By focusing on the limits of hospitality W. has contributed much not only to hospitality studies in particular but also to Christian ethics in general. Christian ethics at times fails to acknowledge the existence of competing goods and tragic choices. W.'s book fruitfully wades into the moral complexities of the hospitable life.

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BIOMEDICINE AND BEATITUDE: AN INTRODUCTION TO CATHOLIC BIOETHICS. By Nicanor Pier Giorgio Austriaco, O.P. Catholic Moral Thought Series. Washington: Catholic University of America, 2011. Pp. xiv + 327. $44.95; $24.95.

Many of the most important and complex ethical dilemmas of our time concern questions in biomedicine. Persons and organizations face pressing moral choices at the beginning and end of human life and must engage in challenging ethical deliberation about human reproductive technologies, end-of-life care, organ donation and transplantation, embryo and stem cell research, physician-patient relationships, health-care funding and distribution, and other issues. In this clearly written introduction to Catholic bioethics, Austriaco examines many leading biomedical issues, including direct and indirect abortion, selective prenatal testing, human sexual acts and their moral meaning, contraception, direct sterilization, in vitro fertilization and other reproductive technologies, human embryo research, hydration and nutrition in end-of-life care, and euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide.

A highly traditional Thomistic natural-law framework guides A.'s examination of biomedical procedures and related moral questions. He draws on John Paul II's theology of the body in analyzing various moral issues in patient medical care and questions of sexual ethics (e.g., 74–77). He presents a strong natural-law argument in defense of Paul VI's *Humanae vitae* and the encyclical's prohibition of artificial contraception (80–81). When considering moral objections to church teaching, A. observes that "a single contraceptive act, in itself . . . distorts the structure and meaning of human sexuality, [and] hinders the spouses from attaining the beatitude that comes from the practice of chaste sexual acts" (87).

A. devotes significant attention to "bioethics at the beginning of life" and to "bioethics and human procreation" (chaps. 2 and 3). He addresses questions concerning the moral status of the human embryo and offers a sound explanation of the principle of "the dignity of the human being" (44–47) as a central foundation of Roman Catholic bioethical thought. Chapter 2 treats "disputed questions" such as ectopic pregnancies and prenatal testing and diagnosis (64–69). His careful analysis of the

serious moral hazards of preimplantation genetic diagnosis and also donor and surrogate methods in artificial reproductive technologies is well argued.

Chapter 4 presents a sensitive discussion of the important responsibilities of patients and health-care professionals in clinical encounters. Topics such as informed consent, advanced directives, health care proxies, and other subjects are considered (122–33). A.'s discussion of clinical and moral issues in treatment decisions for hydration and nutrition of patients who are minimally conscious, in a prevegetative state, or comatose presents helpful moral analysis and offers a useful history of the continuing debate (157–65).

Many readers will be inspired by the faith, sincerity, and care that A. directs to complex and often heartbreaking bioethical dilemmas. The book is disappointing, however, for a number of reasons. While A.'s exploration of the role of virtue is promising, his central moral arguments are based on a highly traditional natural-law account of bioethics, one that emphasizes the central importance of specific human acts in moral evaluation. Brief discussions of virtue appear in chapter conclusions—for example, in consideration of "the practice of organ transplantation" (204–6). In the final chapter, "Catholic Bioethics in a Pluralist Society," A. describes the moral approach of his book as "a Thomistic natural law account that grounds virtue in an understanding of the perfections of human nature" (251). While A. attempts "to recover the proper role of the virtues in bioethical decision making" (41), in the end he primarily adopts an act-centered moral approach (based on traditional Thomistic natural theory) in his analysis of contemporary biomedical dilemmas. His appeal to virtue seems "added on" to the primary moral arguments and positions adopted, especially in the areas of end-of-life care, reproductive ethics, and sexual ethics. In places, moral arguments appear to take a defensive posture that may limit the needed further analysis required by highly complex and changing biomedical dilemmas. Further, the book devotes too much attention to quoting directly and at length already well-known Catholic teachings in official documents.

The book is carefully organized and well referenced. Overall, A. is successful in reviewing well-known and established ethical positions and arguments in the Roman Catholic tradition. Readers looking for a clear statement (and defense) of established Catholic moral teachings in bioethics will find it here. Yet, others who may be seeking a new and more historically grounded examination of pressing biomedical issues—and a sensitive moral treatment of issues still unclear or developing—will need to look elsewhere.

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