

*The Preferential Option for the Poor beyond Theology.* Edited by Daniel G. Groody and Gustavo Gutiérrez. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 2014. Pp. viii + 252. \$30.

This collection of essays attempts to move the preferential option for the poor beyond its normal theological and ecclesiological boundaries. Based on presentations from two international conferences at Notre Dame, the essays present the preferential option for the poor from a wide variety of academic disciplines, including law, economics, science, and politics. According to the editors' claim in the introduction, fully two-thirds of the world's population continues to live in poverty. This reality, coupled with the inherent dignity of every human person, "challenges *all* people to consider in what ways they can help to promote justice and peace here and now" (2).

Some essays prove more enlightening than others. Georges Enderle makes the strong claim that the option for the poor and business ethics need each other, and his detailed tables and statistics prove that the global economic system should be reexamined in light of principles of distributive justice (44). Iguñiz Echeverría adeptly illuminates the multidimensional views of development from an economic perspective. Patricio and José Aylwin brilliantly weave together the implications of politics and the preferential option for indigenous peoples. Utilizing the experience of the former Chilean president, Patricio Aylwin Azócar, they recount the sad history of the marginalization of indigenous peoples and describe the modern history of a society that hopes to bring justice for native peoples through solidarity. Paul Farmer integrates the challenges in global health with insights from liberation theology and social justice. He deftly describes an approach to disease and suffering that protects "the rights and dignity of the poor" (221). Somewhat regrettably a few essays address concerns applicable only within the Notre Dame community, such as the importance of the integration of the preferential option with the "Great Books program" or the South Bend shelter for the homeless (149).

An essay by Groody or Gutiérrez would have given the book more theological weight and cemented the importance of moving the preferential option for the poor beyond theology. But for those interested in the broader implications of liberation theology from an interdisciplinary perspective, the book succeeds in its insightful and worthy mission.

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*Restored to Earth: Christianity, Environmental Ethics, and Ecological Restoration.* By Gretel Van Wieren. Washington: Georgetown University, 2013. Pp. ix + 208. \$29.95.

In this timely study Van Wieren examines the theory and practice of ecological restoration to better understand its significance for environmental ethics. For V., "ecological restoration is the attempt to heal and make the human relationship to nature whole" (2).

In two parts and six chapters, the book directs careful attention to the thought of leading thinkers in the ecological restoration movement. Noting that restoration practice has been neglected in recent decades, V. explores its promising place in the broader field of environmental ethics. A constructive aim of her study “is to highlight the neglect of religious elements in understandings of ecological restoration” (16).

For V., restoration may function “as a form of symbolic action” (145) that can be important for the cultivation of environmental values. In chapter 5, “Ecological Symbolic Action: Restoration as Sacramental Practice,” the author proposes that “a symbolic interpretation of concrete ecological acts such as restoration, and the direct experiences they may yield, are integral to the formation of cultural environmental values” (146). She points to social, communal, spiritual, and moral values that the practice of ecological restoration can nurture; these can ultimately be transformative for persons. A central claim of the book is that “people may become restored to earth in and through the process of restoring earth” (185). Further, ecological restoration can serve as a helpful context for developing a broader religious environmental ethic (185).

Drawing on the lessons of actual restoration projects such as Chicago Wilderness, Common Ground Relief, and Vermont Family Forests, the book successfully presents a clear introduction to important theories and activities of ecological restoration. The book also directs attention to the implications for spirituality and ethics in ecological restoration activities. In an intriguing discussion of how religious narratives of redemption “may prove beneficial in building new stories of the ways in which people may live restoratively with land” (179), V. points to the role of religious narratives in ecological ethics that can contribute positively to public restoration discourse.

V.’s study should be welcomed by those interested in the pressing environmental challenges of our time. I recommend the book for courses in contemporary moral problems and ecological ethics at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. It offers a thorough and sensitive examination of ecological restoration—a promising response in a world that continues to struggle with complex environmental dilemmas.

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*The Spirituality of the Second Vatican Council.* By Gerald O’Collins, S.J. New York: Paulist, 2014. Pp. xi + 77. \$10.95.

O’Collins offers this surprisingly compact gem in a clear, attractive style. He outlines a vibrant, liturgical Christian spirituality by marshalling a vast storehouse of ecclesial tradition to illuminate the key passages from the 16 documents of the Second Vatican Council. “A non-liturgical, Christian spirituality,” he affirms, “would be a contradiction in terms” (58).

O’C. goes further by recalling the root word *leitourgia*, the “work” of the church that is both worship and social action in serving the suffering. In fact, under O’C.’s gentle direction all the documents of Vatican II come alive in symphonic echoes of one