mission but, more alarmingly, threaten to pervert the gospel into supporting racist attitudes and practices. Indeed, Massingale laments global Catholicism has been co-opted into an idolatrous belief system according to which the sacred "can be definitively mediated and unambiguously encountered only through white cultural products" (133).

If the church is to be a sacrament to the world in more than just a rhetorical and nonincarnational manner, it must strongly oppose what Mannion has so aptly called "neo-exclusivism," that is, a distinctly new set of theological inclinations rendering racism, nationalism, xenophobia, economic disparities, and human exploitation tolerable. But, at the same time, according to Barry Harvey, the church needs to cultivate a kind of exclusivity for the sake of a greater inclusivity. While some of the exclusion that we experience and generate as Christians is unneeded, painful, and sinful, some of it is necessary and justified. Ecclesial communities often struggle to hold together the enduring theological and pastoral insights embedded in the approaches of both exclusivity and inclusivity. Only an ongoing negotiation between them will enable the church to remain faithful to its own unity and mission and, at the same time, to bear an authentic witness against sinful exclusivism.

One cannot but share the editors' hope that the book will serve as a starting point for many conversations. Several issues call for further research. For instance, are we justified in putting the exclusion due to racial factors on the same level as those that originate from people's choices and that may have ethical dimensions (e.g., refusal to ordain active homosexuals or sacramental exclusion of divorced Catholics)? Furthermore, is it not telling that, even though Vatican II recommended ecumenism both *ad extra* and *ad intra*, 50 years after the council the former appears to be more dynamically open than the latter? The call for dialogue with world religions and cultures seems to resonate with the current ecclesial mentality more than the call for unity within Christendom, complicated as it is by different approaches to issues such as priesthood, for example. One may simply repeat after Paul: "For what have I to do with judging those outside? Is it not those who are inside that you are to judge?" (1 Cor 5:12). It should be kept in mind, however, that the famous baptismal confession by the same Paul that in Christ there is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female (Gal 3:28) refers, first and foremost, to those who form the mystical body of Christ.

This engaging collection leaves its readers with much to ponder. Highly recommended!

University of Pretoria

JAKUB URBANIAK

RESISTING VIOLENCE AND VICTIMISATION: CHRISTIAN FAITH AND SOLIDARITY IN EAST TIMOR. By Joel Hodge. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012. Pp. xi + 232. \$99.95.

Those already well versed in the history of the small half-island state of East Timor and those who would struggle to locate it on a map will find in this book offers a thought-provoking analysis of the East Timorese experience of violence and resistance in the context of Christian faith. Using the Timorese case, Hodge provides an insightful theological reflection on how Christian beliefs and practices helped people of East Timor endure suffering and confront violence. His analysis brings to the fore the potency of the transcendent Christian imagination—how it can create spaces of nonviolence and solidarity, replacing the spaces of violence created by the constricted imagination of those in power to sustain their order.

Informed by René Girard's works, H. examines the East Timorese experience with the eyes of a critical faith through the lenses of stories of suffering and resistance. The stories H. selects are of martyrs and survivors, men and women, priests, religious, and lay. He mines these accounts of courage in the face of death, and unearths veins of fidelity, forgiveness, and solidarity grounded in Christian belief and practice, and centering especially on the Eucharist and the cross.

An introduction to Girard's ideas on mimetic desire, scapegoating, sacred violence, and sacrifice provides the theoretical framework that shapes H.'s interpretation of his own experiences. A central aspect of this framework is the idea that the loving self-giving of Christ has provided an alternative to the violent sacrifice of scapegoats found in societies through the ages.

A concise overview of the history, religion, and culture of East Timor provides a good introduction for those unfamiliar with this former Portuguese colony that struggled under Indonesian rule for 24 years before attaining independence. Few would dispute the significance of the Catholic Church in those decades of struggle. However, H. takes us well beyond the familiar territory of how the Catholic Church grew rapidly and provided spaces for supporting resistance, helped create a unified national identity, especially through its liturgical use of the local language, Tetum, and was a trusted source of charitable assistance. H.'s focus is much more on how Christian faith in a loving, self-giving God and how solidarity found in the church empowered personal and collective resistance to oppression.