

Some might object that R.'s approach ultimately privileges the canonical Gospels. R. explicitly identifies the noncanonical Gospels in terms of their interaction with their predecessors. Indeed, he explicitly aims to enhance students' understanding of the canonical Gospels (114). For example, I learned a great deal from his demonstration of *Infancy Thomas* as a reading of Genesis, John, and Luke; and I had not thought of *Infancy James* as an articulation of Johannine word theology via an interweaving of infancy stories from Luke and Matthew. Others may complain that R.'s focus on Jesus, from which he rarely wavers, limits the book's appeal.

Although having a background in NT or early Christianity will be advantageous for readers, this volume includes remarkably lucid discussions of introductory matters such as a singularly helpful explanation of the Q hypothesis (13–14). Robbins' pioneering work in socio-rhetorical interpretation contributes to this study, and its formidable terminology rarely distracts.

Greg Carey

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Pennsylvania

Reading Mark for the First Time. By Wilfrid J. Harrington, O.P. New York: Paulist, 2013. Pp. iii + 172. \$14.95.

Introductions, it has been said, are best written either in the passion of youth or the wisdom of experience. Harrington's didactic study on the Gospel of Mark is a little gem, built for classrooms, that represents the latter: a sage invitation to read Mark as a literary and theological touchstone. H. highlights these two elements while deftly and gently introducing readers to Mark in a critically thoughtful light.

H. begins by foregrounding Mark's literary dimensions. H.'s real achievement here is his ability to pepper his exposition with helpful critical information and many astute literary insights. For instance, H. draws attention to the way Mark uses setting to lend solemnity and importance to the farewell discourse in Mark 13 (43), and continues by musing poignantly on Mark's depiction of Jesus' loneliness and solitude (44). H. then turns to the theological dimension of Christ "who suffers and sends," where he again achieves a balance of explanation and exposition as he smuggles theological tidbits into the discussion. For instance, H. explains that Jesus' message is inclusive (72), that Mark conveys the immanent and present kingdom of God (74), that the Gospel links Jesus to the suffering-servitude of Deutero-Isaiah (85), and that the text exhibits a preferential option for the poor (102).

H.'s intended audience comes into clarity in his final chapter, which fosters an understanding of discipleship and offers an application-oriented reading of Mark as a guide for active faith and church leadership. Here, also, is an indication that parts of this book might not be suited for all kinds of students. While the literary and theological sections would add an enlightening dimension to a diverse undergraduate course, it is difficult to know how this final chapter would work outside of a Sunday school classroom. Even so, H. takes care to include literary and theological insights and

closes with a profound musing on Mark's presentation of Jesus' death as a "triumphal failure" (156–57).

With the small caveat that this book might not be suitable for all educational settings, I heartily recommend it.

Allan T. Georgia
Fordham University, NY

Saint Paul and the New Evangelization. By Ronald D. Witherup. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2013. Pp. x + 147. \$14.95.

Witherup seeks to link the exhortations on the new evangelization made by the magisterium of the Catholic Church with Paul's apostolic life and practices. It is undeniable that Paul's life provides numerous examples of the apostolate of evangelization. Nevertheless, using Paul is not particularly helpful in addressing the unique situation of evangelizing former Christians, people who, either personally or collectively, have renounced the faith they once professed.

The book is a sort of manual, and each chapter concludes with a set of questions intended to help a group discuss the content of the preceding pages. The fact that the book was quickly written leads to certain approximations: the New Testament does mention Paul's origin in the city of Tarsus (22), Jesus' crucifixion is generally located in AD 30, not 28 (23), and the fact that the Philippians' hymn (2:5–11) is pre-Pauline is increasingly discussed among scholars (25). Statements that can be challenged include the observation that crossing the Bosphorus was a "dramatic move" (56); that both sides of the Aegean sea belonged to the Greek cultural world; and that Paul discarded Jewish ritual laws only for pagan converts but stressed their validity for Jewish Christians (94).

I commend many of W.'s points of emphasis: for example, when he underscores our ability to be sent as apostles even if we have not known Jesus according to the flesh (34); the fact that Paul knew perfectly well the persistence of sin in his communities and tried to deal with it (58); and the necessity to call the church a "family of faith" comprised of brothers and sisters (65, 88).

The usefulness of this booklet lies in its practical and accessible dimension, which allows beginners and newcomers to (re)discover Paul's letters with joy.

Marc Rastoin, S.J.
Centre Sèvres, Paris

Making Sense of Sex: Attitudes towards Sexuality in Early Jewish and Christian Literature. By William Loader. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. vii + 168. \$24.

A catchy title, to be sure. Of three other books on the market with that title, only Loader's is a scholarly investigation of ancient literature. In fact, it is the latest in a